Pre-Winter Roof Checklist

Winter in Central Ontario brings harsh winds, ice, and heavy snow loads. Use this practical checklist to spot warning signs from the ground before freezing weather sets in.

1. GROUND-LEVEL VISUAL INSPECTION

- [ ] **Curling or Missing Shingles:** Look for shingle tabs that are bent upward, cracked, or completely blown off by recent fall winds.
- [ ] **Granule Loss (Sandy Gutters):** Check the bottom of your downspouts for coarse, sand-like granules. This indicates the shingles are aging and losing their weatherproofing.
- [ ] **Sagging Roof Lines:** A wavy or dipping roof deck can mean moisture has compromised the plywood underneath.
- [ ] **Tree Clearance:** Ensure overhanging branches are trimmed back so they do not scrape against your shingles during winter storms.

2. CHECK FLASHINGS & PENETRATIONS

- [ ] **Cracked Rubber Seals:** Inspect the rubber boots around plumbing vent pipes. Sun and age can cause these to crack and let water in.
- [ ] **Rusty Chimney Flashing:** Look at the metal where the roof meets the chimney. Rust or loose metal allows melting snow to seep inside.
- [ ] **Debris in Roof Valleys:** Ensure the "V" dips of your roof are completely free of wet leaves, which trap moisture and cause rot.

3. EVALUATE EAVESTROUGHS & DRAINAGE

- [ ] **Clogged Gutters:** Ensure eavestroughs are completely clear of leaves and pine needles so melting snow can drain freely.
- [ ] **Detachment Risk:** Check if the gutters are pulling away from the wood fascia board. Heavy winter ice will pull loose gutters completely down.
- [ ] **Downspout Flow:** Confirm that water exits at least three to four feet away from your home's foundation to prevent basement leaks.

4. ASSESS ATTIC HEALTH (THE WINTER BLANKET)

- [ ] **Insulation Depth:** Your attic insulation should look like a deep, even blanket. Thin spots allow expensive indoor heat to escape and melt rooftop snow.
- [ ] **Blocked Airflow:** Make sure insulation isn't stuffed tightly into the edges (soffits). Fresh air must flow up from the eaves to keep the attic dry.
- [ ] **Drafty Attic Hatch:** Feel around your attic access door. Cold drafts mean it needs weatherstripping to stop heat loss.
- [ ] **Water Stains:** Use a flashlight to check the exposed wood framing for dark water stains, mold, or winter frost buildup.

⚠️ Safety First Protocol

Never climb up on a steep or slippery roof yourself. Protect yourself by staying safely on the ground and using binoculars to perform your visual inspection.

Want a Professional Diagnosis?

We take the guesswork out of winter preparation. Our safety-certified experts will inspect your roof, attic, and eavestroughs with complete photo documentation.

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