



Beating the Summer Strain and Getting Ready for Fall

By: Barry Upchurch

It's almost August, and the summer has taken its toll. Through the wear and tear of the summer storm season and the stifling heat, it seems every year around this time things begin to go awry.

However, this year you will be ready as long as you keep in mind these top five problems that hit our homes towards the end of the season.

1. Hail Damage Got You Down?

Through the crazy of all the summer storms and with the random attacks of hail, you might notice heading into the early fall that a lot of your neighbors are having people out to fix or even replace their roof. It might be tempting to follow suit and call up your insurance, but first things first, make sure you have a reputable roofer over to assess your situation. After their inspection, you can confirm that there is damage and have peace of mind when calling your insurance agent.

Also, keep in mind your deductible. Check to make sure that you can afford the fix and remember to always purchase an equal or better roof. You don't want to down-grade your home, especially if you think you might put your house on the market in the future. It is always smart to keep re-sale in mind.

2. Falling Trees and Other Eyesores

Rough winds and other natural catastrophes can leave your yard in

shambles with fallen debris and cracked limbs splayed all over. The key with tree removal is to get multiple bids. Usually there is always someone cheaper out there, so keep asking around.



Another thing, make sure to have the tree AND the stump removed. An old stump sitting in your front landscaping can be a huge eyesore and draw away from the natural curb appeal of your home. As long as we are on the subject of curb appeal, also note that any tall trees brushing up against your roof or siding can cause damage. Keep your trees trimmed back. A good thing to consider also is having your tree pruned in a way that the canopy of the tree is higher up. Allowing more access to your home visually will make it look better from the street, and if you eventually plan on selling, this is always a plus.

3. Heatwave Defeats the Air Conditioner

Often times, things seem to break the second we would find them needed. Your air conditioner is not exempt from this conundrum. With the extreme temperatures, if your air conditioner is not in peak condition, have it checked out.



You will often find something needs to be repaired or

replaced altogether. Much like with my advice about roofs, this is not an area to skimp on.

Always upgrade your appliances when it comes to cooling your home. Trust me, you will not regret it. However, in the meantime a helpful hint is to keep the interior doors of your home all open. This will increase airflow hopefully give you some temporary relief. And never underestimate the cooling power of your basic ceiling fan; they go a long way.

4. To Close or Not to Close: The Pool Problem

With summer ending and school almost in session, people begin to debate whether or not they should keep the pool open or close in the fall. My recommendation is always to keep the pool open as long as you can. If the home is on the market, then the luxury feature of your home is on

display for buyers at all times, which is a huge plus. However, if you find that it is just not suitable in your current position to keep the pool opened for a prolonged period of time, I would recommend that you have someone out to pressure test the lines. Pools are very sensitive, and if they are not properly maintained the results can be catastrophic for the pool itself as well as your wallet. Take the preventative step and make sure that everything is running smoothly and will be operational. The last thing you would want is to open the pool in the fall only to find a disaster where your oasis used to be.

5. How to Breathe Easier on Vacation

Going on vacation is supposed to make you feel at ease, but how can you when you must leave all of your possessions and your home unattended and vulnerable? Make sure you plan for your trip ahead of time. Ideally, if you can find a neighbor, family, or a trusted friend to watch your home, you will feel much more comfortable leaving the day you depart. The last thing you want to worry about when you are away at the beach or wherever else is if someone has broken in to your house. Another great idea is to notify the local law enforcement. That's right, call the police and give them the heads up that you are heading out of town. It may seem a bit over dramatic, but you are always better safe than sorry. An important thing to remember is to notify the police if your house is on the market. Make sure to let them know that buyers may stop in with real estate agents to tour. After all, you wouldn't want to miss out on a great offer because of a misunderstanding.

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