

TROUBLESHOOTING COMMON ISSUES

The Simplest Solution Is Often the Best

Homes experience wear and tear just like anything else. Over the years, the PWSC team has collected the ordinary maintenance mishaps homeowners face. The good news is that many of these common issues are 100% fixable by you. No experience or warranty required.

When you find that next creak, squeak, buzz, or bump, check this list first to see if a simple fix will do the trick.

Appliances

The Maintenance Issue	Its Likely Cause	Try This Simple Solution First
An electric appliance isn't working	The plug is loose or the circuit breaker tripped	Check that the plug is secured in the outlet, then reset the breaker
Dishwasher is leaving a white or gritty residue on dishes	Water flow to the dishwasher is blocked or the filter needs cleaned	Open the valve under the sink to improve water flow. Remove the dishwasher filter and soak it in hot, soapy water for about 60 minutes.
The refrigerator isn't making ice	The ice maker or water line are turned off	Reset ice maker and ensure the water line is connected to the back of the refrigerator
The fridge is collecting condensation	Temperature control needs adjusted	Ensure doors are closing and sealing properly, then reset the temperature
Water is on the floor near the clothes washer	The washer's drain line is constricted	Check the drain for clogs and adjust the line to improve outbound flow

Windows

The Maintenance Issue	Its Likely Cause	Try This Simple Solution First
Window is difficult to open	Broken window balance or unclean jambs	Clean jamb with a silicone spray. If problem remains, replace the balance.
Window is tough to slide or won't stay open	Weak window balance or jammed tension rod	Adjust and/or replace the balance and tension rods
The window sash comes out when fully opened	The tension rod clips on the window's side jambs are stuck in the open position	Move clips to the closed position (you will feel a click) before opening
Window does not lock properly	There is debris in the track or the window is not aligned correctly	Clean the track and adjust the window's alignment at the middle when closing

Exterior Finishes

The Maintenance Issue	Its Likely Cause	Try This Simple Solution First
Depressions and nicks in the wood siding	Abuse, accidents, or weather	Caulk the nicks and repaint quickly
Siding is dirty or has the appearance of streaks	Growth of fungus or mildew, especially common in rainy regions	Apply a commercial mildew cleaner that complies with the siding manufacturer's recommendations, then hose the siding down to remove excess dirt
Painted surfaces are peeling or cracking	Normal aging and weather	Remove loose paint, then clean and sand the surface. Prime and repaint.
The wood trim has gaps at the joints	Normal shrinking of caulk and filler	Re-caulk or fill the joints regularly
A white substance is appearing on masonry finishes	Known as efflorescence, or the crystallization of soluble salts, when water dries on the masonry	Scrub with a stiff brush using a water and vinegar mixture
Cracks on stairsteps and masonry	Normal home settlement	Seal exterior cracks with a flexible masonry caulk

Heating & Air Conditioning

The Maintenance Issue	Its Likely Cause	Try This Simple Solution First
Air temperature differs between rooms and floors	Unbalanced air distribution or obstructed registers	Adjust air registers and remove obstructions. Close doors when not using a room to better control the temperature.
Thermostat's indicator light always stays on	Disconnect breaker is tripped	Reset the disconnect breaker in the electrical box or unit
Air conditioner or heat pump aren't working properly	The outside unit cannot get enough circulation	Remove all debris from the top of the unit and at least 12 inches from its sides
Inside or outside coil is frozen	Low refrigerant or dirty air filter	Clean or replace the filter, then raise the thermostat to 90° to thaw

Heating & Air Conditioning (Continued)

The Maintenance Issue	Its Likely Cause	Try This Simple Solution First
Water is collecting on the inside of windowpanes	Your home has excess humidity	Adjust thermostat setting or purchase a dehumidifier. Always use exhaust fans when cooking or bathing.
There is a burning smell when I first turn on my furnace for the season	Accumulated dust on electrical cords	This is perfectly normal and likely will happen every year

Plumbing

The Maintenance Issue	Its Likely Cause	Try This Simple Solution First
My water heater isn't producing hot water	Tripped circuit breaker or incorrect temperature setting	Reset the circuit breaker and increase the temperature setting on the unit
The toilet runs constantly	The tank's water level is too high	Adjust the toilet's float arm stem inside the tank downward
The toilet is making weird noises—it's loud, dripping, or gurgling	The ball cock or floater valves are not working	For loud noises, replace the ball cock in the toilet's water tank. Replace the floater valve for dripping and gurgling sounds.
The toilet is backing up or overflowing	There is a line obstruction	Turn off the intake valve and then plunge the toilet
Water spits or sprays from faucets	The water supply line has air in it	Run every faucet in your home simultaneously for about five minutes
Water drips from the shutoff valves	Loose packing nut	Open the valve completely, then gently tighten the nut