

When to Replace It

Homeowners have gotten in the habit of changing their fire-detector batteries and air-conditioner filters.

Smoke detectors themselves should be replaced every 10 years, according to the National Fire Protection Association, since they tend to lose sensitivity. But many other critical items in your home require scheduled maintenance, as well. Here's a look.

FIRST-AID KITS

We all tend to put together a first-aid kit, store it away and forget about it. Then something happens, like a sliced finger or oven burn while cooking, and you remember how long it's been since you reviewed the contents. Check in on your first-aid kit annually to make sure it's fully stocked and ready for action. Summer is a great time for this regular inspection, since that's when we're most active — and most likely to have a minor accident.

WATER FILTERS

We often overlook the filter in our refrigerator's water dispenser, since it's tucked away inside the appliance. But bac-



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REAL ESTATE 101

Protect Your Family from Injuries in the Home

There are many small and easy things you can do to protect your family from injuries in the home, some of which are listed at the U.S. Housing and Urban Development's website at [bit.ly/338TBgw](https://www.hud.gov/338TBgw).

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every six months. Reminders attached to the refrigerator door with a magnet can help keep you on schedule.

SPONGES

Most people tend to be very contentious about cleanliness in the kitchen and bathroom,

much more than the other rooms in your home. Yet sponges, a key tool in cleaning, are often too often ignored. Since they're used for cleaning, and so often damp, sponges provide an easy breeding ground for bacteria. Keep a stockpile, or consider sanitizing them with white vinegar or in the dishwasher.

FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

Every home should keep at least one fire extinguisher on hand — especially if the property includes a gas stove or a wood-burning fireplace. Modern-era fire extinguishers are rechargeable, but still have a limited lifetime. Check the tag for an expiration date, and make a note with information on when this issue needs to be addressed. Monitor pressure gauges more regularly to make sure they're in working order.

DEHUMIDIFIERS

Dehumidifiers play a key role in keeping things like mold at bay, and can be particularly helpful for those who suffer from breathing problems. Companion-piece humidifiers help others with their own unique symptoms. But both have filters that must be checked regularly for any build up of mold, dust or mildew.



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HOMEWISSE GLOSSARY

Assignee: The person responsible if the rights and responsibilities for a property are transferred to a new person. **SOURCE:** MLS.com

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