

# Hints *For* Homeowners

## Protect Your Property From The Elements

(NAPSA)—According to the Insurance Information Institute, losses from catastrophic winter storms have averaged \$1.1 billion annually for the past 20 years, but there are steps you can take to keep your home out of such statistics.

Rough weather brings many threats to a home, so it's vital that homeowners take necessary precautions to protect the outer shell. Well-maintained windows, roofing and siding defend a home against the threats of moisture and winter elements, ensure that the long-term integrity of the structure is not compromised and help keep energy costs in check.

Homeowners should consider:

### Windows

- Check for drafts. If you feel a draft, not only is cool air and moisture entering the home, warm air is escaping.

- If you are in the market to replace windows, look for Energy Star®-qualified vinyl replacement windows with at least a dual-paned, Low-E glass pack. The vinyl option requires less maintenance, and the Low-E coating helps retain heat in the home in winter and helps keep your home cooler in summer by reflecting the sun's rays away from the window.

### Roofing

- Make sure shingles are undamaged and the underlayment is water tight.

- When replacing shingles, consider fiberglass for durability. Damage to shingles and the shingle underlayment can let moisture into the attic. Without proper ventilation, this moisture will linger, eventually ruining the insulation.

- Homeowners can save up to 20 percent on energy costs by insulating the attic to the proper R-value, the standard rating to describe insulation effectiveness.



**Treatment and replacement options help keep a home's armor strong.**

### Siding

- Patch or replace any cracks or flaws in siding.

- Consider vinyl siding with foam backing. The vinyl provides a virtually maintenance-free exterior and the foam fills air space for insulation and better energy performance.

These home maintenance and efficiency measures can increase a house's life span. What's more, regular upkeep can add value to the property, ultimately increasing the return on investment.

For larger home improvement projects such as upgrading roofing, siding or windows, homeowners will likely want to arrange installation with a licensed professional rather than attempting to do it on his or her own. The Home Depot Home Services provides guaranteed installation for these and other home improvement projects. Visit [homedepot.com/install](http://homedepot.com/install) or call (800) HOMEDEPOT to schedule a free in-home consultation with a licensed technician.