

A Message from the President of the Youngstown Columbiana Association of REALTORS®

Fall To-Do List: Prepare Your Home for the Upcoming Winter

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The smell of pumpkin spice is in the air, and you know what that means...Fall is here and winter is right around the corner. For many homeowners, Fall is the perfect time to get your home prepared for the winter season. But where do we begin? Here are 3 areas of focus with tips on how to get your home prepared for the snowy season:

Prepping Your Outdoor Space

- **Cover Outdoor Furniture.** Keep your outdoor furniture looking brand new by ensuring you have it all properly covered and or stored away, protecting it from extreme temperatures and snow.
- **Prep Your Pool.** Many homeowners start to close their pools after the Labor Day holiday. Begin prepping your pool now so it is ready to be completely closed in the coming weeks.
- **Check Your Gutters.** If your home has lots of trees, you know that the leaves will begin falling very soon. Be sure to clean your gutters out of all leaves and debris before the start of winter.
- **Properly Store All Outdoor Items.** Decorations, tools, grills, lawn equipment, outdoor toys, and garden hoses should all be disconnected and stored away nicely for the winter. Make some time to clean these items so when you pull them out in the Spring, they are ready to go.
- **Trim Back Your Landscaping.** Set aside time now to trim back the plants that need to be trimmed during the winter months, so they are ready to bloom again next Spring. Before you know it, the weather will change and it will be too late.

Prepping Your Indoor Space

- **Ensure a proper seal.** If you noticed that you had a draft last winter from any of your windows or doors, now is the time to get those sealed or replaced. This will help with heating costs as well.
- **Test Your Furnace.** Kick on your furnace to make sure it is running properly and heating efficiently before the temps begin to drop.
- **Prep Your Fireplace.** If you are one to enjoy winter nights by the fire or use a wood burner to heat your home, you want to ensure that your fireplace is ready to “fire up” this winter. Contact a local expert for help if you are unsure of what to do.
- **Change Your Batteries.** Change your batteries in your smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors. Fall is the perfect time to do this to ensure you have the proper alert systems in place before you begin running your furnace or fireplace.

“Rev Up” Your Winter Gear

- **Start Your Snowblower.** Be sure to start your snowblower now to guarantee it will fire right up when needed. A full tank of gas or a full charge will be an essential task to complete now.
- **Grab Your Car Emergency Kit.** Now is the perfect time to fill your car with emergency items if you get stranded on the road in cold, icy/snowy weather.
- **Get those winter coats, hats, gloves, and boots ready now!** It’s time to refresh or stock up on all your winter gear, helping you to stay warm, cozy, and comfortable during the cold winter months.

By focusing on these 3 main areas and checking items off your list, you will feel better prepared for Winter. If you are unable to tackle some large jobs or you're just unsure of the proper ways to handle these tasks, be sure to consult with a local expert to get assistance. And if you are thinking about selling your home altogether, the Fall and Winter months are STILL a great time to do so here in Northeast Ohio. Contact a local REALTOR® to begin the process of selling and getting you into a new home for the upcoming Holiday season!

Michael Stevens is the 2023 President of the Youngstown Columbiana Association of REALTORS®