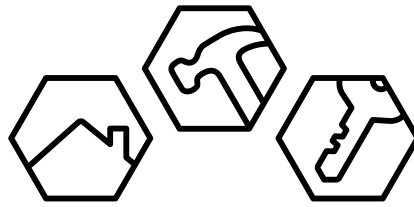


PROPERTY PRESERVATION GUIDE



THE JOSEPH GROUP

RENTAL HOME MAINTENANCE

A routine maintenance guide for your rental property portfolio



WELCOME TO THE JOSEPH GROUP'S PROPERTY PRESERVATION GUIDE

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RENTAL PROPERTY PRESERVATION AND SEASONAL MAINTENANCE

Homes require ongoing maintenance. One of the common mistakes we see Landlord's make is neglecting to address preventative and recurring/seasonal maintenance. This can lead to costly issues down the road and lower the overall value of your investment.

Landlords who follow a preventative program and reinvest a portion of their rental income back into the investment, keep their properties in great condition.

This guide gives you a simple program to follow each year.

Starting with spring, you will see what tasks are important to manage at the beginning of the year to minimize moisture damage.

In summer, you learn about getting the outdoor areas ready for warm weather activities and summer pest control.

Fall is a good time to animal proof your house to make sure pests don't move indoors as it gets colder.

And winter, you'll learn tips to winterize your property before the freezing weather creeps in.

The Joseph Group clients have peace of mind that this program is followed and reminders are sent out automatically. Our Pro Tip is to set calendar reminders for each season so you can address any needed issues at that time.

As a bonus, we've provided a flyer you give to your Residents so they can be educated and participate in maintaining your beautiful home



SPRING MAINTENANCE



In the Seattle Washington market, April/ May is a great time to get your Spring Cleaning done. Your Residents will likely begin enjoying the outdoors, so this is the perfect time to press reset on some items.

Clean the Gutters and Roof

It's important to clean gutters before and after the wet seasons. Winter winds can bring with it debris that become trapped in gutters causing leaks. This can result in ex-pensive damage to roofs and home interiors if a leak occurs. If your downspout goose-neck is clogged, simply use a hose to force out any organic materials. Should the debris be too difficult to remove, consider calling an expert.

Landscape Management

Spring is known for its beautiful blooms; increase your curb appeal and your Resident's enjoyment by sprucing up your landscape. It's time for annual landscaping to ensure that your property looks its best. It's also imperative to clear any limbs or other debris from the landscape to avoid trips or accidents. Maintain shrubs and branch so they will not conduct moisture

onto your roofing and siding. This will also discourage pests from finding an easy path to nest in the attic.

Spring landscaping can include lawn aeration, over-seeding, fertilization, and pruning of shrubs or trees.

This is the ideal time to start thinking about ongoing landscape management. Educating your Residents on whose responsibility it is for mowing or weeding grass, along with watering the lawns and beds. Addressing it now will provide a head start on sudden growth caused by warm weather.

Planting annuals or installing fresh mulch in the spring is a low maintenance way to give a dash of color to a yard and increase your property's curb appeal. This not only beautifies the yard but makes ongoing landscape maintenance easy.

Early spring is a perfect time for pruning flowering trees and fruit trees since they will start budding soon.

Spring-Clean the Exteriors

Check for areas that could use a good power washing and blast away any residual winter grime. Walk the exterior of the property and check all the siding for any potential damage or issues from the previous Winter Season. In the process, be sure to check for any chipped or cracking paint. Exposed siding can be subject to rot, so protect it with a fresh coat of paint if needed.

Minimize Moisture

Remind Residents to look for any mold. Winter dampness can lead to mold buildup on the surface of walls within the unit. Any issues should be managed as quickly as possible. If you notice that a leak has caused mold to penetrate the structure of the unit, hire a professional to address the situation. Make certain that you are fully aware of your legal responsibilities with regard to mold in a rental home. Check state or local jurisdictions to learn more.

Take a look in your attic and crawlspace to check for any water pools, mold, signs of pests and overall condition of the areas.

SPRING CLEANING TIPS TO PASS ALONG TO RESIDENTS

Daily Tasks: Tidy any personal items; vacuum carpets and area rugs, and finally, sweep and mop flooring.

Dust: Take a trick of the trade from the pros and start at the top working your way to the bottom to address any hard-to-reach spots that you may miss in the day-to-day cleaning.

Clean Walls: Use a sponge and soap or vinegar with water to remove scuffs. Avoid dyed soaps and sponges that can cause discoloration. The Magic Eraser truly is magic! Use it for small scuffs on walls and other surfaces.

Wash Window Screens & Sills: Maintain the cleanliness of window screens and sills.

