

Fall Into Home Fix-Ups

(NAPSA)—The crisp autumn air, changing foliage and cooler temperatures of fall are a good time to tackle home improvement projects. There are a number of simple home projects around the house that will help prepare your home for the winter months ahead.

Here are some simple home fix-up projects to get your home in shape this fall:

- **Gutter Buster**—Falling leaves, twigs and pine needles can block downspouts and cause rainwater to overflow gutters. Clean your gutters after most of the leaves have fallen and check for and repair any problems. To keep gutters clear for next fall, install mesh or perforated leaf shields.

- **Now Adhere This**—Cracked bathroom tiles, peeling linoleum and chipped molding can easily be replaced to give rooms a fresh look. The Loctite Power Grab Pressure Pack™ (www.loctiteproducts.com) is a high-strength construction adhesive designed for multi-surface use on surfaces such as concrete, brick, veneer, treated lumber, plywood and drywall. In addition, the pressure pack is easy to dispense and no extra caulk gun is needed.

- **Avoid Drafty Situations**—Part of your fall chores should be checking your home's doors and windows for areas where cool air can leak in, and warm air can escape. To make them draft free, make sure to maintain and upgrade weather stripping. All sorts of do-it-yourself materials are available: rope caulk, self-stick foam, and rubber weatherseals (www.duckproducts.com). The goal is to ensure that your windows and doors are snug but still operative.

- **Keep the Heat**—Fall is the perfect time to inspect insulation. Up to 80 percent of a home's heat loss typically occurs around ceilings, and can be dramatically reduced by adding insulation.



Proper attic insulation is the key to cutting this loss, and will keep your house warmer in winter and cooler in summer. If there is no flooring over ceiling joists, adding loose insulation is as easy as emptying the bags and spreading an even layer. If your attic has flooring, you may need to insulate between the roof rafters.

- **No Smoking Section**—Make sure to change the batteries in smoke and carbon monoxide detectors at the beginning of the season.

- **Neat Freak**—Sorting and reorganizing drawers, closets and cabinets can greatly improve the look of your home and it can be done without spending a fortune. Clean out your summer wardrobe and donate old clothing and furniture to local charities to help leave more space for items you use. With masking tape for labeling and a few plastic storage bins, boxes or baskets, you can easily bring order to cluttered areas.

Don't feel like you have to tackle these home improvement tasks on your own. Have the entire family chip in and help out. And when you're done, be sure to reward everyone with a mug of hot apple cider.