

Annual Rural Home Maintenance Checklist

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Print this and stick it on the fridge. Every item below carries the schedule that EPA guidance, extension services, or equipment makers actually recommend — nothing invented.

Well water

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| ☐ Test well water for bacteria and nitrates — EPA guidance; also retest after floods, repairs, or taste/odor changes | Every year |
| ☐ Walk the wellhead and pressure system: look for leaks, rust, corroded fittings, cracked caps — U. of Illinois Extension; call a pro if anything looks off | Every year |

Septic system

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| ☐ Pump the septic tank — EPA; sooner with a garbage disposal or a big household | Every 3–5 years |
| ☐ Have the whole system inspected — EPA; yearly for aerobic or mechanical systems | Every 1–3 years |
| ☐ Protect the drainfield: no driving or parking on it; keep roof drains and sump discharge away — EPA SepticSmart homeowner guide | Always |

Heating and cooling

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| ☐ Check the furnace/AC filter; replace when dirty — Energy Star: at minimum every 3 months | Check monthly |
| ☐ Have the chimney inspected — NFPA 211 — sweep only when the inspection finds buildup | Every year |
| ☐ Clean the dryer vent pipe — NFPA guidance; sooner if drying takes longer than usual | Every year |

Water heater

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| ☐ Flush sediment from the tank — twice a year with hard water | Every year |
| ☐ Check the anode rod; replace when corroded — yearly if you have a water softener | Every 1–2 years |

Roof and exterior

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| ☐ Clean the gutters — spring and fall; more often under heavy tree cover | Twice a year |
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Safety

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| ☐ Test smoke and CO alarms — use the test button | Every month |
| ☐ Replace alarm batteries — unless sealed 10-year units — replace the whole unit at 10 years | Every year |

When in doubt: pump the septic on schedule, test the well water yearly, and call a licensed pro for anything involving sewage, gas, or electricity. The full guides behind this checklist live at acreageguide.com.

Free download from acreageguide.com — no email required.

Cadences grounded in EPA homeowner guidance, university extension services, and NFPA 211. Your county health department may recommend tighter intervals — local rules win.