Vacuum Low-Traffic Areas: Address areas that may be neglected on regular days.

Clean Carpets: A run over from a carpet cleaner can ensure that your carpet looks as good as the day you moved in. If your lease is up for renewal, think about providing this to your Resident as an incentive to stay.

SUMMER MAINTENANCE



Summer's warm weather months bring with it some additional maintenance to be aware of. It's important to address items to maintain the overall health and condition of the home, but also provide a positive experience for your Residents. Now is the time to spruce up your common areas and perform routine maintenance and inspections that took a back burner to harsh weather and urgent requests through the colder months.

Ready Outdoor Amenities

If your property offers outdoor amenities like pools, fire pits or grills, make sure everything is clean and working well. Summertime calls for entertaining in outdoor spaces, and providing your residents with functioning features is part of the reason they chose to rent from you in the first place – don't let them down!

Get the pool in prime condition for summertime splashes. If you don't have a lifeguard on duty, check to make sure your posted safety signs are visible & aren't faded by winter weather or the sun. Check that locks & gates are in good condition.

If you want your residents to use the community space you provide, make sure the pro-pane tank is full & keep an extra on hand, in case your residents need to make a quick switch.

Service the Air Conditioner

If your property has an Air Condition unit now is the time to have it inspected and serviced. You can only service these units during warm weather so don't miss your opportunity.

Turn on / Service the Irrigation Systems

When the temperatures start to rise, it's time to turn on and service the irrigation system. Set up the schedule to save on water usage, prevent landscape damage & reduce standing water. Every system needs a good annual tune-up and the first heat wave of summer is a great time to do it, ensuring no plants will be without water when they need it most. Make sure your irrigation system is programmed to follow any water rationing regulations. Program sprinklers to optimal summer use settings to keep the landscape looking fresh.

Seasonal Pest Control

Bugs love warm weather, including ants, mosquitoes, wasps and spiders.

If you choose to use pesticides on your property to prevent insects and pests from invading the grounds, treating your property seasonally will help stop pest before they become a big problem.

Don't forget to check the nooks and crannies of the exterior of your property for wasp or hornet nests that might pop up this time of year. And advise your Residents on the best way to handle any ants that seek refuge inside your Residents' homes.

If pest control is a Resident responsibility, make sure to have a discussion with them so they know what they are responsible for.

Summer Fire Wise

Prep your property for high heat and remove fire dangers. Trim bushes and trees, take care to remove dead plants. Ensure any grills are properly ventilated and positioned away from buildings.

Double check your local laws about fire extinguisher requirements for landlords. To further protect against summer fires, tests smoke detectors and carbon monoxide alarms. Although your Residents should monitor their own detectors, maintaining these property features can easily get overlooked by passive Residents. Every detector should have a test button, and batteries should get changed biannually.

Check in With Residents

Whether you send out a seasonal resident newsletter, or send a friendly email, check in with your residents to stay connected and remind them to communicate questions or concerns they have about the rental property.

Take advantage of asking for renewals while spirits are high. Host a community event, like a BBQ or pool party & offer renewal incentives. Remind your residents about how much fun it is to live in your property; they will be more likely to stay.



FALL MAINTENANCE

As the temperatures cool, take some time to give your property some attention and visit those maintenance issues that took a back burner during the busy summer months. With a seasonal inspection and a little preventative maintenance, you can help keep your rental property in top condition.

You can also make expensive items like your roof or furnace last much longer, which means more money in your pocket.

Have the HVAC Inspected

Check that your property's heating system is inspected, serviced and cleaned at least once a year. Your heating systems work hard in winter. As the colder months approach it's best to service the unit before it's turned on for the first time and becomes an urgent issue.

Exterior Checks

Check for inexpensive maintenance issues like areas that need caulking, gutters that need debris removed, or vegetation that needs trimming to prevent future damage. Check the roof for loose or missing shingles. Fixing small issues before they cause expensive problems is key.

Inspect for Fall Safety

Autumn brings with it cold weather and, often rain. Inspect your supports and railings for decks, patios, and entry ways. Be sure that the handrails can support someone who may slip on a wet surface. If needed, you can apply a coat of stain or sealant to any wood decks or fencing to extend it's life.

Animal Proofing

Cold weather brings pests seeking refuge in the warmth of an accessible basement or attic. To prevent an infestation, caulk small holes and cover large holes with hardware cloth. The Humane Society recommends the following tips for animal proofing your property: caulk for small holes, staple or screw hardware cloth over larger holes, or make permanent repairs.

