

## TIME TO WINTERIZE YOUR HOME!

It's usually second nature to have our air conditioning units inspected before the summer heat sets in, but winter has a way of sneaking up on us. Preoccupied with the holiday season, we often forget about the effects winter can have on our home. Nothing is worse than needing to make home repairs at a time when finances are tight and family and friends are staying for a visit.

Luckily, we've just entered fall, which means now is the time to have different areas of your home inspected to help prevent unforeseen issues and headaches down the road. The Nevada State Contractors Board offers this list as a starting point:

### **WATER HEATER**

If you find that your shower lasts longer than your hot water supply, there are several potential fixes, many of which you can try yourself. You can try wrapping pipes and sheathing your water heater in a jacket to insulate them from the elements. It may be necessary to increase the temperature setting on your water heater to achieve the same results. No matter what the climate, flushing your system can rid it of sediment that impedes maximum performance.

If after all these efforts your water still takes too long to heat, runs out too soon or costs substantially more than in previous winters, it may be time to call a professional for service or replacement. Remember that only licensed Nevada contractors may install or repair water heaters. Be sure to verify a building permit was pulled for installation of new water heaters, and always have a building official come out to inspect it for your safety, which is required.



### **ROOF**

It may be tempting to wait until spring to call for repairs to your shingle, tile, or wood shake roof. But freeze-thaw cycles and other winter conditions only exacerbate the potential for leaks and further damage. Cracked tiles, curling shingles, and missing or loose pieces should be replaced as soon as

**WINTERIZE** *from page 1*

possible. If you are experiencing leaks, hire a licensed Nevada contractor to inspect your roof, paying particular attention to the flashing around the chimney, gables, and other architectural features where leaking is common.

Northern Nevada residents should be aware that while roof repairs cannot be completed if there is standing snow, a good licensed roofer can safely remove snow and ice dams to repair leaks and prevent more from developing.

**FURNACES and CENTRAL HEATING**

A malfunctioning heating system creates much more than an inconvenience. Pipes can freeze within hours, gas and carbon monoxide leaks create even more immediate health concerns. While all repairs should be left to licensed experts, homeowners can perform routine

maintenance duties to ensure their furnaces, central heating elements, and delivery systems are working at peak efficiency. Change the filters every three months; dirty filters force your heater to work extra hard, slowing delivery of warm air and taxing components. A programmable thermostat will automate your home's heating, saving money by reducing wasted heat. Move obstructions – furniture, draperies, decorations, storage containers, etc. – away from vents to ensure proper delivery and dispersal of heat.

If you find yourself turning to a professional for assistance, the Contractors Board encourages you to always hire a licensed Nevada contractor. By doing so, you have the option to file a complaint up to four years after the work is performed if you are dissatisfied with the workmanship of the contractor you hired. Upon receiving your complaint, the Contractors Board opens an investigation into your concerns in an effort to determine if options for remedy are available.

Verifying a license is quick and convenient. Go to the Board's website: [www.nscb.nv.gov](http://www.nscb.nv.gov), click the "License Search" tab in the middle of the homepage, and then search for a contractor by license number or company name. Ensuring your contractor has an "Active" license status before signing a contract affords you the full services of the Board should issues arise with your project.

Please never hesitate to contact our office with any questions or for assistance. We are more than happy to serve you!

Southern Nevada: (702) 486-1100

Northern Nevada: (775) 688-1141

E-Mail: [CustomerService@nscb.state.nv.us](mailto:CustomerService@nscb.state.nv.us)



**HOMEOWNER  
PRO TIP:  
OBTAIN 3  
BIDS BEFORE  
SELECTING A  
CONTRACTOR**



## Top Tips for DIY Home Safety

An article by [Parent Giving](#)

With just a small investment in time and a few dollars, you can make your home safer and more comfortable by following these do-it-yourself tips. All of the home modification suggestions below are easily implemented by you, the homeowner, and do not require the services of a professional contractor. So why wait? Modify your home today and feel happier and more secure.

