

Easy Winter Home Prep

By Andi Peterson Brown

I know, I know—it's 80 degrees out and I'm writing about prepping your home for winter. But if you are anything like me, once the holidays hit, getting up on the roof to clean the gutters is just not going to happen. Thus, there is no better time than a warm fall weekend to spend a few hours preparing your home for the cold, wet weather that is just a couple short months away. These easy tips can prevent future costly repairs, lower your utility bills, and ultimately protect your largest investment.

- Clean your gutters. It's so easy and yet so hard. But failing to clean your gutters will cause long term water damage to your siding, roofing, and wood trim.
- Inspect your roof and flashing. Been some time since anyone's been up there? For minimal cost, a roofer can inspect, diagnose, and perform basic repairs.
- Inspect your heating system. For minimal cost, and HVAC technician can tune up, clean, and perform basic repairs to ensure your system is running at maximum efficiency.
- Reverse your ceiling fans to push warm air down.
- Extend downspouts. Water should drain a few feet away from your foundation, not flow right onto it.
- Caulk around windows and doors. And those foam and fabric front door draft stoppers—yes, those, the ones on late night infomercials for twelve bucks—they work wonders.



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Head and Arm above the Grass

By Cathy Dausman



Photos Cathy Dausman

multimedia artist Tony Zorich said he never had a lesson in his life, but that doesn't mean he's not creative. Witness the rosin and fiberglass statue in the Lafayette man's front yard, a wall-sized painting in the works under cover along his porch and a house filled with scenery painted in bright primary colors and 3-D art. Zorich displayed his front yard statue – a man's head and right forearm – at last year's Burning Man event in Nevada. It took him two and a half months to build. "Burning Man is held on a dry lakebed," Zorich explained. When assembled, the pieces represent a man rising from the water clutching a fish. "There were at least 50 people looking at this every time I visited the [Burning Man] site," he said. When he brought it back, his neighbors suggested he leave it in his yard. The skull is reminiscent of another local artwork head, residing outside a Walnut Creek bank. "I did it before him!" Zorich said, laughing.

