



## Home Maintenance & Safety Tips

### Water Supply Lines

Check your washing machine lines periodically and replace them when they are old. Look for good hoses with a metal mesh reinforcing jacket. Baring a manufacturer's defect, these hoses should last for years.

Ensure the water lines to your toilet are secure and that the plastic nuts that hold the lines are in place. Do not use cleaning tabs in the toilet reservoir as these chemicals tend to destroy the flushing mechanism and cause slow, wasteful leaks.

Don't forget to inspect the supply lines under bathroom vanities and kitchen sinks.

### Dryer Vents

Inspect your dryer lint hose for clogs. If it seems like your dryer is running forever and your clothes are still damp this is a good sign you may have a clog. Find the outside vent to the dryer hose and see if you have good airflow - if not, clean it yourself or hire a professional. Metal hoses are longer lasting and much more fire resistant.

### Heat Pump

Water condensation from the air handler is normally vented from the house by a pair of  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch white PVC pipes. The primary pipe comes directly off the air handler internal drip pan and usually comes out by your foundation. If it clogs, the secondary line takes over. By code the secondary line should be coming out of your eaves. If your air handler is in the attic crawl space, it may be above a bedroom window. If you see water coming from your secondary line, this is a sign the primary pipe is clogged. If you ignore it and the secondary clogs, the air handler will start flooding your home. A float switch can be installed in the secondary drip pan, so that if it fills with water the entire system will shut off before it floods.

### Hot Water Heater

Hot water heaters all have a valve to blow out water if the pressure goes too high. It should be connected to a pipe that runs outside the house or into the basement crawl space. Hot water heaters hold fifty gallons or more and the overflow pan may hold two gallons at best, so it is essential to check the pipe's placement. If your heater is very old with multiple rust spots, especially around the base, it may be time to replace it. you replace it anyway. Old water heaters can rupture from rusting out.



### Smoke & Carbon Monoxide Detectors

Change the batteries in your smoke detectors when the clocks go forward or back. Make sure to dust your smoke detectors - for them to work smoke has to get in and a coating of dust will slow or prevent this process.

If you have any gas appliances get a carbon monoxide detector. You cannot see or smell carbon monoxide, but it is deadly. If it is battery operated, change the batteries at least twice a year. When you replace the batteries hit the test button. If it doesn't sound, then replace the unit.

### Crime Prevention

Make sure you know the details of contracts with an alarm company. Some alarm companies call the homeowner instead of the police when there is a problem.

Keeping your home well light will discourage thieves. Motion detector lights are best since they are triggered by movement and that draws the attention of residents to the areas.

Landscaping is also important. You should avoid dark covered areas where thieves can hide, but you do want shrubs below windows that make them difficult to access. Plants like yuccas and hollies are painful to come in contact with and can defend windows.

If you plan to be away from home, let your trusted neighbours know. If they see something suspicious, they can call 911. If your community has a Community Watch, you may also let them know you are away. Additionally, stop deliveries while you are gone. Newspapers piling up, mailboxes stuffed with mail and packages laying around are signs to thieves that you are not home.