

March 5, 2015

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT  
Shelly Stengel  
314-817-5638 or *StengelS@hbastl.com*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Checklist for Keeping Your Home Healthy**

By Jeff Schindler, 2015 HBA President

A home is often the biggest investment you will make in your lifetime. It is also the place where families will raise children and spend many hours making lifelong memories. So it's important to maintain your home in good condition and make sure it offers a clean, comfortable and safe environment for many years to come.

This checklist contains tasks you should complete at least on an annual basis to keep your home operating efficiently and to protect your investment.

**Anytime During the Year:**

- Check all connections to your electrical system for possible hazards. Check cords and plugs of all electrical appliances for fraying or signs of wear. Repair or replace as necessary. Do not overload extension cords.
- Test your smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detector and radon detector for proper operation. Clean the units with a vacuum or cotton swab and replace batteries and light bulbs if needed.
- Have your heating and air conditioning system(s) inspected and cleaned. If your system(s) has a filter, replace it every three months to keep your unit working efficiently.

- Inspect all doors and windows for proper operation and a tight fit. Clean the window tracks, clean and adjust the door thresholds and check that the weatherstripping hasn't cracked or torn. Preventing unwanted outside air from leaking into your home will reduce your energy bills.
- Check interior paint and touch up or repaint as needed.
- Inspect the attic insulation. Make sure the entire ceiling area is covered. Check that the insulation has not blocked vents in the eaves to prevent buildup of condensation and to allow proper air circulation. Insulation should also not be touching the underside of the roof sheathing.
- Oil motors of appliances as directed in instruction manuals.
- Periodically check storage areas, closets, and the basement to make sure no oily rags, gas cans, painting supplies or flammable cleaning materials have been stored and forgotten. These items could be a fire hazard and should be discarded.
- Check that the alarm and circuits of your security system are in working order, inspect the sensors one by one, and check primary and backup batteries monthly.
- Inspect your stairs, steps and ladders for damage or broken pieces that could cause someone to fall. Make sure handrails and railings are sturdy and securely attached.

**In the spring:**

- Check the condition of glazing compound, caulking and exterior paint. Replace or paint as needed.
- Exchange glass and screens in storm doors and/or windows (also in autumn).
- Inspect the roof for snow damage.
- Check for evidence of termites such as sagging floors and ceilings or dry, brown tunnels in the ground near the home's foundation.
- Seed and feed the lawn and plant annuals. Cut back perennials that need pre-growth pruning.

**In the autumn:**

- Mulch perennials that need protection from winter weather and prune those that should be cut back in the fall.
- Rake and compost leaves.
- Remove hose connections and store hoses to avoid freezing.

There are many more tasks that you can complete throughout the year to keep your home in good working order. If you would like to make the move to a new home, start shopping at [www.stlhba.com](http://www.stlhba.com) and click on "Search for New Homes Now" to see thousands of homes built by members of the Home Builders Association of St. Louis & Eastern Missouri.

###