

Certain Renovations Require Licensed Trades



Sometimes, despite your do-it-yourself skills or confidence, a repair or renovation requires a professional. In some cases, the municipal bylaw requires that a tradesperson perform certain work, and/or that a building inspector ultimately approve it. Moreover, insurance companies may not honour claims that stem from uncertified plumbing and electrical work, or installations involving combustible fuels. Sometimes this can extend to foundation work, roofing, or landscape drainage. So, before you embark on a DIY project, or rely on a friend or acquaintance to proceed with work normally completed by a professional, be sure to check your insurance policy, and consult your local building code for permit and inspection requirements.

Clean or Replace Air Filters and Fan Screens

It's advisable to clean or replace your home's air filters and screens at least once a year to help keep your indoor environment safe from mould, dust mites and other allergens. But don't stop at your heating, ventilation and cooling/air-conditioning systems. Think of all the other filters and screens that need cleaning, such as those in humidifiers, range hoods, bathroom fans, and windows. Unfortunately, homeowners often neglect to clean or replace their range hood filters. This can lead to a thick buildup of greasy residue that could easily compromise the important function of removing cooking gases, odours and humidity from the stovetop area. The



result can be unhealthy air trapped in your kitchen, not to mention an accumulation of a thin film on your walls, ceilings and countertops. Likewise, bathroom fans and window screens can trap layers of dust over time that will hinder the free flow of air to and from the rooms you want to have well ventilated.

Property Upkeep is Essential for Your Home Investment

This may be the ideal time of year to take a few steps to check for any major maintenance issues in and around your home that could result in costly repairs down the road. Under favourable weather conditions, inspect your roof as closely and safely as possible, including peaks, valleys and overhangs. Look for wind damage and signs of deterioration, plus dried-out sealants around vents, pipes and chimneys. Check eaves to ensure your soffit and gutters are intact, and inspect door and window frames, awnings and foundations. Also, make sure utility connections are not vulnerable to wear and tear from harsh weather, birds or animals. Inside, check your attic, exterior walls, windows and doors for signs of



mould, rot or leakage such as drafts. Finally, when it rains, walk around your house to confirm that run-off is directed away from your foundation. For any homeowner not able or inclined to do his or her own maintenance investigation, a professional home inspection may alert you to problems that need attention.

Carpet Cleaning Tips

If you have carpets, you're bound to have carpet stains, either now or in the future. Although most of us don't keep professional grade carpet cleaning solvents or equipment at home, there are a number of basic steps you can take to combat sudden stains, by utilizing common household products that are readily available. Remember, the quicker you act on a stain, the better chance you'll have of removing it. Always dab or blot the stain towards its centre with a clean cloth, but don't rub or scrub. If a cleansing agent is necessary, start with something basic, such as soda water, or a 50/50 solution of vinegar and water. You could also try making a paste with baking soda and water, or salt and vinegar, and then working it gently into the stain with an old toothbrush. Allow it to dry before vacuuming. If you need to escalate your efforts, consider a gentle soap solution, such as shaving cream, dish detergent or hydrogen peroxide. Always pre-test any solution on an inconspicuous area first.

