

Canadian Home Maintenance Checklist

A practical seasonal checklist for catching household failures early - without pretending every Canadian home, climate or piece of equipment follows the same calendar.

How to use it

Check only the systems your home actually has. Use condition triggers such as snowmelt, leaf drop, freezing weather and severe storms instead of forcing every task onto one national date. A checkbox is not permission to do unsafe work: gas, electrical, roof, structural, sewage and other hazardous work can require qualified professionals.

Start with the interactive planner: readyhomecanada.com/home-maintenance-checklist-canada/#home-maintenance-planner

Frequent checks

	Task	Timing	Why / what to notice	Done
☐	Test every smoke alarm using its test control.	Monthly	Keep the detection layer working. Replace alarms over 10 years old or earlier if the manufacturer says so.	___/___
☐	If installed, test water-leak alarms/sensors using their device test method.	At least annually	Confirm the detector and any alerts you rely on still work; follow the manufacturer schedule too.	___/___
☐	Inspect homeowner-accessible forced-air filters and clean or replace when loaded.	About every 3 months or as loaded	Protect airflow and equipment. Use the actual filter and equipment instructions.	___/___
☐	Test private-well water for microbial contamination.	At least every 6 months	Contaminants may not change taste, smell or colour. Follow local public-health guidance for chemical tests.	___/___
☐	If you have a backup sump pump, test the backup separately.	2 to 5 times per year	A backup can fail even when the primary pump still runs. Follow the installed system instructions.	___/___

Spring - post-thaw checks

	Task	Timing	Why / what to notice	Done
☐	Inspect accessible foundation walls for new/changing cracks, dampness or seepage.	At least annually	Catch water entry or movement that needs assessment before finishes hide it.	___/___
☐	Walk the perimeter and look for low spots, erosion or grade that sends water toward the home.	Spring and fall check; maintain annually	Surface drainage changes as soil settles and erodes.	___/___
☐	Clear eavestroughs and downspouts and confirm water can leave freely.	One of two yearly cleanings	Restore the roof-drainage path before wet weather.	___/___
☐	Run a full sump-pump test if the home depends on a sump.	At least annually	Verify the pump activates, moves water and has an unobstructed discharge path.	___/___
☐	Inspect roof and exterior surfaces from a safe ground-level position.	After winter / after severe weather	Look for obvious missing, displaced or damaged components without unsafe roof access.	___/___

Summer - moisture and exterior durability

	Task	Timing	Why / what to notice	Done
☐	Watch basement/crawlspace for persistent dampness, condensation or musty odour.	During humid weather and after water events	Separate water vapour from liquid-water entry before choosing a fix.	___/___
☐	Inspect accessible window/door seals and exterior penetrations for obvious deterioration.	Dry-weather visual check	Catch openings that may admit water or air before a harsher season.	___/___
☐	Keep window wells and accessible drainage openings clear of debris.	As needed	Give water a clear path instead of letting debris create a local dam.	___/___
☐	Check decks, exterior stairs and railings for movement, decay or corrosion.	Seasonal visual check	Visible structural deterioration deserves repair planning, not a cosmetic patch.	___/___
☐	Trim or arrange qualified tree work for vegetation that blocks drainage or contacts the structure.	As needed	Reduce obvious drainage, impact or access problems. Large-tree work is professional territory.	___/___

Fall - before cold weather

	Task	Timing	Why / what to notice	Done
☐	Clean eavestroughs/downspouts after the main leaf drop.	Second yearly cleaning	Keep drainage open before repeated rain, freeze-thaw and snow.	___/___
☐	Recheck grading and drainage before the ground freezes.	Fall check	Correct new settlement or ponding while the site is still workable.	___/___
☐	Identify vulnerable exterior plumbing and winterize for the actual plumbing design.	Before regular freezing temperatures	Avoid leaving water trapped in exposed plumbing. Do not blindly close unknown valves.	___/___
☐	Arrange qualified service for fuel-burning heating equipment when due.	Oil: annually; gas/propane: at least every 2 years per NRCan	Combustion and venting are safety-sensitive systems. Manufacturer/local guidance can be stricter.	___/___
☐	If you use solid fuel, have the appliance/chimney inspected and cleaned as needed.	Inspect annually	NRCan recommends annual inspection for wood-burning equipment/chimneys.	___/___
☐	If you do not know the home radon level, start a valid long-term test.	At least 91 days; include 91 heating-season days for a below-guideline result	Radon cannot be judged from a map, neighbour or short reading.	___/___
☐	Review outage readiness for heat, sump, refrigeration, communications and essential loads.	Before likely outage season	Different household systems fail on different timelines.	___/___

