

MAINTENANCE: Gutters & Covers

One of the least enjoyable tasks on your property is to clean the gutters. No one likes to do it, but gutter maintenance is a chore that must be done to clean the leaves and debris and allow water to flow freely away from the roof and siding.

1. **Clean covered or hooded gutters at least once every two years**, and more often if trees are near your roof.
2. **Remove leaves and debris from gutters and downspouts.**
3. **Practice pest prevention** by keeping firewood away from the house, trimming shrubs, and repairing rotten or broken woodwork.
4. **Remove any wasp nests hanging from eaves or overhangs.**
5. **Drain and winterize exterior plumbing**, including hoses and in-ground sprinkler systems.

➤ **Install leaf guards on the gutters (if not already installed).**

A growing trend to prevent more falling leaves from accumulating and undoing your hard work is to install leaf guards on the gutters. They are relatively inexpensive and can be installed easily without professional help depending on the size and height of the task at hand.

➤ **Cleaning downspouts**

You can use a hose to rinse the gutters and send water through the downspouts. You may need to use a chimney or pipe-cleaning brush to further clear the downspouts. Rake up and remove any debris that you remove from the spouts and gutters.

➤ **Inspect gutters.**

Inspecting your gutters and covers for

Be sure to seal any small cracks in your gutters with a sealant or strong adhesive. If you have steel gutters, be sure to check for any exposed metal as bare metal tends to rust faster. Paint over any exposed areas as a rusted gutter will likely need replacing.

Regularly check the alignment of your gutters after experiencing inclement weather

➤ **Trim branches.**

Trim back any branches from the gutters or that might be touching your roof. Trees and branches grow over the summer months and can be directly over your troughs.

➤ **General debris**

When the wind blows, the leaves and seeds are falling straight into the gutters and clogging them up, but also expect that all sorts of debris could work their way into your gutters depending on where your property is located. Even the smallest holed gutter covers can accumulate debris over time.

Check the gutters drainage rate

Taking care of your gutters each spring and fall by cleaning them out is a decision that will help pay dividends down the road plus make your property look better. Additional accumulation of debris, leaves, sticks and dirt will eventually lead to damaging or discoloring your roof or siding.

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