

winter TROUBLE

Tips to help avoid panic renovations.

PREVENTION



with winter fast approaching, it is a great time to make sure you take care of a little home maintenance to ensure a safe, undamaged house during the cold weather.

The first item that comes to mind is to have your eavestroughs cleaned out. If they are not, there is a good chance that you could have some ice damming over the winter that could cause extensive water damage in your home. As the snow on your roof melts, it can refreeze as the water lies on the leaves in the trough. As this continues to hap-

pen, the ice can build up and under the shingles and even under the plywood. As it reaches the interior heated space of your home, it thaws and the water comes through the drywall or plaster, causing extensive damage that will require a lot of work to repair.

The easiest way to avoid all this trouble is to keep your eavestroughs clean. You can also make sure that you have a drip edge installed to keep the water from rolling down the roof and around and under your plywood.

Another tip is to make sure that you have all of your exterior water taps shut off and drained. If they freeze, you could be in big trouble. They could burst and the water could spew into your basement and cause serious damage.

You should have a shut-off valve just inside the house before the pipe exits. Before the temperature hits freezing, turn this valve off and then go outside and turn the exterior tap on to allow the excess water to drain. To go one step further, have some frost-free hose bibs installed in place of the

standard exterior taps. This is now the standard in all new construction and it is also in the building code.

Another little winter tip is to test all of your smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors. If any of them don't work, then get the batteries – or the units themselves – replaced right away.

Now that winter is approaching, you probably won't have the windows open as much. In warmer weather, you may have had a slight problem and not known about it. When you keep your windows closed all winter, your house is more tightly sealed and gases and vapours don't have as much of an opportunity to exit the house.

As far as getting any renovation work done to your home during the winter months, now is the time to get it booked.



Bruce Cromie

Also, most contractors are a bit slower in the winter, so you can usually get inside jobs done a bit quicker.

The winter months are a great time to have bathrooms, basements, kitchens, flooring and painting jobs completed.

It's also a great time to get your drawings and plans completed

for larger projects – such as additions and decks – that you would like to start in the spring.

If you have any building or renovation questions or concerns, please feel free to e-mail me at bruce@woodcastle.ca. Have a great winter. ❄️

■ *Bruce Cromie is president of Woodcastle Homes Ltd. & Backyard Oasis Ltd., www.woodcastle.ca.*