HAPPY HOMES
CUSTOM SOLUTIONS
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A HAPPY HOMES GUIDE

Home Maintenance, All Year Long

One season at a time, so nothing gets missed.

A home doesn't fail all at once. It fails one skipped filter, one clogged gutter, one dry pipe left over the winter at a time. This guide breaks the year into four checklists, one per season, built for Prince George's County and the wider DMV: the freeze-thaw winters, the humid summers, and everything in between. Work through each list as the season turns, and keep it, it's meant to be reused every year.

Winter	DECEMBER – FEBRUARY
Spring	MARCH – MAY
Summer	JUNE – AUGUST
Fall	SEPTEMBER – NOVEMBER

Happy Homes Care members don't have to run this list themselves. Every included seasonal visit covers items like these, and we log what we did in your Hometrue Record. Call or email to ask about membership, or to book a one-time Hometrue Check.

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Your property, your investment, and your interests as a homeowner: protected.

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Winter Home Maintenance

Keep the cold out and the pipes intact.

DECEMBER – FEBRUARY

Winter maintenance is about heat loss and frozen water, in that order. Most of this list takes an afternoon and saves you a much worse afternoon in February.

Interior

- ☐ Reverse ceiling fans to spin clockwise on low.
  Pushes warm air that's collected near the ceiling back down into the room.
- ☐ Check weatherstripping around doors and windows.
  A cold draft right at the threshold usually means it's worn through, not that the door is the problem.
- ☐ Replace smoke detector and carbon monoxide detector batteries.
- ☐ Have your furnace or heat pump serviced by a licensed HVAC tech.
  Do this before the first hard freeze, not during it, appointments book up fast once it's cold.
- ☐ Swap your HVAC filter, and again every 60–90 days through the heating season.
- ☐ Shut off interior valves feeding outdoor spigots and drain the lines.
- ☐ Test your sump pump by pouring a bucket of water into the pit.
  Winter thaw and ice damming send more water toward foundations than most people expect.
- ☐ Get the chimney swept if your fireplace or wood stove sees regular use.

Exterior

- ☐ Disconnect and drain garden hoses.
  Store them somewhere they won't freeze and crack.
- ☐ Clear gutters and downspouts before the first freeze.
  Standing water there turns to ice and can pull the gutter off the fascia board.
- ☐ Walk the roofline after any snow or ice event.
  Icicles along the eaves usually point to an attic losing heat, not just cold weather outside.
- ☐ Keep walkways and steps sanded or salted.
  DMV ice storms come with little warning.
- ☐ Check for tree limbs hanging over the roof or driveway, and have a tree service trim them.
  Ice load snaps weak branches fast.
- ☐ Screen dryer vents, soffit vents, and any gap a mouse could use to get in from the cold.

> *Premier and Estate members get their winter walkthrough done for them, items like these included, and logged in their Hometrue Record.*

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Spring Home Maintenance

Undo winter's damage before summer sets in.

MARCH – MAY

Spring is inspection season: find whatever winter cracked, loosened, or waterlogged, and fix it before summer heat and humidity make it worse.

Interior

- ☐ Change HVAC filters and have the AC system checked.
  Do this before the first 80-degree day, not after.
- ☐ Test every GFCI outlet in the kitchen, bathrooms, and garage.
  Press "test," confirm it trips, then "reset." A dead GFCI won't protect anyone when it actually needs to.
- ☐ Check washing machine supply hoses for cracks or bulges.
  They're one of the most common causes of a surprise basement flood.
- ☐ Clean out the dryer vent.
- ☐ Walk the basement and crawl space after a spring rain.
  Look and smell for standing water or mustiness, a small leak now is a mold problem by July.
- ☐ Inspect window screens for tears before you start opening windows for the season.

Exterior

- ☐ Clean gutters and downspouts again.
  Check that water is actually draining away from the foundation, not pooling against it.
- ☐ Inspect the roof, siding, and caulking around doors and windows for winter damage.
  Reseal or repair anything cracked or pulled away.
- ☐ Power-wash the deck, patio, and siding.
- ☐ Check the deck for soft, spongy, or rotted boards.
  Do this before the season's first cookout, not after someone finds the soft spot.
- ☐ Cut back brush and branches touching the house or crowding the AC unit (hand tools, from the ground).
  They trap moisture against siding and give pests a bridge to the roof.

> *Happy Homes Care members get their spring walkthrough done for them, items like these included, and logged in their Hometrue Record.*

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Summer Home Maintenance

Protect the house from heat, humidity, and storms.

JUNE – AUGUST

Summer is easier on the to-do list but harder on the house: heat stresses paint and roofing, humidity feeds rot and mold, and afternoon storms find every weak point in the exterior.

Interior

- ☐ Reverse ceiling fans back to counter-clockwise to push cool air down.
- ☐ Check attic insulation and ventilation.
  A hot, poorly vented attic drives up your cooling bill and shortens your roof's life.
- ☐ Clean or replace HVAC filters monthly during peak cooling season.
  They clog faster when the system runs nearly nonstop.
- ☐ Test smoke and CO detectors.
  A good mid-year habit alongside the fall battery swap.
- ☐ Confirm bathroom and kitchen exhaust fans vent all the way outside.
  A fan dumping humid air into the attic instead of outdoors invites mold and rot you won't see coming.
- ☐ Check exposed pipes and the water heater for condensation or sweating.
  Summer humidity can slowly rot the framing around a pipe that's been sweating for months.

Exterior

- ☐ Check gutters for standing water after storms.
  Standing water is a mosquito nursery.
- ☐ Inspect the exterior for peeling paint or chipped siding.
  Humidity is hardest on paint this time of year.
- ☐ Reseal or restain a wood deck once water stops beading on the surface.
  That's the sign the old sealer is done, not a specific date on the calendar.
- ☐ Look over fences and outdoor structures for wood rot from spring moisture.
- ☐ Walk the yard after any storm for downed limbs or leaning trees.
- ☐ Check exterior faucets and hoses for leaks.
  Irrigation and hose use run daily this time of year, so a small leak adds up fast.

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Fall Home Maintenance

Get ahead of the next freeze.

SEPTEMBER – NOVEMBER

Fall is the last easy window before cold weather makes everything harder and more expensive to fix. Everything here is about getting ahead of the first freeze.

Interior

- ☐ Have the furnace or heat pump serviced before you need it.
  Appointments book up fast once it turns cold.
- ☐ Replace smoke and CO detector batteries.
  The twice-a-year habit: spring forward, fall back.
- ☐ Check your water heater.
  If the tank is warm to the touch, an insulation blanket pays for itself in a season.
- ☐ Install foam gaskets behind exterior-wall outlet and switch plates.
  An easy, cheap fix for drafts.
- ☐ Reverse ceiling fans to clockwise, low speed, to push warm air back down.

Exterior

- ☐ Clean gutters once the leaves are mostly down, not before.
  Clogged gutters send water down the siding and toward the foundation all winter long.
- ☐ Drain and shut off outdoor spigots before the first freeze warning.
- ☐ Inspect roof, siding, and masonry for cracks, gaps, or animal nests.
  Small repairs now beat storm-driven ones in January.
- ☐ Seal gaps around the foundation and exterior penetrations.
  Rodents go looking for a way in as it cools off.
- ☐ Check the fire extinguisher's gauge and expiration date.

Fall is when every Happy Homes Care member gets a seasonal visit, plus their yearly Hometrue Record review: exterior faucet winterization, filter changes, and a general walkthrough, logged straight into your Hometrue Record.