Bug screen (1/4 inch hardware cloth) will not hold up to stronger animals, such as raccoons, so 16 gauge 1 x 1 inch steel mesh is recommended for raccoons.

For squirrels, solid aluminum flashing is the exclusion material of choice.

Prep Your Attic

Check your attic's insulation to prevent ice damming on your roof, which can lead to damage and expensive repairs. Unwelcome pests can destroy insulation which will need to get repaired before winter weather makes the problem an even bigger repair.

Roof Inspection

Ice, rain, snow and wind combined with rapidly changing temperatures and humidity wreak havoc on roofs. Check for missing or loose shingles. A slightly damaged roof can lead to water exposure which cause deterioration to insulation, wood and drywall, making electrical, plumbing and HVAC systems vulnerable.

It's better to proactively deal with repairs in the fall, than discover a leaky roof during a winter storm. Due to the importance of your roof, have a licensed, certified roofing professional check the condition of your roof once a year.

Caulking

Caulking and sealing openings is one of the least expensive maintenance jobs. Openings in the structure can cause water to get in and freeze, resulting in cracks and mold build up.

Gutters

Once leaves start to fall, clean out the gutters and down-spouts around the property. Clogged gutters can create ice dams in freezing temperatures that can cause gutters to break entirely and a cleared gutter will direct water away from the property and prevent water damage to the foundation or structure. Preventative maintenance before autumn is crucial and protects your investment from storms.



WINTER MAINTENANCE

Winter chill is in the air, indicating that it's time to take care of the all-important winter maintenance tasks before storms hit full-force. Preventative winter maintenance includes protecting pipes from bursting, fixtures from crumbling, plants from dying, and your Residents from slips and falls.

Here's a look at the most important winter maintenance tasks to prevent cold weather damage this season.

Winterize Pipes

Any uninsulated pipes must be wrapped to ensure they will not freeze or burst when the temperature drops. Remind your Residents to disconnect garden hoses and insulate outdoor spigots. Tell your Residents to take special precautions if the temperature drops below 20 degrees. Instruct them to keep one or two faucets running slowly at all times to prevent the line from freezing. Tell Residents to keep the cabinet under the kitchen sink open so warm air can flow around the pipes.

Flush the Water Heater

Experts advise that you flush the water heater at least every two years to control mineral buildups that can cause damage or prevent efficiency. An old water heater will need some extra TLC; plan to schedule either a repair or a replacement, if necessary.

Prune Trees & Clear Debris

Now is the time to prune your vegetation to protect it from harsh weather, and to ensure safety for your Residents. Heavy snow and ice can weigh on unstable branches leading to dangerous breakages that could harm residents or obstruct pathways.

Check your property for any trees or shrubs in need of a trim before the cold hits full-force, and ensure that walkways are clear of slippery mulching leaves. Prevent damage from water pooling against your roof or siding by cleaning the gutters once more. Autumn winds brought leaves and debris with it that need to be addressed.

Weather-Proof Structures

Don't forget to seal windows and doors to insulate against the winter chill.

This keeps heating costs down for your Residents (ensuring their satisfaction, and that your heating system is not over-worked) as well as keeps out damaging moisture.

Attend to the Roof

If you have yet to have a certified roofing professional inspect your roof this year, now is the time. It is crucial to check for even slight damage, as this can lead to water exposure and deterioration leaving your plumbing, electrical and HVAC systems vulnerable.

While you're in the general vicinity of the chimney, be certain to inspect it (and your fireplace) before your Residents use it. Seasonal maintenance is always the perfect time to perform your yearly

or seasonal safety inspection and check in with Residents. This provides an easy venue for Residents to inform you of any maintenance concerns, and serves as an excellent time to remind Residents of their responsibilities as winter comes closer.

In addition to a verbal reminder, a simple newsletter containing winter maintenance instructions for your Residents will go a long way to ensure the protection of your properties this season. Inform Residents to inspect their fireplaces before use, remove window air conditioners, and reverse ceiling fans.

All of these simple maintenance tasks can ensure that you don't have a preventable crisis on your hands when the freezing weather hits.



RENTAL PROPERTY SAFETY CHECKLIST

You are legally required to provide safe conditions for residents within your rentals. **How Safe Are Your Rentals?**

HOUSING SAFETY LAWS:

- Structural elements must be secure & intact
- Known toxins must be managed appropriately
- Water heaters & heating systems must work appropriately
- Electrical, plumbing, heating ventilating & air conditioning systems must be operating safely
- Threat of foreseeable criminal intrusions reduced Infestations of rodents and other vermin exterminated
- Common areas (hallways, stairways, entryways) must be clean and in safe condition



Regular inspections of your property will help keep your tenants safe and allow you to identify problems before they become expensive repairs.

