

# National Center for HEALTHY HOUSING

## Healthy Homes Maintenance Checklist for Thermal Control Extreme Heat

A healthy home is one that is constructed, maintained, and rehabilitated in a manner that is conducive to good occupant health. To maintain a healthy home, occupants should keep it dry, clean, safe, well-ventilated, free from contaminants and pests, well-maintained, and thermally controlled.

As our climate changes, extreme weather is increasing in both intensity and frequency; for many places, this means an increase in extremely hot temperatures. In addition to causing heat stroke, extreme heat conditions can exacerbate many health conditions, such as respiratory conditions, heart disease, diabetes, and high blood pressure. Tenants and homeowners are at heightened risk for various health problems related to prolonged exposure to excessive heat or cold when their homes do not maintain adequate temperatures.

This checklist provides a list of activities you can complete in your home to prepare for the possibility of extremely hot temperatures. For more information about the adverse health effects caused by extreme heat and how to prepare for and act during extreme heat events, please see our [extreme heat resource library](#). These activities are not meant to replace steps that can or should be taken in an emergency; in an extreme heat event, follow the advice of your local public health agency, and if you feel ill or recognize symptoms of illness in others, seek medical help immediately.

This checklist was adapted from the [Healthy Homes Maintenance Checklist](#). We recommend using the full checklist in conjunction with this resource to create a comprehensive list of home maintenance activities that can help ensure your home is constructed, maintained, and rehabilitated in a manner that is conducive to good occupant health.

Spring  
Fall  
Annual  
As Needed  
Pro Needed?

| THERMAL COMFORT   |        |      |        |           |             |
|---|--------|------|--------|-----------|-------------|
| These activities will help ensure that your home stays comfortable during extreme temperatures. |        |      |        |           |             |
|   | Spring | Fall | Annual | As Needed | Pro Needed? |
| <b>Windows and Doors</b>  |        |      |        |           |             |
| Remove and replace any cracked or broken glass.   | ●      | ●    |        |           |             |
| Look for signs of water leaks at doors and windowsills and repair or replace as needed.         | ●      | ●    |        |           |             |
| Check for air leaks and caulk and weather-strip doors and windows.                              | ●      | ●    |        |           |             |
| Verify that windows and doors are operational.  | ●      | ●    |        |           |             |
| Check that screens in windows and doors are intact.   | ●      |      |        |           |             |
| <b>Cooling/Air Conditioning Units</b>   |        |      |        |           |             |
| Check air conditioner or air conditioning system and repair if needed.                          | ●      |      |        |           |             |
| Clean air conditioning coils and drain pans.  | ●      |      |        |           |             |
| Replace or clean air conditioner filters (for central air use MERV 11 filters).                 | ●      | ●    |        |           |             |
| Caulk gaps around window air conditioner units.   | ●      |      |        |           |             |
| Make sure room and ceiling fans are functioning.  | ●      |      |        |           |             |
| <b>Heating Units</b>  |        |      |        |           |             |
| Replace or clean filters for warm-air furnace (MERV 11).  | ●      | ●    |        |           |             |

*(Checklist continued on reverse...)*

For more information, visit NCHH's Extreme Heat and Extreme Cold "Prepare and Act" pages.

Spring  
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### PROTECTING ATTIC INSULATION

In a fully insulated home, these activities will not be as critical and can be seen as a secondary way to maintain thermal comfort. They will also help control additional hazards like moisture that can cause other healthy housing issues.

#### Attic Inspection

|   |  |   |  |  |  |
|---|--|---|--|--|--|
| Ensure that the insulation is in place.   |  | ● |  |  |  |
| Verify that any bath and kitchen exhaust fan ductwork in the attic is intact and vents outside. |  | ● |  |  |  |
| Inspect attic for signs of roof leaks.  |  | ● |  |  |  |
| Inspect the attic intake and exhaust vents.   |  | ● |  |  |  |

#### Roof Inspection

|  |  |   |  |  |  |
|--|--|---|--|--|--|
| Ensure that the roofing is in good condition.  |  | ● |  |  |  |
| Inspect the chimney, valley, plumbing vent, and skylight flashing for damage or leaks. |  | ● |  |  |  |

#### Gutter Inspection

|  |  |   |  |  |  |
|--|--|---|--|--|--|
| Make sure gutters are fastened securely. |  | ● |  |  |  |
| Clean gutters of leaves and debris.      |  | ● |  |  |  |

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### PREPARING FOR EXTREME TEMPERATURES

These activities include ways to prepare your home ahead of extreme temperatures or weather. This list is not inclusive of other ways you can prepare yourself and your family. For additional ways to prepare (e.g., ensuring you have medications on hand, having enough food and water), see our Extreme Heat or Extreme Cold "Prepare and Act" pages.

|   |  |   |  |  |  |
|---|--|---|--|--|--|
| Verify that generators work properly and are the appropriate distance away from the home (20 feet away from any windows, doors, or vents). Do not operate if wet. |  | ● |  |  |  |
| Prepare window coverings.   |  | ● |  |  |  |

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### INDOOR AIR QUALITY

These activities will help keep your indoor air clean, which is especially important when you need to spend extra time inside during extreme weather events.

#### Ventilation/Dryer Vents

|  |   |   |  |  |   |
|--|---|---|--|--|---|
| Verify that the exhaust ducts are clear (fans are moving air). | ● | ● |  |  |   |
| Verify that the bath and kitchen fans are operational.         | ● | ● |  |  |   |
| Clean dryer vents and screens.                                 | ● | ● |  |  |   |
| Clean exhaust fan outlets and screens.                         | ● |   |  |  |   |
| Clean outdoor air intakes and screens.                         |   | ● |  |  | ● |

#### Dehumidifiers and Air Cleaners

|   |   |  |  |  |  |
|---|---|--|--|--|--|
| Replace/clean dehumidifier filters per the manufacturer's instructions. | ● |  |  |  |  |
| Replace/clean air cleaner filters per the manufacturer's instructions.  | ● |  |  |  |  |
| Clean the dehumidifier coils and check operation.                       | ● |  |  |  |  |

#### Alarms

|   |   |   |  |  |  |
|---|---|---|--|--|--|
| Make sure smoke and CO alarms are operational.                        | ● | ● |  |  |  |
| For alarms without 10-year batteries, replace batteries twice a year. | ● | ● |  |  |  |



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