



DIY Gutter Cleaning: 7 Tips to Staying Safe

Published February 24th, 2016 on prohomemi.com

If you stepped outside this weekend and it felt like spring, you were not alone. Thousands of people across Michigan saw the outside air temperature creep past 60, despite the fact that it was still mid-February. Yes, it seems the groundhog is keeping his promise to bring us an early end to winter. If you spent any time in your yard this weekend, you may have noticed your gutters and the sad state that they may be in. As you've read here before, gutters are vital to the health your home.

After winter, you may not think your gutters needs a clean-out, but, trust me, they do. Since fall ended, you haven't been up to look inside your gutters, and a whole host of various leaves, debris and roof granules have piled up in your gutters. Combine that with what the snowfall left behind, and you could have a very clogged gutter system on your hands.

So what does this mean?

It's time to check your gutters.

With the amount of snow melt and rain that we should expect in the next month, your gutters need to be performing at their peak and any clogs will further destroy the effectiveness.

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7 Tips to Stay Safe When Cleaning Gutters

Here are 7 tips you should follow if you are (and you should be) going to be cleaning out your gutters in the near future as well as special, bonus 8th tip to reduce your need to clean gutters in the first place.

1. Practice ladder safety.

Use a safe and sturdy ladder, preferably not wooden. Bring someone along to anchor the bottom and ensure it will not slide. Inspect the ladder prior to using it for any cracks, broken pieces or dents. Make sure you use any extension arms and rest the ladder on a solid surface, NOT on your gutters.

2. Use eye protection.

Clearing out a gutter can be a messy job and you don't want to be taken off-guard when you are high up on a ladder. Getting blasted in the eye with water can be uncomfortable and if your reaction is to grasp your face, you may endanger yourself by not firmly holding onto your ladder. Use eye protection to avoid the danger of stuff getting in your eye (which is bad enough), but also because if stuff does get in your eye, you tend to focus on that rather than not falling off of a ladder.

3. Wear gloves.

Wearing gloves can help protect against the filth that is built up in your gutters which may include animal droppings. It can also help avoid any cuts or scrapes you could get from a jagged edge. The best material is the thicker, construction gloves that are somewhat suede-like in feel. They provide better poke protection and decent moisture protection for the gutter cleaning job.

4. Avoid power lines.

Make sure you know where power comes into your house and where it travels overhead and do not go anywhere near it. It is better to leave a gutter cleaning to the experts if the situation is not safe enough for you.

5. Use a hose or gutter scoop.

One method of cleaning a gutter involves the use of a garden hose with a trigger. The trigger helps you to control the pressure of the water used to push debris down your gutter. If your hose is still put away, consider using a plastic gutter scoop. These tools are specifically made to clean out gutters and avoid scratching them. If your debris log-jam is large enough, the hose will not do the trick and you'll have to scoop.

6. Unjam the downspouts.

You might have to keep going back to the downspout to clear it out if you are using the hose method. If nothing is moving along, go back to the downspout to ensure it's flowing freely.

7. When in doubt, move the ladder.

Never overextend yourself to "just get that last little bit". This might be the number 1 way people end up with a broken rib in the ER after cleaning their gutters. They think they can avoid moving the ladder by just reaching far enough. They lose their balance, grab the gutter (and probably destroy it) and plummet to the ground where they lay in a heap. Don't push it, never reach out past the range of your arms and just move the ladder if you can't decide. It will add 10 seconds to your work but will save you a potential life-threatening injury.

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Where's my 8th tip? Is there some secret to avoiding all this in the first place?

The 8th tip is Pro Flow Gutter Protection. If you have Pro Flow Gutter Protection, you have the luxury of not needing to ascend the ladder as often to inspect, clean and fix your gutters.

I'm listening.

Pro Flow Gutter Protection shields your gutters from leaves, debris, sticks and dirt to help them flow freely, year-round with little to no clean-out necessary. Imagine skipping all of the steps listed above because you have a worry-free gutter protection system in place? I call that a win for you and your precious Sunday afternoons that can be better spent enjoying your family, the yard and the great Michigan outdoors.

With spring right around the corner, it's time to consider the gutters and siding of your home. How are they holding up? Do you need a fresh look? Do you want to end the cycle of endless cleanouts, jams and clogs? If you need some help in this area, don't hesitate to call up the Pros at Pro Home Improvement at 888-776-1998. We can help get your gutters & siding buttoned up, protected and ready for summer.



For more information contact Pro Home Improvement
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