

Preventing Pricy Home Repairs

Life is going along smoothly until one sweltering day your AC gives out. As a homeowner, you know untimely home repairs like this can knock on your door at any time. Keep an eye on these key areas that can cause some of the most expensive repairs:

Foundation – Ensure elevation slopes away from the house for drainage, and if there are long periods of drought, put soaker hoses around the perimeter of the house so the soil doesn't get too dry, to prevent shrinkage.

Roof – Have your roof inspected twice a year, especially after extreme storms and before the winter.

Hot water heater – Schedule an annual service, unless you are handy and have the knowledge and time to maintain it yourself.

HVAC – Replace filters every 3 months and remove clutter around the inside and outside units. Have your HVAC system serviced annually.

Water damage – Clean gutters, and fix any leaks right away, as



they can lead to other costly damage repairs such as mould removal.

Electrical repairs – Replace outdated wiring, which is not meant to handle the electrical load a typical household has now. If you notice the underlying metal wire, it's time to replace it.

As the saying goes, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure."



4 Reasons to Switch to a Heat Pump

As climate change continues to make its presence loud and clear, eco-friendly innovations like heat pumps continue to gain popularity.

Heat pumps heat your home by transferring heat from the outside air indoors, and cool by extracting the heat inside to outside. There are significant benefits heat pumps have over traditional HVAC systems, such as:

1. **Save \$\$\$** – They may have a hefty upfront cost, but long-term heat pumps cut down your monthly electrical bill because they are much more energy-efficient.
2. **Improves air quality** – Heat pumps continuously circulate air and offer humidity control, helping to purify and ventilate the air, whereas traditional HVAC systems only regulate temperature.
3. **Better for the environment** – Heat pumps use electricity, producing fewer greenhouse gas emissions than traditional HVAC systems, which typically rely on fossil fuels.
4. **Can increase home's value** – Because of energy bill savings, and with more people concerned about their effect on climate change, heat pumps can increase your home's value.

Thinking about making the switch? The fall is an ideal time to install a heat pump since the weather tends to be more moderate, so you are less likely to need temperature control during the installation. Additionally, depending on your area there may be significant government incentives available to you.

Pest-Proofing Your Home

Whether it's mice or centipedes or some other unwanted guest, you may have dealt with a pest issue somewhere along the line, and if not, ongoing preventative measures can keep it that way. To help avoid creepy crawlers taking up residence in your home, read on for some helpful tips.

- Keep up on your housekeeping. A single crumb might seem inconsequential to you but could be a big feast for a repulsive pest.
- Keep food stored in airtight containers. Some pests can get through thin plastic or cardboard packaging.
- Don't leave standing water around and fix leaky faucets immediately.
- Seal cracks near windows, doors, and baseboards.
- Keep your waste containers clean and the lids tightly closed.
- Clear leaves from the foundation and gutters.
- Declutter. Small, dark spaces are ideal nesting spots.
- To dissuade bed bugs, clean bedding often and use light-coloured sheets so it's easier to spot them early.



Signs of rodent activity could include pellet-like droppings, evidence of gnaw marks, tiny holes in the floor or wall, bad odours, or scurrying and scratching sounds, especially at night.

If you notice any signs of pest activity, nip it in the bud as soon as possible. Left unchecked, pests can cause structural damage to your home, in addition to spreading disease to you and your loved ones.