



PROPERTY MANAGEMENT EXPERTS SM

“Property Management Is Our Only Business”

Plan Fall/Winter Maintenance Early

Thinking about winter maintenance needs for your investment before the season hits can often save you money. An extra benefit is that it can help to keep tenants happy. For example, if you wait until the rains or winds come and the roof leaks, you will be competing with everyone else to have the work done because roofing contractors are at their busiest. This can mean major delays and higher costs. When the weather is better, contractors may not charge as much because their workload is lighter and they want more work. Tenants can become unhappy with the inconvenience of a leaky roof but if the problem is severe enough, there can be loss of rent because of uninhabitable or unsafe conditions.

There are many areas where early maintenance can be a benefit. Here are items to consider during summer and fall months to see how you could avoid unnecessary repair expense or tenant problems.

Heating

Heating is simply a necessity and in the eyes of the legal system, it is a requirement for health and safety for tenants. You could experience loss of rent if the tenants are without heat for an unreasonable amount of time. Having the heating system checked out yearly before cold weather hits could avoid bigger maintenance problems and making necessary repairs can prolong the life of the heating unit.

Walls, foundations, windows, doors, and plumbing

Checking walls, foundations, windows, doors, and plumbing can reveal problems with moisture, leaking, cracking, drafts, and more. It is truly important to avoid water and moisture problems that could lead to toxic mold – one of today’s biggest liabilities for investors.

Gutters

Having gutters and downspouts cleaned and if necessary, repaired after leaves fall and before heavy rains hit can reduce damage and avoid other problems. Many landlords want tenants to do this but it can become a safety issue. Having a qualified vendor handle the problem can be safer and more cost effective.

Roofs

It pays to have the roof checked for missing materials, hanging branches, and any other damage. Have repairs completed before winter weather hits to avoid unnecessary damage and expense

inside of the property. You may not be able to avoid winter storms but the roof may hold up better if maintenance is completed. Proper maintenance can also extend the life of the roof.

Chimneys, fireplaces, and smoke alarms/detectors

If your investment has a fireplace and chimney, having a yearly checkup can prevent fires and/or other safety issues. Of course, a working smoke alarm/detector is an absolute must.

Driveways and sidewalks

If there are badly damaged or cracked driveways and sidewalks this can be a safety issue. Many times you cannot repair them during bad weather, leaving it open to more liability. Contractors are more likely to give you a better price during better weather.

Porches, patios, decks, retaining walls, fences, and landscaping

Again, these are items where necessary repairs can extend their life. Major tree roots can cause many problems, such as broken sidewalks, raised driveways, and problems with sewers. You can often avoid these liabilities. You may not be experiencing any maintenance problems with your investment property at this time. However, it pays to review where you could avoid larger expense and avoid liability by addressing them early. You can start planning for winter maintenance now and then plan an earlier start next year as well.