



OPERATION HIBERNATION: 10 Indoor Home Projects to Tackle This Winter

1. Change your furnace filter and humidifier water panel.

Filters last from one to three months when you're using your furnace regularly. Remember to turn on your humidifier and change the water panel every year as well.

2. Test your toilets for leaks.

Put five drops of food coloring in your toilet's tank, wait 10 minutes and see if the color comes into the bowl. If it does, you know you have a leak. The most common cause for a leak is a defective flapper, the rubber mechanism that allows water to exit the tank when you flush.

3. Re-caulk bathtubs and showers.

A super easy DIY project done now can prevent any possible water damage and the onset of mold and mildew in the future.

4. Repaint interior trim.

Never underestimate the power of fresh, crisp trim paint to accent walls and give the whole house a clean, well-maintained look.

5. Swap lightbulbs with LEDs or smart bulbs.

You will be amazed how much brighter your home will be in the dreary winter months using LED bulbs. As an added bonus, this energy-efficient option will reduce your electric bill!

6. Inspect your smoke detectors.

Most smoke alarms only have a lifespan of 8-10 years, and batteries should be checked at least once per year. Make sure your home is armed with up-to-date and fully functioning alarms now, so you're prepared in case of emergency.

7. Install a Wi-Fi-enabled thermostat.

Reap the benefits of energy savings combined with convenient indoor temperature control via smartphone or computer.

8. Add insulation in attic and/or basement.

Keep your home warmer and reduce energy costs. Win win!

9. Replace weather stripping on all exterior doors.

Well-sealed door openings can save homeowners an average of 15 percent on heating and cooling costs.

10. Update cabinet and door hardware throughout.

New hardware provides an instant facelift, giving a fresh look for a low investment of time and money.



ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTOR

Ellie Kowalchik, a real estate agent with Keller Williams Pinnacle Group, leads Cincinnati's top-ranked Move2Team. A multi-million dollar producer and company sales leader, she holds the advanced designations of Seller Representative Specialist, Certified Residential Specialist, as well as e-Pro with a focus on technology. She has also been named one of America's Best Real Estate Agents by RealTrends for the past 4 years.

Have real estate questions you'd like to see answered in a future edition of Ask the Expert? Give Ellie a call at (513) 616-2323 or email her at EllieKowalchik@gmail.com.