### **Top DIY Tips For Home Safety: All Rooms**

1. Keep emergency numbers (911, doctor, relatives, neighbors) in large print near each phone.
2. Arrange furniture to create unobstructed pathways and strategically place heavy, sturdy furniture pieces for resting and support.
3. Try to create bright, uniform lighting by adding lights to dark areas and changing light bulbs to a higher wattage (without exceeding manufacturer's maximum).
4. Ensure ample reading and task lights in the bedroom, kitchen and living room; consider under-counter lights and natural spectrum desktop or magnifier floor lamps.
5. Remove personal items, decorations and any clutter on floors, tables and counters.
6. Clean out and reorganize contents of closets, cabinets, shelves and pantries for easy access of the most frequently used items.
7. Remove throw rugs, but if you can't part with them, secure with double-sided tape, tacks or a non-skid mat.
8. Remove or rearrange electrical cords and extension cords that interfere with pathways.
9. Make sure electrical outlets are not overloaded with plugs; consider switching to a surge protector.
10. Make sure smoke/carbon monoxide detectors have new batteries, are in working order and are placed near bedroom, kitchen and utility area where your boiler, furnace, hot water heater and washer/dryer may be located.
11. Keep a working fire extinguisher in the home that is easily accessible, preferably near the kitchen, and know how to operate it.



### **Top DIY Tips For Home Safety: Kitchen**

1. Move frequently used small appliances to the counter or waist-height cupboard and near an outlet.
2. Consider upgrading to small appliances with an automatic shut-off feature such as a coffee maker, electric kettle, toaster oven and iron.
3. Reduce the risk of fire around the stovetop area by relocating potentially flammable fabrics such as curtains, aprons and dish towels; and refrain from wearing clothing with billowy or wide sleeves when cooking on the stove.
4. Reduce the risk of burns by placing a heat-resistant surface near the stove, oven and microwave for placing hot pans and dishes; keep potholders and mitts handy.
5. If you must use a step stool, make sure your foot stool

*See SAFETY, page 4*

## ***SAFETY*** from page 3

has a support handle and never use a chair in place of a step stool.

### **Top DIY Tips For Home Safety: Living Room**

1. Make sure curtains and shades are easy to operate; and consider adding sheers to reduce glare.
2. Upgrade to a lighted, big-button universal remote control to easily operate the television and entertainment system.
3. Make sure your favorite chair or sofa is easy to sit down in and get up from, and has sturdy arms for support; otherwise consider a lift chair or uplift seat device.
4. **Top DIY Tips For Home Safety: Bedroom**
5. Use a sturdy nightstand with ample surface for a lamp, phone, glasses and water; use a drawer to store a flashlight and extra batteries.
6. Use nightlights with sensors that illuminate your path from your bed to the bathroom and to the hallway.
7. Have a sturdy chair with arms in your dressing area for support and comfort while putting on shoes, socks, pants, jewelry, etc.
8. Ensure your bed is high enough to get in and out of easily; consider adding sturdy wooden risers and remove casters.
9. If possible, consider relocating your bedroom to the first floor of your home.

### **Top DIY Tips For Home Safety: Bathroom**

1. Install non-slip strips or a suction-cup bath mat on the floor inside the shower and tub.
2. Place a non-slip, absorbent floor mat outside the shower and tub to soak up excess water and dry the bottom of your feet.
3. Consider using DIY suction cup grab bars with

green-light safety indicator, a tub rail and bath transfer bench or bath lift inside the tub.

4. Install an elevated toilet seat with support arms to help with sitting and standing.
5. Make sure toilet paper is comfortably within reach and extra rolls are handy in case you run out; consider installing an L-shaped holder that makes changing the roll easy.

### **Top DIY Tips For Home Safety: Exterior**

1. Mount battery-operated, motion-detector lights outside to illuminate doors and walkways.
2. Make sure address numbers are visible at all exterior doors and easily seen from the street in the event of an emergency.
3. Clean garage floor to remove slick spots, pick up any sharp objects (nails, screws, shovels) and use a non-slip floor mat to wipe moisture and debris off shoes and boots before entering the home.
4. Clear a path, free of overgrown grass, bushes and shrubs, to a sturdy mailbox that is easy to open and close.
5. Make sure garden tools are easily reached from a flat-footed stance; and use a retractable reel to keep hoses coiled.
6. Consider hiring a local service for wintertime ice and snow removal, spring and summer yard maintenance and fall leaf removal and gutter cleaning.

For more extensive home modifications such as ramps, grab bars, curbless showers, recessed lighting and wider doorways, just to name a few, hire a reputable company that is certified in aging-in-place solutions.

**HAVE A QUESTION? WE'RE READY TO ASSIST YOU!**

**[www.nscb.nv.gov](http://www.nscb.nv.gov)**

#### **Northern Nevada**

5390 Kietzke Lane, Suite 102  
Reno, NV 89511  
775-688-1141

#### **Southern Nevada**

2310 Corporate Circle, Suite 200  
Henderson, NV 89074  
702-486-1100