

# Celebrating Your Home

## PRESERVING YOUR BIGGEST ASSET

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FOR MOST ORANGE COUNTY RESIDENTS, OUR HOME is our largest investment asset and more often than not, we neglect our most prized possession. As your home celebrates yearly anniversaries, there are certain maintenance duties that if done correctly and in a timely manner can increase your home's value and eliminate some unexpected costs down the road. Here is a list of some of the recommended upkeep items to protect your home and your wallet.

### Annual Maintenance

- Make sure all your rain gutters and drains are clear allowing water to run off in the designated areas. We recommend tackling this prior to winter and the rainy season. When your gutters get blocked, water will start to disperse in areas that are not properly drained. This can eventually cause the soil surrounding your house to settle which could result in future foundation issues.
- Ideally, homeowners should change out their heating and air conditioning filters every 6 months. This helps your home's heating and cooling system operate at peak efficiency and create a clean indoor environment for your family. Filters can easily be found at hardware stores and will end up saving you hundreds of dollars in costly repairs.
- Unfortunately some of us have to deal with hard water in our homes—meaning it has higher doses of calcium and magnesium in the water. Even with soft water, deposits build up over time in faucets and showerheads. If you have reduced water flow or water is spraying in the wrong direction it's most likely because of build-up. Make sure to check for water deposits every couple months.



- It is also important to flush your water heater of these hard water sediments to avoid damage and bacteria build-up. Flushing your water heater a few times a year can also help prevent leaks and ensure it's working efficiently.

### Every 5 Years

- In addition to the annual responsibilities, it is important to maintain all the wood on your home. The best way to do this is with paint. Consider painting all of the trim on your home to avoid water damage, dry rot and termites. This will seal any existing cracks helping to protect the wood from additional damage.

### Between 10-15 Years

- If your water heater is 10 years or older, it is probably only running at 50% of its efficiency. Good news is that you have options. Gas or electric water heaters are still going to be the most economical, but if your wallet allows, splurge on the tankless. It will be about double to





price, but will last twice as long and save you money in the long run.

- Consider the condition of your home's floor coverings whether that's wood, tile or carpet every 10 years. Your family's lifestyle can dramatically increase or decrease the amount of time between replacements, so this may need to be considered every 5 years.

## Between 15-20 Years

- After about 20 years, it's probably time for a kitchen and or bathroom remodel. If your home was built in the early 90s there's a good chance your kitchen cabinets are oak and your appliances are on their last legs. This can be a minor kitchen remodel with new cabinets and counters, or a complete overhaul. With changing living habits, more homeowners are opting for adjusting room layouts to update their home to modern day "great room" designs.
- A very general way to look at appliance replacement is the 5-10-15 Rule: five years old, do not replace; 10 years

old, run the numbers; 15 years old, probably time to replace. This applies to the five major energy-consuming appliances in most homes—refrigerators, air conditioning, furnaces, water heaters and washing machines.

## Between 25-50 Years

- One of the most costly home maintenance replacements will be your roof. If you have shingles you should be able to make them last 25-30 years. Tile is much more durable and will be able to resist replacement for closer to 50 years. If you are completing interior remodeling, and your roof is in question, make it your first priority. Every single remodeling task you undertake from drywall to paint will be ruined if you don't protect it first.

This list includes some of the major ticket items in your home's maintenance plan. However, don't forget that caring about your house is a daily process. Continue to preserve your landscaping and try to practice daily cleaning. Small, daily tasks will result in a well-presented home for your family to enjoy for years to come.