

**Golden Secrets of Mechanical Maintenance and Management**  
**Findlay Area Apartment Association - November 2023**  
**Presented by Tom Miller-- followed by group input**

Points to hit

Take before and after pictures from each corner of each room. Be sure to photograph smoke detectors, light fixtures, and door thresholds (where pets often scratch when they want out).

Use Qwikset locks. They're cheap and decent quality. Cylinders can be rekeyed and then use WD40 to prevent any issues. Engrave key to a code you can understand for each property.

Digital locks are great but are usually difficult to program, have high failure rate lasting from a couple months to 7 years and batteries will have problems if mounted in a cold area.

Check sink plumbing- garbage disposal /remove disposal if several years old. Sink drain pipes-use the white pvc (chrome or brass is much more expensive and rots at about 20 years)

For pressure pipes, consider cpvc: cheap and easy. Pex: cheap, easy and fast. Copper: very expensive

Try never to use quick connectors as they sometimes will leak years after repair.

Recommend 90 degree turn shut offs

Wax ring for toilet—consider going to elastomer- available from Johnson Supply

Check sump pumps-install two at different levels.

Make sure breaker box is well labeled.

Check each electrical outlets and replace if it holds a plug loosely.

Check where main sewer line goes out of structure-if there's moisture it indicates the sewer is plugging

Run dishwasher through a cycle

Flooring—use vinyl click together for kitchens and baths, wood laminate is acceptable in other areas but edges will swell if they get wet for long. Carpet is fast to lay down and preferred in bedrooms

Soft vinyl is unacceptable—it will tear the first time your tenant tries to slide a refrigerator or washing machine.

Change water heaters every 10 to 12 years-gas heaters especially-they seem to lose their efficiency and cause problems. Check venting at gas hot water flue/ change over to electric water heater if easy to do.

Check smoke alarms/new batteries, recommend sealed battery, replace detector at 10 years

Check power lines coming into the structure-if the line runs through trees that sway in the wind they can wreak havoc on computers

Clean drains with Zippit to pull the hair out even if it still flows good

Check boiler pressure

Furnaces-keep extra ignitor on hand—a lot of furnaces even of different brands use the same style, If flame problem in furnace-scrape flame sensor or use sandpaper-never had to buy a new sensor Ebay is a great place to buy extra parts and obsolete parts.

Recommend Delta faucets-they are simple to repair. If the big nut that holds the guts in doesn't turn, use wd40 and some heat

Use good quality paint—Behr from Home Depot is some of the best.

Consider ordering from "HD Supply" mail order supplies. Typically plumbing parts, hardware, and miniblinds. They require at least \$50 order for free shipping and ship quick. They often beat Lowe's and Menards prices but check to be sure

To put a screw through carpet-to prevent the strand wrapping around and forming a runner-heat up an awl and burn the carpet where the screw is going

Refrigerators-check temperatures. IR gun is quick and easy. Clean coils. Use 3/8 inch hose to suck the goop out of the evaporator drain

Cleaners—Totally Awesome (piss yellow) from the dollar store is an excellent general cleaner. Hot water is your friend. Allow things to soak before scrubbing. Zep oven cleaner from Menards is excellent to clean ovens

Group Input 2-2012 (most contributors are listed so you can contact them for further info. Please forgive omissions-I was writing fast and couldn't catch all names)

Nylon toilet bolts are better than brass, they seem to have some give, are easy to cut, and won't deform the toilet ring. They can be found at Menards and Lowe's now-Jack Wasbro

Use 3 in 1 oil on furnace squirrel cage bushings, sometimes you have to drill a hole-Tom Ross

Ohio Conveyor has bushings for about \$3-Jack Wasbro

Lease hot water tanks for \$12 per month, free 24 hr replacement if problem.

Use DrainKing or Clogbuster to clear plugged sewer lines. They are like a rubber balloon that goes into the drain, hook up a garden hose, they expand to seal then force water to unplug. They're available in various sizes even up to 4 inch at Lowe's or Menards and has saved from renting an electric eel many times-Gary Greiwe

Be sure to run bathroom vent to outside, many are just dumping the damp air into the attic leading to mold problems.

Modern gas hot water heaters draw in oxygen from bottom. A common problem is flame goes out intermittently. This is caused from air starvation because screen on bottom has gotten dirty from dust and especially pet hair because the pets often like to lay close to the heat.-Bob Wagner

Use bottled air to clean dust from thermostat-Linda Woolery

Check tenants' outdoor hoses every fall-Joe Edinger

Check outdoor spigots every Thanksgiving, disconnect hose if connected, send tenants one of two prepared letters: one saying you disconnected their hose and if spigot freezes in the future tenant will be held liable for repair, other thanking them for having their hose disconnected but if hose is connected in the future and spigot freezes tenant will be liable for repair-Denise Mitchel

Bats in the attic might be chased away by a radio type emitter.

Bats in the attic are left alone by pest controllers because of the "Tree Hugger" environment-Brad Wagner

PEX or snap on connectors can make quick repair of leaking copper pipe-Mike Smith

Be careful with these connectors, they have been known to release once water pressure is removed.

Refrigerators sometimes quit working, typically in August because of the humidity, evaporator drain in back of freezer has frozen shut thus coils have frozen into an iceball and often water will be dripping onto bottom of fridge. To remedy this contact Thomas Appliance, he sells a kit(about 11\$) that consists of a strap of metal which wraps around the heat element and extends into the drain hole where they typically freeze shut. An infrared thermometer gun purchased on EBAY for about \$20 makes quick work of taking temps, just aim and pull the trigger, temp reading in 2 seconds rather than waiting about 5 minutes for your old mercury thermometer to get a freezer temp-Tom Miller