



Building North Central Washington (Building NCW), is a nonprofit organization bringing together the builders, tradespeople, designers, suppliers, lenders, and local businesses who help shape the places we call home.

Photo Courtesy of Central Washington Construction



Home is Having a

Moment

Fall inspiration, smart updates and a little preparation before winter arrives

There's something about September in North Central Washington that turns our attention back toward home.

The mornings get cooler. The hills begin trading summer green for gold. Evenings on the patio require an extra layer, and suddenly that fireplace we barely noticed all summer starts looking pretty inviting.

Fall has a way of making us look at our homes differently.

And lately, what homeowners want from their spaces is changing too. Less "perfect for the photo" and more comfortable, functional and made for actually living in.

Warm woods, natural stone and richer colors are finding their way back into homes. Lighting is becoming softer and more layered. Kitchens continue to be gathering places, but homeowners are also thinking about how the spaces around them work: mudrooms that can handle real life, flexible rooms that serve more than one purpose and outdoor areas that stretch our relatively short North Central Washington patio season just a little longer.

There's also a growing appreciation for the things you don't necessarily see.

Good insulation. Energy-efficient windows. Thoughtful storage. Quality materials. Heating and cooling systems that keep a home comfortable through 100-degree summer afternoons and snowy January mornings.

Not exactly the glamorous side of home design, but comfort has a funny way of becoming luxurious when winter arrives.

BEFORE THE SNOW FLIES...

Of course, fall isn't only about cozying up the house. September and early fall are also the perfect time to give your home a little attention before North Central Washington's colder weather arrives.

Look up. Check your roof and gutters for damage, loose materials and debris. It's considerably easier to deal with a small problem now than discover it during the first heavy snow.

Seal the gaps. Take a look at weather stripping and caulking around windows and doors. Small drafts can make a surprisingly

big difference in comfort and energy use.

Give your heating system some love.

Change the filter and consider scheduling seasonal maintenance before the first truly cold week, when approximately everyone else remembers they own a furnace too.

Protect the pipes. Disconnect garden hoses, winterize irrigation systems and make sure exposed plumbing is protected from freezing temperatures.

Take a lap around the house. Look at siding, decks, concrete, exterior paint and drainage. Fall is a good time to catch little issues before winter gives them the opportunity to become much more ambitious.

And think ahead. If a remodel, addition, new windows or even a new home is somewhere in your future, fall is a great time to start those conversations. Good projects benefit from planning long before the first hammer swings.

MAKE HOME FEEL GOOD

Your home doesn't need a full renovation to feel different this fall.

Sometimes it's changing the lighting, bringing in warmer textures, rearranging a room or finally fixing that one thing you've walked past for six months while pretending you absolutely do not see it.

Sometimes it's simply making the house ready for the season ahead.

Because a good home isn't necessarily the biggest, newest or most impressive one. It's the place that works for the people inside it, stands up to our four very opinionated North Central Washington seasons and gives us somewhere we genuinely enjoy coming back to.

So light the fireplace. Invite some people over. Put something good on the stove.

Winter will get here soon enough. ■

Building North Central Washington represents local builders, remodelers, trades and home-industry professionals who help build, improve and care for the places we call home throughout North Central Washington.

Fall Home *Tips*

A mix of practical home preparation and simple ideas that make fall at home more comfortable and enjoyable.



- 1. Show the furnace a little love** — Replace the filter and schedule seasonal maintenance before the first cold week—when everyone suddenly remembers furnaces exist.
- 2. Clear the gutters** — Remove leaves and debris before fall rain and winter snow turn a small clog into a much larger personality problem.
- 3. Disconnect the garden hoses** — Drain hoses, cover exterior faucets and winterize irrigation systems before freezing temperatures arrive.
- 4. Find the drafts** — Check weather stripping and caulking around doors and windows. Small gaps can quietly nibble away at comfort and energy costs.
- 5. Look up**—and check the drainage — Check shingles, flashing, vents, nearby tree limbs, downspouts and drainage around the foundation. Use a professional if heights and you are not currently on speaking terms.
- 6. Prepare the fireplace and safety equipment** — Clean and inspect the fireplace or chimney, then test smoke and carbon-monoxide alarms. Cozy season should remain cozy.

- 7. Check outdoor lighting** — Replace bulbs and clean fixtures before shorter days make arriving home feel like an obstacle course.
- 8. Create an entryway landing zone** — Add hooks, baskets or a boot tray for coats, backpacks and wet shoes. The floor has carried this team long enough.
- 9. Warm up the lighting and texture** — Add lamps, warmer bulbs, heavier throws, woven baskets and natural wood. A home can feel like fall without becoming a pumpkin warehouse.
- 10. Make one room gathering-ready** — Rearrange seating, clear the dining table or create a cozy conversation area before the holidays and football gatherings begin. ■

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