



EASY FALL MAINTENANCE

IS IT WORTH THE EFFORT? YOU BET IT IS!



Fall is a great time of year to do some of those home maintenance chores you've been putting off during the hot, summer months.

You want your home to look great and now is the time to get ready for the cold winter months ahead. First and foremost, give it a good wash-down with [Log Wash™](#) to get rid of the dust and dirt that have accumulated on your logs over the summer. You will be surprised how much better your home will look once it's clean.

Fall is also a good time to seal up any gaps that may be leaking air into the home. As fuel and electricity costs keep going up this becomes especially important. A few air leaks can cost you many dollars per month in keeping your home warm during the winter. The trick is finding and sealing those air leaks before the really cold weather sets in. Here is a system that's fairly easy and works well.

FINDING AIR LEAKS

First you need a cool fall day when the outside temperature is at least 20 degrees lower than the temperature within the home. Next, you want a small pail of warm water, a piece of chalk and a perhaps a ladder depending on how high your ceilings are. Dip your hand in the water then run your wet hand over your interior walls keeping it about six inches to a foot away from the surface.

You will easily feel any cold air leaks that are coming through the walls or around your windows. As you move your wet hand closer to the wall you can pretty well pin-point where the leak is located. Be sure to mark those leaking areas with the chalk.

If you have a box fan and want an even more efficient method of locating leaks, place the fan in a window or door blowing outward and cover the remaining opening with plastic sheeting. This will help draw cold air into the home through the leaks making them easier to find.

SEALING THE LEAKS

Now comes the hard part, sealing up the leaks. The best way to attack leaks is from exterior surfaces. You can seal the interior but if a crack or crevice is leaking air it may also leak water as well. Sealing the leak from the outside prevents water penetration along with air infiltration.

Finding the outside source of the leak may not be as easy as it sounds, especially around window and door frames. The opening source of the leak may be several inches from the spot where it is felt inside the home. You can also hire professionals to find the leaks, just search our [Preferred Applicators](#) list for those that do thermographic energy evaluations.

STOPS MORE THAN COLD AIR

In addition to stopping cold air and water from getting inside your home, sealants provide some other benefits. Once the weather turns cool many types of insects start looking for a nice, warm place to spend the winter. Cluster flies (they look like big house flies) can detect warm air coming out of a home from many yards away. They follow the warm air to its source and squeeze through amazingly small cracks and crevices. So, in addition to sealing any openings, you need to check your window and door weather stripping to make sure it's in good shape.

Come fall, ladybugs and boxelder bugs love to congregate on warm log walls, sometimes in the thousands. They too will enter the home through any small openings. The only effective way to keep them out of the home is to prevent them from getting inside by sealing up their entrance points. Pesticides do not work well against these insects and besides, ladybugs are beneficial insects that feed on aphids and other bugs that can harm your plants and shrubs.

A bit of fall maintenance can make your home look great, reduce the number of bugs you see, and lower your monthly heating bill. Is it worth the effort? You bet it is!
