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Professional Home Inspection Services

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*Inspect Your
Home For
Potential
Holiday
Troubles*

HO HO Home for the Holidays

By: Patrick Breen

During the Holiday season your time is precious. Your to-do list seems extra long, and you spend countless hours transforming your house into a welcoming festive home. As you celebrate the Season with family and friends, your mind drifts far from the mundane tasks of home maintenance and safety.

During this busy time of year you do not want problems to arise. Take a few moments and visualize every aspect of your home through the eyes of an excited little munchkin; or the blurry vision and unsteady gate of your grandma. We all become accustomed to our surroundings and little inconveniences we have gotten used to could spell disaster for visitors.

Begin on the exterior of your home. Are extension cords servicing your Christmas lights up and out of the way? Are there any connections at risk of being submerged in water? Remember, in the Black Hills, snow and ice today could be a puddle tomorrow.

The loose railing on your porch, or inside staircase that you've been meaning to fix but haven't gotten around to - now is the time. Replace, permanently repair, or at the very least take out the drill and tighten it up. Are there loose bricks or boards on the stoop or sidewalk? Take a few minutes to make walkways safe - it's well worth it.

Your next stop is the heart of the home - your kitchen. Remember, people unfamiliar with your house will be doing dishes and cooking; and appliances will be used more than usual. Do some organizing for ease of access, and consider replacing appliances that have been acting up. No one likes an uncaffeinated houseguest. Consider this, most house fires don't start from the electrical system, but from what's plugged into it. Splurge and get that new coffee pot you've been eyeing.

The more people you have in your house, the more the facilities will be used. Are there problems in the bathroom? Slow drains can be easily fixed by removing the P-trap, cleaning it out, and possibly even running a snake back into the plumbing system.

Leaky faucets could give out completely from the increased use. Does your toilet constantly run and does the valve need replacing? Is it loose at the floor mount, possibly causing the wax seal to start leaking? Invest the few hours now to fix potential problems, or hire a professional before your guests arrive.

And the final step, take a moment to go slowly through the rest of the house giving it a thorough once-over inspection. If there are rugs that slip and need securing, put non-stick tape or non-skid carpet mat underneath, or consider removing them. Wobbly chairs can be fixed with wood glue, by tightening screws or replacing nails, or think about renting folding chairs for the occasion. Make certain all smoke alarms have fresh batteries, fire extinguishers work, and that there is plenty of water in the Christmas tree stand.

Last but not least - Have Yourself A Merry Christmas!