



Top 10 dream home features

If you were given a chance to design your own dream home, what would your favourite features be? Here are some of the most requested items:

1. Curb appeal. Home exterior, driveway, and landscaping must attract admiring attention.
2. Concrete and natural stone, not structured by wood and brick. These homes (nudura.com) are not only beautiful, they are stonger, more sound resistant, and far more energy efficient than wood frames and brick.
3. Maximum energy efficient throughout from top to bottom.
4. Solar panels in the roof to generate a personal energy source.

5. A large, designer kitchen with natural stone countertops and futuristic appliances, cabinetry and waterworks.
6. Natural hardwood flooring like Brazilian cherry and sustainable bamboo.
7. A sunroom, a front porch, and a backyard finished patio.
8. Vessel sinks, or freestanding bowls above the bathroom countertop, accompanied by wall-mounted faucets.
9. Bedroom walk out or balcony.
10. Designer bathtubs and walk-in shower with marble tile, a seating bench and rainfall showerhead.

—www.newscanada.com

Time is right for furnace maintenance

Back in the old days, the annual furnace maintenance coincided with the arrival of cold weather.

This is because furnaces typically required manual ignition of the pilot light, which for the most part is a thing of the past. Now, a furnace maintenance can be performed anytime – ideally, long before the cold weather arrives and the line-ups for maintenances start.

“There’s another perk to booking a furnace maintenance off-season, as many homeowners may be unaware that their furnace operates during the summertime by circulating cooled air from the air conditioner,” says Dave Walton, director of home ideas, Direct Energy. “The blower motor is responsible for moving cool air through the duct work of the house. This also means it’s important to continue changing the furnace filters regularly.”

And last but certainly not least, safety. Scheduling a regular maintenance for gas fired heating appliances, such as furnaces, boilers and fireplaces can help detect carbon monoxide leaks and avoid the development of unsafe conditions. Having working carbon monoxide detectors in the home is another key safety measure.

It might be 25 degrees out, but think about getting ahead on your



furnace maintenance. Consider bumping up your annual maintenance by a month or so, to late August or early September. Better yet, arrange to have your furnace maintenance done when you get the air conditioner maintenance done.

More information is available online at www.directenergy.com or toll-free at 1-888-266-3939.

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