

Spring Cleaning: Sandcastle's Preventative Maintenance Checklist

Spring is upon us. Your home has just gone through winter and is preparing for summer heat which, in Houston, will certainly involve brutal heat and humidity. It's a great time to focus on the recommended maintenance for the exterior of your home as well as your HVAC system. Below is a useful checklist of Sandcastle Homes' recommended maintenance items, summarized from our Homeowners' Manual:

Foundation

- Check the perimeter of your home regularly for insects. Mud or mounded dirt piles on the edge of the foundation may indicate destructive or hazardous insects, such as termites.

Landscaping, Drainage, Grading

- Maintain grades and drainage in your yard, including the drainage from the rear yard through the side yard, by keeping all soil and grass several inches below any siding, decking or brick. Be sure the ground slopes away from the home on all sides to allow drainage.
- Twice a year or after any major rainstorm, check and clean gutters and downspouts. Debris tends to collect after heavy storms.
- Twice a year prune back trees and shrubs to ensure they are not in contact with the house, blocking gutters, downspouts or air conditioning compressors.
- Fertilize grass and plants twice a year.
- Clean rust off wrought iron fences with a damp cloth. When dry, touch up the paint with satin finish rust prevention paint.

Roofing and Gutters

- Twice a year visually inspect your roof from the ground for broken or missing shingles and gaps in flashing. Call a professional to make repairs as needed.
- Twice a year or after any major rainstorm, clean gutters and downspouts.
- Have your roof professionally inspected once a year and after major storms.
- Once a year visually inspect the fireplace vent and other exterior vents for nests and debris and clear as necessary.
- Once a year check inside attic for signs of roof leaks.
- Every two years hire a professional roofer to re-caulk the roof jacks and/or penetrations.

Siding

- Once a year clean siding by spraying with a mixture of bleach and water to remove mildew. Be sure to wear rubber gloves and eye protection. Regularly cleaning your siding will help the exterior paint last longer. Power washing can remove the paint and is not recommended for regular cleaning.
- Once a year check for cracked caulk and touch up the exterior caulk and paint as needed.

Air Conditioning

- For cleaner air, lower utility bills and better air flow, change your air filters and vacuum air supply and air return registers once a month.
- At least twice a year, use a funnel to pour half a gallon of bleach down the HVAC drain line to kill any natural algae, which can clog the line if left untreated. The drain line is the upturned four inch piece of PVC pipe protruding from the furnace in the attic. If you have two units, you'll also have two drain lines.
- Once your home is two years old, have the system checked by a qualified technician twice a year.

If you would like additional information on how to springify your home, please [click here](#).