

# January HOME MAINTENANCE

NORTH TEXAS EDITION

Monitor your home. Catch issues early. Avoid costly repairs.



Seasonal To-Dos



HVAC & Plumbing Tips



Foundation Care



Storm Prep



Monthly Checklistings

## MONTHLY NON-NEGOTIABLES

These three things alone prevent the majority of expensive home repairs in North Texas.

- Check foundation moisture levels and adjust watering if needed.
- Replace HVAC filter (or install when your Amazon delivery arrives).
- Perform monthly home scan (quick 5-minute walk-through).

## JANUARY FOCUS TASKS



### Post-Cold Weather Check

- Check exposed pipes for stress or slow leaks
- Look for signs of freeze-related damage



### Heating System Check

- Confirm home is heating evenly
- Check vents for airflow
- Listen for unusual sounds



### Plumbing Awareness

- Check water heater for leaks or rust
- Listen for popping sounds
- Monitor water pressure changes



### Exterior Check

- Look at roofline for anything unusual (shingles, sagging, debris)
- Check soffits/eaves for pest entry

## MONTHLY HOME SCAN

USE THIS EVERY MONTH (5-MINUTE WALK-THROUGH)

Most expensive repairs don't start big — they start small and get missed.



### INTERIOR



Check under sinks for moisture or slow leaks



Look around toilets for movement or soft flooring



Scan ceilings for stains or discoloration



Check windows for condensation or seal failure



Vacuum return air vents



Check door and cabinet hardware (tightly, lubricate)



Check around water heater for leaks or rust



Listen to water heater for unusual popping sounds



Test garage door auto-reverse safety, drafts and gaps



### EXTERIOR



Walk the perimeter for cracks or soil pulling away



Check drainage areas for standing water



Look at roofline for anything unusual (shingles, sagging, debris)



Look at eave/soffit damage (squirrels, etc.)



Check for signs of pests or entry points



## JMRE INSIGHT

### January is "Damage Shows Up" Month

Cold snaps can expose small issues that weren't visible before. This is when problems start to reveal themselves.

### Your Foundation Still Needs Attention!

North Texas clay soil expands and contracts with moisture changes — even in winter. Consistency matters more than season.

### Your HVAC Filter Is Not Your Future!

A simple filter helps protect your system, improve air quality, and reduce energy costs.

Set it on Amazon subscription and install it when it arrives.

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# February

## HOME MAINTENANCE

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Manage water. Protect your foundation. Prep for early spring.



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### FEBRUARY FOCUS TASKS



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#### Early Spring Prep



- Test sprinkler/irrigation system.
- Trim back landscaping away from the home.
- Remove debris from around foundation.
- Remove limbs hanging over roof or driveway and any dead or damaged limbs.

#### Quick Maintenance Tasks



- Clean dryer vent
- Vacuum bathroom exhaust fan covers.
- Replace burnt-out bulbs (inside & out)
- Clean washing machine gasket/dispensers.

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### JMRE INSIGHT

#### Your Biggest Risk Right Now Is What You Can't See

Frozen pipes don't always burst immediately.

Sometimes they weaken first... then fail later.

#### Freezes Don't Always Show Damage Right Away

Most issues from hard freezes show up days or even weeks later.

#### Small Cracks Don't Always Mean Big Problems

You may notice:

- hairline cracks
- nail pops
- slight shifting

That's normal with temperature swings—but it's worth watching.

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# March

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Get ahead of spring. Focus on exterior and systems.



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### MARCH FOCUS TASKS

#### Curb Appeal Refresh



- Refresh mulch in beds (even coverage, clean edges).
- Add Seasonal color (front entry & focal areas)
- Edge beds and walkways for clean lines.

#### Exterior Cleaning & Maintenance



- Clean front door and porch area.
- Rinse siding where dirt buildup is visible.
- Repair or replace damaged window or door screens.

#### Exterior Condition Check



- Touchup paint on siding, soffits & trim.
- Check caulking around windows, doors and penetrations.
- Look for wood rot or soft spots.

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### JMRE INSIGHT

#### Buyers Start Judging Before They Ever Walk Inside

Curb appeal isn't about perfection—it's about first impression.

Most buyers form an opinion within seconds.

#### March Is the Cheapest Time to Improve Value

A few hundred dollars in:

- mulch
- plants
- touch-up work can translate into thousands in perceived value

#### Small Exterior Issues Turn Into Big Negotiation Points

Peeling paint, cracked caulk & wood rot:

these are inexpensive fixes now but become leverage for buyers later

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# April

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### NORTH TEXAS EDITION

Prepare your systems. Storm season is here.



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### APRIL FOCUS TASKS



#### Spring Systems Checks

- Schedule Professional HVAC service.
- Clear debris from around outdoor condenser unit.

