

How to Monsoon-Proof Your Home

Written by Elizabeth Liberatore

Boisterous windstorms? Roaring thunder? Even lightening? This could only mean one thing for the Valley of the Sun: monsoon season. After residents encountered one of the worst dust storms to occur in Arizona a few weeks ago, we can only presume how violent this monsoon season will be. However, there are plenty of ways to steer clear of Mother Nature by monsoon-proofing your home. Check out these helpful tips provided by Ace Hardware Phoenix that will keep your home safe.



Outdoors:

For new residents, it is important to call your local Red Cross to find out the drainage patterns in your neighborhood and see what kind of flooding you have. Becoming aware of this allows homeowners to save themselves thousands of dollars in water damage by taking specific safety measures designed to your house's needs.

The wind can cause backyard things to break, bend, and blow about and cause damage. Start by making sure the obvious backyard items are secure. Patio furniture, umbrellas, and roll up patio blind should be stowed. The less obvious items that can blow about are City of Phoenix trashcans, children's play sets, trampolines, side yard sheds, window screens and loose roof tiles or shingles.

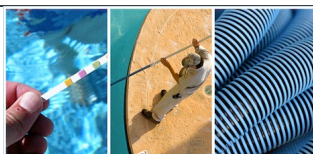
Trees can also become a large problem during the monsoon season. It is important to secure young trees in order to prevent damage to them. The proper way to do this is to stake it. Hammer two eight-foot lodge poles into the ground, in a slight V shaped slant, then wire the trees to the poles with a piece of coated wire and a scrap piece of garden hose to create a "garden hose cradle." For larger trees it is important that they are pruned in such a way that they are thinned out, this will create less resistance to the wind. Simply cut small branches with hand pruners and larger branches with long handle pruners or a tree saw.



Indoors:

It's best to have several flashlights and batteries on hand in the event of a power failure. Keep them in various locations for easy access (the garage, night stands, end tables, kitchen pantry, under beds, etc.) Also, a first-aid kit will come in handy during the monsoon season. Your first-aid kit should include water (two to three gallons per person), non-perishable snacks, a Leatherman Multi-Tool in case you need to do minor repairs in your house and a battery operated radio set. The Red Cross emergency radio from ETON is one in particular that includes a signal light, siren, flashlight and emergency weather alert radio that automatically turns itself on to broadcast warning messages.

Surge protectors are essential to protect your electronic devices. When lightning strikes phone or cable lines, a surge can come through those lines into your home. A good surge protector can help prevent damage to your sensitive electrical equipment. Surge protectors are rated in joules, which tell you how much energy the surge protector can absorb before it fails. A higher number indicates greater protection. Look for a protector that is at least rated at 200 to 400 joules.



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After the monsoon:

The Weather Service decided the Arizona monsoon season ends Sept. 30; however, the true date is up to nature. At this time, it is important to take care of your pool. Using a pool brush, sweep the sides of accumulated dust and debris from the storms. Also, you will need to super shock the water and do a chlorine test to make sure everything is okay. If not, back flush your pool to get it back into its normal condition.

For additional information about products, techniques or to speak to a professional about proper precautions for the monsoon season visit <http://www.acehardwarephoenix.com/>.