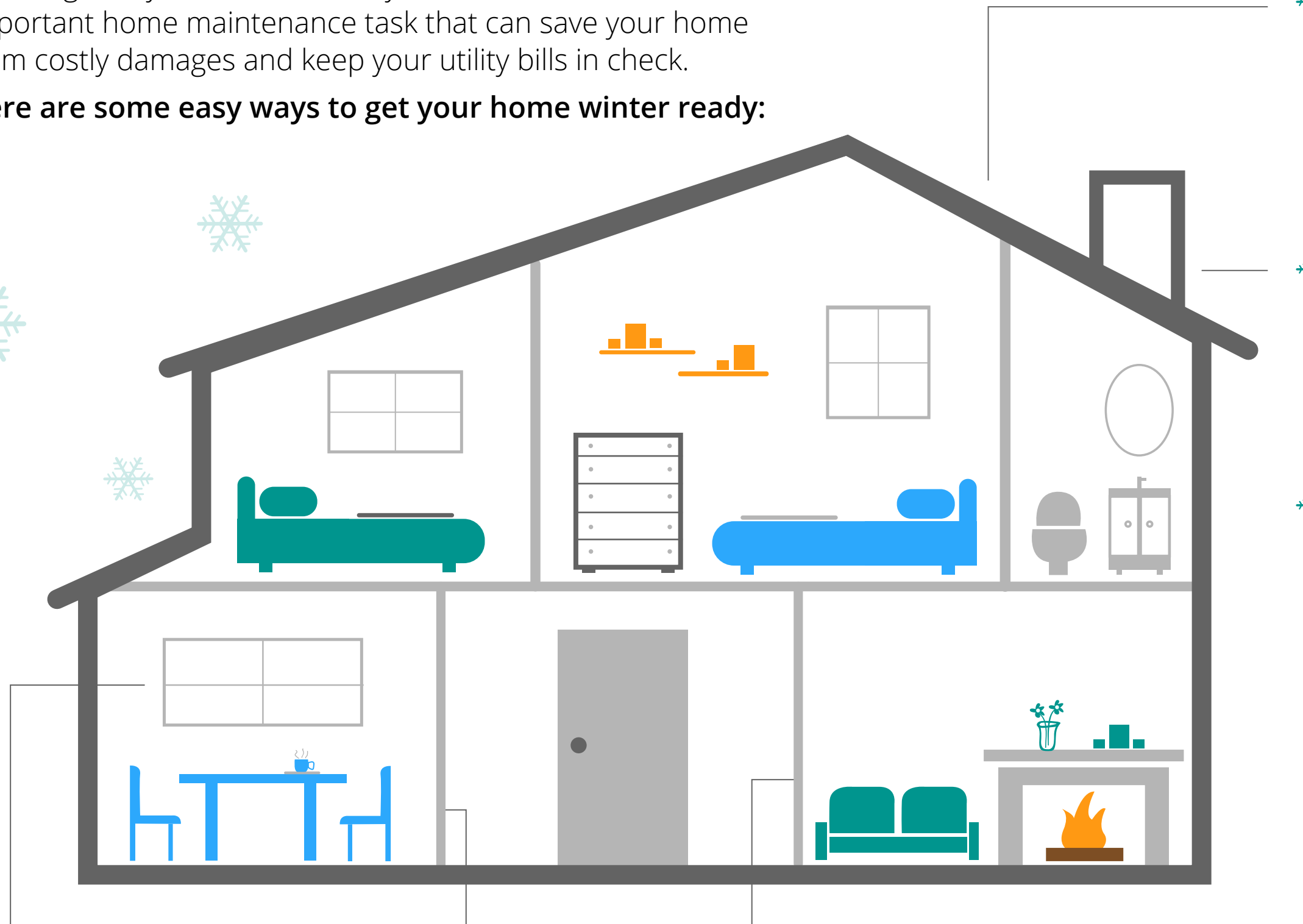


5 EASY STEPS TO A WINTER-READY HOME

Ensuring that your home is ready for the winter season is an important home maintenance task that can save your home from costly damages and keep your utility bills in check.

Here are some easy ways to get your home winter ready:



SEAL UP YOUR HOUSE

Gaps that form between walls, windows and door frames can let in drafts and let out all that heat you're paying for. To keep your home warm and energy bills down, caulk around your windows and doors, and replace worn weather stripping.

PREPARE YOUR PIPES

Pipes left unattended can freeze and burst. To avoid this, winterize them by:

- Turning outdoor faucets off and flushing your irrigation system
- Draining water from hoses and properly storing them for the season
- Properly insulating your hot water heater or the room where it's stored
- Applying additional insulation to pipes that run outside of your home
- Using tape to keep pipes warm

WEATHER-PROOF YOUR ROOF

Take the time to inspect your roof (or hire a professional to do so) for loose, damaged or missing shingles. Make any repairs necessary to ensure your roof is watertight and ready for freezing rain and snow. While you're up there, clear out your gutters, too!

CALL THE CHIMNEY SWEEP

A poorly maintained chimney can cause a fire or even carbon monoxide poisoning. Before you use your fireplace for the first time this year, call your local chimney sweep for a cleaning and inspection.

GET A HEATER TUNE-UP

Like a poorly maintained fireplace, a malfunctioning heating system can cause carbon monoxide poisoning or other illnesses for your family. Call your local HVAC company to schedule an inspection and tune-up. A properly working heat system uses less energy and can help you save on your utility costs.

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