INTERIOR SAFETY CHECK



Doors

Doors inside & outside need to close/open properly. Otherwise you risk an intrusion or a fire hazard.



Outlets

Wall outlets should work appropriately & cover panels will be secure. Black, scorched, or dangling wires are also hints to bad wiring.



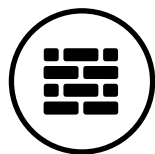
Lights

Lights should switch on & off smoothly. A delayed response could be a clue to faulty wiring which can spark a fire.



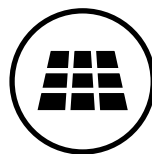
Ceilings:

Cracks or sags in the ceiling can indicate a water leak or roof damage to address before it causes issues or collapses



Walls

Check base of walls & look for cracks or holes that could let vermin in the walls. Examine for cracks & water stains.



Floors

Sloping floors can indicate structural damage/foundation problems & should be repaired or replaced ASAP. Stains & soft spots in the flooring can also reveal rot or water damage.

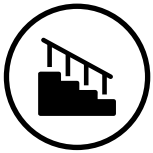


Fireplace

Sweep the chimney to remove any debris that has built up during the warm weather hiatus. Clogged chimneys run the risk of igniting a chimney fire or poses ventilation risks.

Schedule regular safety inspections at least once a year, and again in between lease terms to provide safe conditions for your tenants.

EXTERIOR SAFETY CHECK



Walkways & Stairwells

Make sure all railings are secure and anti slip or caution guards are in place. Walkways and common areas should also be well lit and free of obstacle or debris.



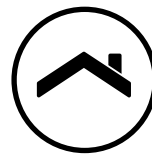
Windows

Wall outlets should work appropriately & cover panels will be secure. Black, scorched, or dangling wires are also hints to bad wiring.



Lights

Lights should switch on & off smoothly. A delayed response could be a clue to faulty wiring which can spark a fire.



Roof Inspection

Cracks or sags in the ceiling could indicate a water leak or roof damage that must be addressed before it causes more issues or collapses on a tenant.



Landscape

Check base of walls & look for cracks or holes that could let vermin in the walls. Examine for cracks & water stains.

Proper maintenance can extend the life of your appliances, postponing expensive replacements.

APPLIANCE SAFETY CHECK



Smoke & CO Alarms

During any routine maintenance, ensure smoke & CO alarms are working properly. Tenants can forget to change batteries, or remove them altogether.



Refrigerator

Make sure the refrigerator maintains an appropriate temperature to keep food safely stored.



HVAC System

Heating systems should be inspected, serviced & cleaned at least once a year. Remind tenants to change air filters regularly & provide extra filters to make sure it gets done.



Water Heater

Ensure the temperature is set below 120° F to prevent scalding. Test safety relief valve once a year to ensure proper operation & flush the system to remove sediment that cause system failure.



Washer/Dryer

Lint & debris can build up in dryer vents causing damage or fires. While the dryer is running, check that the exhaust is coming out. Clear blockages by vacuuming the hose or calling a professional.



Water Pressure

Check water supply & pressure on all sinks and shower. Does water flow properly? Flush the toilet to make sure it drains and refills properly without leaking.



Stove/Oven

Make sure each electric heating element works properly or check that gas lines are clear & burners ignite appropriately for gas stoves.



Extras

Check any other supplied kitchen appliance to make sure they are functioning (dishwasher, garbage disposal, etc.)

WRAPPING UP SEASONAL MAINTENANCE

While regular maintenance work may not be the most exciting task on your to-do list, prudent landlords jump at the opportunity to protect their pocketbooks in the long run. Landlords and property managers are responsible for ensuring that conditions are habitable and small repairs now can easily save hundreds if not thousands of dollars worth of damages later.

Seasonal maintenance in conjunction with yearly safety inspections will keep your margins high and your Residents happy. Property management software and calendar tools are helpful to set reminders that will send notifications about scheduling a maintenance day each season.

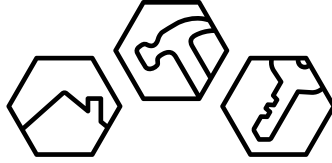
You can also remind yourself to send an email to your renters each season to change their air filter and perform other Resident maintenance tasks.

Protect against damage during your seasonal maintenance by using that time to check in with your Residents; a quick check-in with your renters might remind them to report an issue that they might otherwise not worry about mentioning.

Need More Info About Seasonal Maintenance

Check out The Joseph Group's blog for tips and tricks, articles on habitability requirements and articles outlining maintenance tasks to remind your renters to complete.





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Check out The Joseph Group Blog

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