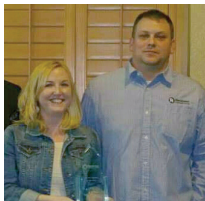


## **Q** How can home maintenance prevent mice and other critters from taking up residence in my home?



*Tiffany and Bryan Peters*

**A** Our homes are inviting for many types of pests, but with a little home maintenance, you can keep unwanted guests out. Take time to examine these key areas on your home's exterior to identify and seal potential entryways into your home:

1. Wall penetrations - Seal up gaps or cracks around anything that passes through your walls such as gas, plumbing, phone and cable lines, and exhaust vents. Perform the "pencil test" on any cracks - if you can slide the pencil into a crack, its large enough for a young mouse to squeeze through.
2. Door and Windows - Replace torn screens and worn-out weatherstripping. Also be sure the rubber gasket under your garage door seals tightly to the floor.
3. Soffits and Roof - Repair any holes and gaps in soffits and fascia as these can be favorite entry ways for squirrels, bats and wasps.
4. Gutters - Be sure your gutters and downspouts are clean since debris-filled gutters are a favorite nest spot for bugs. Check that your downspouts are turned away from the house and that the gutters aren't leaking to keep water away from your home's foundation. Keeping the soil and foundation dry around your house will make it less attractive to insects and spiders.

**This Fall, Leave Your Home Repairs to Handyman Connection!  
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