#### Spring Storm Prep

- Visual inspection of roof after every storm.
  - Look for shingles on the ground or missing.
- Check fences and gates for damage.
- Before storms:
  - secure patio furniture
  - protect plants
  - protect cars

#### Exterior Maintenance

- Clean outdoor light fixtures & repaint if needed
- Check fence/gate hardware
- Clean gutters.
- If you have a pool, clean the filters.

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Check for signs of pests or entry points - Pay special attention this month as termites, carpenter ants and bees are on the move.



### JMRE INSIGHT

**April is when your HVAC system needs a check up.**

Early maintenance = faster service + lower cost

**Storm Season Isn't "If"—It's "When"**

Preparation reduces both risk and stress

**Bees Swarming? Don't Panic**

It's common to see bees swarm in the spring as they look for a new place to settle.

Most swarms will move on within a few days.

If the bees stay longer or start gathering in a wall, roofline, or attic area call me for contacts for removal.

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# May

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### NORTH TEXAS EDITION

Your home is starting to feel the heat.



Seasonal To-Dos



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### MAY FOCUS TASKS

#### Laundry & Moisture Management



- Check dryer vent termination outside for lint buildup.
- Confirm washer hoses are secure & not bulging.

#### Shower & Wet Area Wear



- Inspect and re-caulk showers & tubs if needed
- Inspect and re-grout if needed.
- Do you smell moisture??

#### Exterior Maintenance



- Point up small cracks in masonry (brick & stone)
- Sprinkler check: is scheduling appropriate? damage? overly wet or dry spots?

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### JMRE INSIGHT

#### Your Water Bill Just Changed

May is when irrigation systems start running regularly again.

If your bill jumps more than expected, it's usually coverage or timing—not just usage.

#### That Fast-Growing Grass Can Get You in Trouble

Certain grasses can shoot up quickly after rain, especially in May (King Ranch Bluestem is the worst offender and it shoots up after a rain)

They often grow faster than the rest of your lawn and can trigger HOA or city notices before you realize it.

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# June

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Long hot days put your home to the test.



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### JUNE FOCUS TASKS

#### AC Drain Line Management



- Check the sink where your AC drain line comes in for slow draining or a clog.
- Pour a small amount of vinegar in the drain line to prevent algae growth)

#### Refrigerator & Freezer Load



- Check your door seals for tight closure.
- Vacuum off the vents/coils on the outside of the units and clean the insides.

#### Electrical Load Awareness



- Pay attention to breaker trips in late afternoon/evening.
- Unplug devices that you are not actively using
- Check outdoor outlets to make sure covers are secure and GFCI's are not tripped.

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### JMRE INSIGHT

#### June is when we are just consistently hot!

This is when we start seeing real strain on the power grid and our electrical bills start climbing. Consistent sprinkler usage with very little rain also increases our water bills.

#### The Ground Is Starting to Shift

This is where consistent watering of your foundation starts to matter most.

#### Your Garage Is Affecting Your Home More Than You Think

In June, attached garages trap heat that can transfer into nearby rooms. Consider insulating the garage door to reduce this transfer.

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# July

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Peak heat is here, protect your home and systems.



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### JULY FOCUS TASKS

#### Sun Exposure Management



- Close blinds/curtains in rooms taking direct afternoon sun.
- Make sure ceiling fans are running counterclockwise.
- Close off unused rooms.

#### Landscape Stress



- Take a closer look at the lawn for areas that are burning or thinning and adjust sprinklers.
- Tree stress shows up as leaves dropping early, yellow or browning leaves-deep water at the drip line.
- Check that there is adequate mulch in beds.

#### Interior Quick Check



- Check fire extinguishers - locations, pressures, expirations.

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### JMRE INSIGHT

#### Your House Doesn't Get a Break at Night

In July, overnight temperatures stay high enough that your home never fully cools down.

That means your A/C is starting each day already behind.

#### Finding those heat sinks...

Attic Access Doors are often poorly sealed:

Heat leaks down into house

Add insulation or weather stripping to reduce this.

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## AUGUST FOCUS TASKS

### Sprinkler Reset



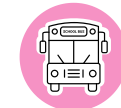
- Walk sprinkler zones and look for heads that have shifted or sunk
- Adjust spray direction (avoid sidewalks, fences, house)
- Check for runoff before water can soak in

### Shower Glass & Hard Water Buildup



- Remove mineral buildup on glass and fixtures.
- Use vinegar on faucets and showerheads to remove buildup.

### Back to School Reset



- Set up drop zones (backpacks, shoes, daily clutter)
- Reset high-traffic areas for daily use
- Clean and organize entry points

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## JMRE INSIGHT

### August is When Everything Looks a Little Burnt

Your AC is running non-stop and the yard is just plain crispy.

