

# Monthly Tips February 2009

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It's the weekend and you have a whole list of household chores to do. Oh, we know you'd rather be golfing or playing tennis or watching TV, but keeping your home in good shape is important. Your home may be the biggest investment you will ever make. Taking good care of it with regular maintenance is necessary to maintain its value and ensure it will provide a comfortable, safe shelter for you and your family for a long time.



Here is a **Home Maintenance Quiz** that will test your maintenance knowledge. While this quiz does not address every home maintenance project, it does provide helpful tips and reminders for chores you may have overlooked.

1. How often do forced-air furnace filters need to be changed?
2. What part of the faucet usually needs to be replaced when you have a water leak?
3. Should you run hot or cold water through your garbage disposal?
4. How often should the moving parts of garage doors be oiled?
5. What tools can you use to unclog your drains?
6. What tool can be used to unclog a toilet?
7. What faucet part needs to be cleaned every three to four months?
8. What can you use for traction on icy sidewalks, steps and driveways?
9. Where should the fire in your fireplace be built?
10. What will prevent soot and add color to the fire in your fireplace?
11. Where should your firewood be stored?
12. What helps keep unpainted concrete floors easy to keep clean?
13. What should you use to clean unpainted concrete floors?
14. When can you clean hardwood floors with water?
15. Do hardwood floors need to be waxed?
16. What is the best polish for vinyl floors?
17. When is basement condensation at its maximum?
18. Why should noisy water pipes be fixed promptly?
19. Why should frozen pipes be thawed slowly?
20. How often should your roof be inspected?
21. What should be regularly checked on your security system?
22. To ensure your safety, what household equipment uses batteries that must be checked regularly to make sure they are operable?
23. What do you use to fill nail holes and cracks in plaster walls and gypsum wallboard?
24. What is the white powdery substance that develops on masonry walls?
25. At what temperature should your water heater be set?
26. How often do skylights need to be inspected?
27. What is a simple solution you can use to wash extremely dirty exterior windows?
28. What can you use to help a window slide easily?
29. What should you look for when you inspect your siding yearly?

Answers on Page 2

**Life Safety**  
test your smoke  
sensors each month.



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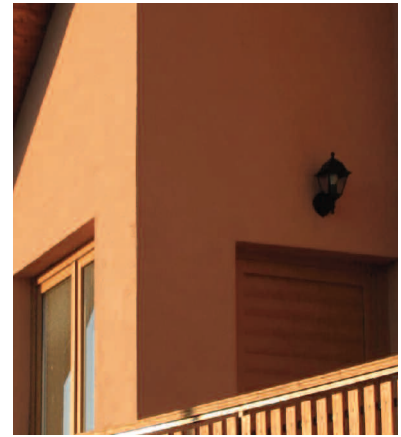


## **...ANSWERS...HOME MAINTENANCE QUIZ**

1. At least every three months during the heating season.
2. The washer.
3. Cold water.
4. Every three months.
5. A plunger and a plumber's snake.
6. Coil spring-steel auger.
7. Aerator—the screen inside the end of the faucet.
8. Cat litter or sand—never use salt because it damages the pavement.
9. On the andirons or grate, never on the fireplace floor.
10. Throw in a handful of salt.
11. Outside, away from your house and not directly on the ground.
12. Concrete sealer.
13. A solution of 4 to 6 tablespoons of washing soda in a gallon of hot water. Mix scouring powder to the solution for tough jobs.
14. When the floors have a polyurethane finish.
15. Hardwood floors that do not have a polyurethane finish probably will need to be waxed periodically. Use liquid or paste "spirit" wax.
16. Water emulsion wax.
17. In new homes because gallons of water went into the concrete of basement walls.
18. The condition that causes noisy pipes may be accompanied by vibration that can cause fittings to loosen and leak.
19. Frozen pipes should be thawed slowly to prevent

the formation of steam, which could cause the pipe to burst.

20. A qualified roofer should inspect your roof every three years.
21. The alarms and circuit breakers should be checked to make sure they are in working order and the sensors should be inspected one by one.
22. Smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.
23. Spackling.
24. Efflorescence sometimes appears on masonry walls. It is crystallized soluble salts that can be removed by scrubbing with water and a stiff brush.



25. 120 degrees Fahrenheit
26. Skylights should be inspected each time your roof is inspected so leaks don't develop from cracks and interruptions around its seals, caulking and flashings.
27. A solution of equal parts vinegar and water or 3 tablespoons of denatured alcohol per quart of warm water. Use a piece of crumpled newspaper to wash the glass to avoid lint left behind by paper towels.
28. Rub the channel with a piece of paraffin.
29. Determine if wood-sided homes need to be repainted; check to see if the caulking around the windows and doors has split and cracked, and replace the caulk; clean the mildew; trim shrubbery away so it does not touch the siding.

Source: National Association of Home Builders. For further information about this organization, please visit [www.nahb.org](http://www.nahb.org).