# **6 Steps for a Fall-Ready Home**

## Taking Care of Drafts

## Feeling drafts around the edges of windows and doors, near stairwells, kitchen floors at kick space or maybe the drop ceiling over the cupboards is a sign that outdoor air in entering the home. The culprit is likely air leaks, Small penetrations and holes in the home’s shell that allow outside air in. However, if air is coming in, air must be leaving in other leaks allowing indoor air out. Some drafts may be fixed by DIY measures, but the best remedy is to hire a BPI certified Professional to locate and repair the leaks that both let air in and let air out. Have Your Heating System Inspected

Having a heating system fail when needed the most is not a pleasant experience. A BPI Certified Professional can prepare the system for the long winter season. They can test for leaks in the heating system venting, check heating efficiency, and change the filter and prepare for the coming chilly nights. They can also do a carbon monoxide check to ensure safe indoor air quality and provide you tips on keeping your heating running in top condition. If your heating system is a heat pump, they can clean the outdoor and indoor units and check the operating controls, refrigerant charge and airflow to ensure proper operation.

Winterize Air Conditioning  
If your home has central air conditioning, it may be necessary to prepare your outdoor unit for winter. If you use window air conditioning units, remove them or cover to prevent air leaks.

## Clean the Gutters

## Clogged gutters can channel water toward your home, where it can damage the foundation, allow moisture into your basement, or worse, cause mold of other issues. Pull debris out of the gutters by hand or call a company that specializes in gutter cleaning, if you’re not able to do it safely yourself. Be sure your gutters drain away from the house. A BPI certified Professional can recommend methods of runoff water management if you suspect something is wrong.

Inspect Your Home’s Exterior  
Do a visual inspection around the exterior of the home. This includes the chimney is you have one. If you have a fireplace, it is advisable to have your chimney cleaned and inspected by a professional for safe operation. If you notice areas where the siding is damaged or missing, cracks in the foundation or evidence of standing water, contact a BPI certified professional to assess and provide recommendations on repairs.

## Home Safety Check

Conduct a home safety check to ensure you and your loved one are protected. A BPI certified professional can complete the safety check for you for ease of mind. However, always replace the batteries in your smoke alarms and carbon monoxide monitors on a regular basis. A good way to remember to do this is to replace the batteries when you change the clock for daylight savings time. Create a family fire escape plan or review the one you already have with the whole family. Put together an emergency preparedness kit so you are ready for winter power outages.

Once you finish with your autumn home checklist, you will be ready to enjoy the season in your warm, comfortable home.