

Out With The Old ...In With The New

10 Items To Put On Your Home Spring Cleaning List

(NAPSA)—The changing seasons are a reminder that it's time to check around the house to make sure things are operating properly and safely. Here are 10 often overlooked tasks to add to your home spring cleaning list.

1. **Defrost the freezer:** Ice buildup makes freezers less efficient and takes up space. Throw away out-of-date or freezer-burnt food.

2. **Update the first-aid kit:** Replace missing supplies and update emergency contact information, including the poison control center.

3. **Donate old clothes:** Clean out closets and take unused clothes to a clothing donation center.

4. **Clean up the computer:** Delete old files and e-mails, organize documents and photos into folders and run a virus scan.

5. **Clean the chimney:** Hire a chimney sweep to clear the flue and perform an inspection.

6. **Caulk and weather strip:** Keep rain from seeping in and cooled or heated air from seeping out by caulking around windows and doors.

7. **Drain the hot water heater:** Check for rust and remove sediment that may have collected at the bottom of your hot water heater.

8. **Call the termite inspector:** Termites establish new colonies every spring, so get a professional inspection of your home.

9. **Review your family emergency plan:** Have an established plan in case of fire or other emergency. Make sure windows and other escapes are easy to open from the inside.



Check your flashlight batteries to be sure they're in good working order before you need them.

10. **Check batteries:** There are 21 battery-operated devices in the average home—from flashlights to smoke detectors to cordless phones. Test each device and replace the batteries with fresh ones.

According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, about 3,000 people in the United States lose their lives in residential fires every year. You should test smoke alarms once a month and change the batteries inside at least twice a year. Also replace smoke alarm batteries if the detector emits a warning sound, such as chirping or beeping. Make sure there's at least one working smoke alarm on every level of your home, particularly inside or near sleeping areas.

To help householders, Interstate Batteries makes 16,000 different kinds of batteries for powering cars, laptops and everything in between. The company's All Battery Centers promise to have, find or build the right battery for just about any gadget around your home.

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