Winter - watch the house under load

	Task	Timing	Why / what to notice	Done
☐	Keep accessible combustion-air/exhaust openings clear of snow and ice.	After significant snowfall or drifting	Blocked venting can become a no-heat or safety problem. Do not alter the vent system.	___/___
☐	Keep the outdoor heat-pump area free of obstructing snow, ice and debris.	Condition-based	Preserve airflow and drainage without opening or modifying the equipment.	___/___
☐	Watch for persistent room-side window condensation across multiple rooms.	During cold weather	Widespread condensation can be a moisture/ventilation clue; between-pane moisture is a different failure.	___/___
☐	Pay attention to plumbing in known cold zones.	During extreme cold	Slow flow or freezing is a location-specific warning. Never use open flame to thaw a pipe.	___/___
☐	Inspect roof edges from the ground after snow/freeze-thaw for heavy ice buildup or leak clues.	Condition-based	Ice-dam symptoms call for safe roof/attic diagnosis, not risky ladder work.	—

After an event

	Task	Timing	Why / what to notice	Done
☐	Heavy rain or rapid snowmelt: check basement, sump operation, drainage and window wells.	After the event when safe	Look for changed water paths or a system that failed under real load.	___/___
☐	Severe wind/hail: do a safe ground-level roof/exterior scan.	After the event when safe	New exterior damage may need a qualified roof/contractor inspection.	___/___
☐	Wildfire smoke: review filtration/ventilation setup appropriate to the actual system.	During and after smoke events	Use current Health Canada guidance; do not assume one HVAC setting fits every home.	___/___
☐	Long power outage: check heat, sump, water, refrigeration and backup systems.	During/after outage as safe	Restore and inspect the systems that were actually stressed.	___/___
☐	Major renovation/foundation work: review radon retesting and affected systems.	After relevant work	Structural, ventilation and excavation changes can alter radon and other home conditions.	___/___

Longer-term / system-specific

	Task	Timing	Why / what to notice	Done
☐	If the home has a backwater valve, inspect it and follow its model-specific maintenance instructions.	Inspect at least annually	Debris, seal wear or a stuck mechanism can stop sewer-backup protection from working.	___/___
☐	If an active radon mitigation system is installed, retest the home.	Every 5 years plus relevant building changes	Health Canada recommends periodic confirmation that active mitigation still performs.	___/___
☐	For septic systems, follow the provincial/local and system-specific inspection/pumping schedule.	Varies	There is no single defensible Canada-wide pump-out interval for every system.	___/___
☐	For generators, batteries and other backup systems, use the exact manufacturer maintenance schedule.	Varies by system	Fuel, batteries, transfer equipment and power electronics age differently.	—

Professional follow-up / notes

Date	Finding / follow-up	Who / next action
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Source backbone

This printable is a condensed companion to the full ReadyHome guide. Consequential timing and safety claims were checked against current Canadian primary sources. Use the online guide for direct links, detailed caveats and system-specific next steps.

- Canada.ca - Actions to reduce flood damage (updated March 23, 2026)
- Canada.ca - Foundation maintenance, property grading, sump pumps and backwater valves (updated March 23, 2026)
- Health Canada - Fire safety in your home
- Health Canada - Guide for Radon Measurements in Homes (May 22, 2026)
- Health Canada - Well water and your health: Test your well water
- Natural Resources Canada - Keeping The Heat In, Section 9

Important: This is a planning aid, not a home inspection, code-compliance certificate, warranty schedule or substitute for your equipment manuals and local authority requirements.