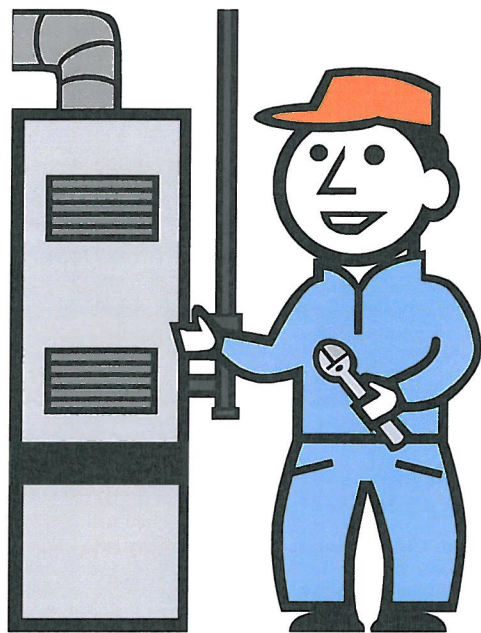


# YOUR HOME

JAN/FEB  
2014

TIPS AND TRENDS FOR HOMEOWNERS, BUYERS AND SELLERS



## WINTER TO-DO LIST

**K**ick off the New Year with a fresh attitude about home maintenance. After all, you don't want to wait until the furnace conks out before you deal with it. Keep track of when you need to schedule service and how to keep things in good working order with The Weather Channel's to-do list for January.

First, take a snow day to organize your files and review warranties and manuals for equipment, appliances and other tools. There you'll find how often to check or replace items.

Need a new washer and dryer? Post-holiday sales this month can also help you snatch a bargain.

Take a room-by-room inventory with photos or video. In the case of fires, floods or other disasters, a record of your possessions can be helpful when filing insurance claims.

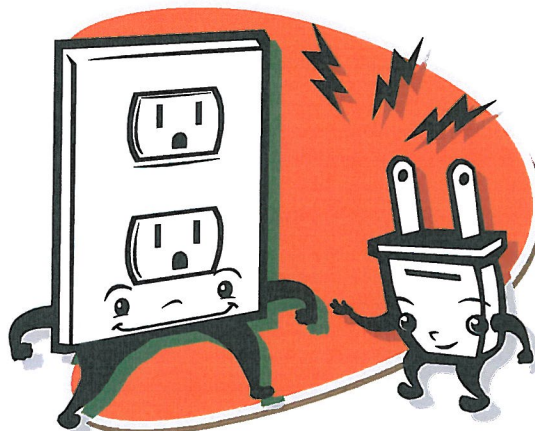
Examine furniture and cabinets for loose knobs and hinges, and repair as needed. Fix squeaks in floors and stairs.

Also this month, keep crawl space vents open to control condensation beneath the house, and check insulation around outside pipes that are exposed to freezing weather.

## FIRE FIGHT

Tangled extension cords? Power strips galore? Your home's wiring system might be working overtime with all of the new gadgets you received for Christmas — and it might be at risk for igniting a fire. Straighten out these wiring problems and more with tips from This Old House.

Have a licensed electrician walk through your home every five years to look at the wire insulation and the service panel and for any code violations. If you're doing it yourself, start by turning off the circuit at the main breaker panel.



Code requires outlets within 4 feet of a door and every 12 feet after that. Extension cords can be useful, but keep in mind that smaller-gauged cords can overheat and start a fire if overused. Adding more outlets can run about \$100 per outlet on first levels and \$200 upstairs.

Another fire hazard is overlampping, in which light fixtures have a bulb with higher-than-recommended wattage installed. Check the fixtures' wattage limit or use bulbs that are smaller than 60 watts.

Flickering lights aren't just annoying, but they could be a sign of wire trouble, too. The outdoor fitting where overhead cables from the power line come into the house, or frayed wiring in the weatherhead, causes the short when the cable moves. Call your electric utility provider to have the weatherhead replaced for free.

## Christopher Tenggren

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## POSITIVE ENERGY

Was your last gas bill higher than usual? Cold air might be finding its way into your house. Conserve energy, save money and stay toasty with these tips from the Department of Energy.

Let the sun shine in! During the day, open the curtains on the south side of your house. Feel a draft? Seal a clear plastic sheet to the inside of window frames or install drapes or shades that are tight and insulating. Caulking and weatherstripping windows can also keep your home warmer.

The heat is on, so keep your heating systems up and running as efficiently as possible. Follow the recommended maintenance schedules and change furnace filters once a month.

Fireplaces also can cause heat loss. Keep the flue damper tightly closed unless you're burning a fire. Grates made of C-shaped metal tubes and tempered glass doors can help keep the room warm when the flue is open.

## Say Yes to CRS

Buying a home is one of the biggest and most emotional decisions you will ever make. So it's important to work with someone who can provide sound advice and a steady, guiding hand when you need it. That's why a CRS agent is the best person for the job.

A Certified Residential Specialist (CRS) is among the top 3 percent of all agents in the country. CRS agents have achieved a high volume of transactions and advanced training in areas such as business planning, finance, marketing and technology. They must also maintain membership in the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® and abide by its Code of Ethics. Why work with anyone else when you can work with a CRS agent?



## DID YOU KNOW?



Forty-five percent of Americans make New Year's resolutions. Among the most popular goals: lose weight, get organized, spend less and save more, stay fit and healthy, and quit smoking.

Source: History Channel

Do you know someone who is thinking about buying or selling a home? **Please mention my name.**

This newsletter is for informational purposes only and should not be substituted for legal or financial advice. If you are currently working with another real estate agent or broker, it is not a solicitation for business.



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