Try running appliances that will heat the house up at night (washer, dryer, dishwasher) and just avoid using the oven.

### You're Using More Water Than You Think

Between irrigation, showers, laundry, and daily routines:

August is often one of the highest water-use months of the year.

Don't ignore those small drips, they add up fast.

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### SEPTEMBER FOCUS TASKS

#### Dust & Air Quality Reset



- Wipe down ceiling fan blades (dust buildup from summer use)
- Dust return vents and high shelves
- Clean or replace range hood filter

#### Garage Reality Check



- Check for heat damage to stored items (paint, chemicals, etc.)
- Reorganize anything that shifted or melted/warped
- Sweep out buildup from summer debris

#### Cabinet & Pantry Reset



- Check for expired or heat-affected items.
- Wipe Shelves and remove crumbs/debris
- Look for signs of pests or moisture.

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### JMRE INSIGHT

September is when Ragweed peaks so air quality is even more important

Here are some other places that dust and pollen tend to hide:

- Upholstery
- Carpet
- Throw pillow
- Window sills & tracks

Noticing more wasps around doors and chimneys?

They're looking for a place to settle for winter. Pay attention to where they gather and treat nests early.

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### OCTOBER FOCUS TASKS

#### Fall HVAC System Checks



- Schedule Professional HVAC service.
- Clear debris from around outdoor condenser unit.
- Test heat function before first cold snap.
- Confirm that your thermostat transitions correctly.

#### Sealing the Envelope



- Check weatherstripping on exterior doors.
- Seal gaps around windows & thresholds
- Check attic access door for air leaks.
- Check window & door caulking.

#### Fireplace & Chimney Prep



- If wood burning, hire chimney sweep to clean.
- Check damper function.
- Inspect that firebox. Call professional if damaged or cracked.
- Clean firebox if needed

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### JMRE INSIGHT

#### This is the Best Time to Plant Trees, Shrubs and Some Perennials.

In North Texas, trees and shrubs establish better when planted in the fall.

Cooler temps and consistent moisture help roots grow before next summer's heat.

#### October is Also When the Outdoors Tries to Come Inside.

Cooler weather drives pests indoors. Gaps around doors, windows, and even weep holes can become easy entry points.

Seal gaps and use steel wool in weep holes.

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### NOVEMBER FOCUS TASKS



#### Freeze Prep

- Disconnect and drain all hoses.
- Cover spigots.
- Move plants inside
- Insulate exposed pipes.



#### Final Gutter Check

- Remove remaining leaves and debris
- Confirm downspouts are flowing properly.
- Check for clogs at elbows and exits.



#### Safety Check

- Test smoke detectors
- Test carbon monoxide detectors.
- Replace batteries.



#### Tree Trimming & Landscape Clean Up

- Mulch or compost the leaves.
- Trim up and trim out trees in anticipation of ice storms.

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### JMRE INSIGHT

#### November is When We Typically See Our First Hard Freeze.

We usually see that first really hard freeze right around Thanksgiving. Its better to be prepared then caught off guard.

#### Do You Know Where Your Water Shut Off Valve Is?

Don't wait until we have 3 inches of snow/ice covering the meter box to figure out you didn't know exactly where it is and what kind of tools you need to turn it off. A broken line can dump 10 gallons of water per minute.

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### DECEMBER FOCUS TASKS

#### Company is coming checklist



- Clean out freezer
- Wipe down and touch up baseboards.
- Clean around vents and returns.
- Replace burnt out light bulbs.
- Wipe down cabinets and tighten hardware.
- Replace worn shower curtains or liners.
- Donate unused items to charity.
- Wipe down the front door and tidy the entry.

If you are anything like the hard working Realtors at Jeanie Marten Real Estate, your December list is long enough. Please enjoy your time with your families and call us if you need anything.



### JMRE INSIGHT

#### December is About Fire Safety

- Keep flammable items away from heaters and candles.
- Never leave cooking unattended during gatherings.
- Do you know not only where your extinguisher/blanket is but do you know how to use it.
- Make sure the damper is open on the fireplace while in use.
- Make sure you have a carbon monoxide detector on every level of your home.
- Unplug appliances not in active use and make sure power strips are not overloaded.

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Vacuum return air vents



Check door and cabinet hardware (tightly, lubricate)



Check around water heater for leaks or rust



Listen to water heater for unusual popping sounds



Test garage door auto-reverse safety, drafts and gaps



#### EXTERIOR



Walk the perimeter for cracks or soil pulling away



Check drainage areas for standing water



Look at roofline for anything unusual (shingles, sagging, debris)



Look at eave/soffit damage (squirrels, etc.)



Check for signs of pests or entry points

Want to stay ahead of repairs and protect your home's value?

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