

## Disclaimer

The information contained in this New Tradition Homes, Inc. Homeowner Guide ("Guide") is for general information purposes only. New Tradition Homes, Inc. assumes no responsibility for errors or omissions in the content in this Guide. Best efforts were made in the preparation of this Guide to provide accurate information as of the date of publishing. Under no circumstances does New Tradition Homes, Inc. warrant or certify the information in this Guide to be free of errors or omissions of any kind.

New Tradition Homes, Inc. does not assume any liability for the use of the information and procedures described in this Guide. In no event shall New Tradition Homes, Inc. be liable for any special, direct, indirect, consequential, or incidental damages or any damages whatsoever, whether in an action of contract, negligence or other tort, arising out of or in connection with the use of this Guide or the contents and information in this Guide. New Tradition Homes, Inc. reserves the right to make additions, deletions, or modifications to the contents of this Guide at any time without prior notice. No representation, express or implied, is made regarding the accuracy, adequacy, completeness, reliability, or usefulness of any information in this Guide. All warranties of any kind, express or implied, including, but not limited to, any IMPLIED WARRANTY OF MERCHANTABILITY, HABITABILITY, OR FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE are disclaimed.

This Guide may contain links to external websites that are not provided or maintained by or in any way affiliated with New Tradition Homes, Inc. New Tradition Homes, Inc. does not guarantee the accuracy, relevance, timeliness, or completeness of any information on these external websites.

This Guide offers general information on the purchase, construction, and ownership of your new home and is designed for educational purposes only. You should not rely on this information as a substitute for, nor does it replace, professional legal, accounting, or tax advice.

Last updated: February 26, 2020

All Rights Reserved

© 2018

New Tradition Homes, Inc.

# Contents

<b>Caring for Your Home .....</b>	<b>5</b>
Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines .....	6
Warranty Guidelines.....	6
Warranty Service Requests.....	7
Emergency Service .....	7
Anniversary Visit.....	9
Warranty Repairs.....	10
Primary Warranty Visit Meeting Details .....	13
Warranty Visit – <i>Sample Agenda</i> .....	14
Air Conditioning .....	15
Alarm System.....	16
Appliances.....	17
Asphalt.....	17
Attic.....	18
Brick and Cultured Stone.....	20
Cabinets.....	20
Carbon Monoxide Detectors.....	21
Carpet.....	21
Caulking .....	24
Ceramic Tile.....	25
Concrete Flatwork .....	26
Condensation .....	29
Countertops.....	30
Crawl Space .....	31
Dampproofing .....	32
Decks .....	32
Doors and Locks .....	33
Drywall .....	35
Easements .....	36
Electrical System .....	37
Energy and Water Conservation.....	39
Extended Absences .....	41
Expansion and Contraction.....	42
Fencing .....	42
Fireplace .....	43
Fire Prevention .....	44
Fixtures (Plumbing).....	45
Foundation.....	46
Framing.....	47
Garage Overhead Door.....	47
Gas Shut-Offs.....	48
Ghosting.....	49
Grading and Drainage .....	49
Green Home Care .....	51
Gutters and Downspouts (Southwest WA) .....	53
Hardware.....	54
Hardwood and Laminate .....	56
Heating System: Gas Forced Air .....	56
Heating System: Heat Pump .....	59
Humidifier (Eastern WA).....	60

Insulation .....	61
Landscaping .....	61
Mildew .....	64
Mirrors .....	65
Mold Prevention .....	65
Multi-Family Lifestyle (Townhomes) .....	67
Paint and Stain .....	67
Painted Stucco .....	69
Pests and Wildlife .....	69
Plumbing .....	70
Property Boundaries .....	75
Railings .....	75
Resilient (Vinyl) Flooring .....	75
Roof .....	76
Septic System .....	78
Shower Doors or Tub Enclosures .....	79
Siding .....	80
Smoke Detectors .....	80
Stairs .....	81
Stucco .....	81
Sump Pump .....	82
Swimming Pools .....	82
Telephone and Cable Outlets .....	83
Termites .....	83
Utility Locations .....	84
Ventilation .....	85
Water Heater .....	86
Windows, Screens, Sliding Glass Doors .....	87
Wood Trim .....	88
Home Care Supplies List .....	91
Maintenance Schedule .....	92
Additional Warranty Coverage .....	94
Appliance Service Log .....	95

## Chapter 8

# Caring for Your Home

**Much like an automobile, your home requires care from the first day you own it. This chapter of our homeowner guide was assembled to assist you in giving regular attention to your home to maintain quality for a lifetime.**

This chapter includes:

- **Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines**—An introduction to the maintenance information in this homeowner guide
- **Warranty Guidelines**—An introduction to the criteria we use to evaluate workmanship and/or distribution systems (i.e. plumbing, HVAC and electrical) warranty items
- **Warranty Service Requests**—Information about handling product emergencies or appliance issues, standard warranty visits and interim items
- **Warranty Repairs**—Decisions and scheduling; details about working in your home; completion times; and missed appointments
- **Warranty Visit Meeting Details**—We plan to inspect your home on your behalf to confirm that it is performing to the documented standards
- **Warranty Visit Agenda**—Although each community is slightly different, the sample agenda illustrates the level of detail we will check in your home
- **From Air Conditioning to Wood Trim**—An alphabetical list of the items in your home, including maintenance hints, warranty criteria, and troubleshooting tips
- **Home Care Supplies**—Create a shopping list of tools and supplies you will need to care for your home
- **Maintenance Schedule**—a place to make notes about routine maintenance tasks and plan your maintenance schedule
- **Additional Warranty Coverage**—In addition to our Two Year Warranty, your home comes with other warranties
- **Appliance Service**—A worksheet where you can record serial and model numbers along with manufacturers' service phone numbers

We build your home with carefully selected materials and experienced craftsmen and laborers under the supervision of our field personnel. This group works from detailed plans and specifications, but because homes are one of the last hand-built products left in the world, each one is unique and behaves differently over time.

## Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

We are proud of the homes we build and the neighborhoods in which we build them. We strive to create lasting value. This is best achieved when you know and perform appropriate maintenance tasks. Periodic maintenance is necessary because of normal wear and tear, the inherent characteristics of the materials used in your home, and normal service required by the mechanical systems. Home maintenance is also necessary as a result of natural fluctuations in temperature and humidity.

We recognize that it is impossible to anticipate and describe every item that will need attention to maintain your home. This chapter addresses the maintenance questions that homeowners most frequently inquire about. The subjects are listed in alphabetical order to make finding information convenient. Because we offer a variety of floor plans and optional features, this homeowner guide may discuss components that are not present in your home.

### Prompt Attention

Many times, giving attention to a minor maintenance need immediately saves you a more serious, time-consuming, and sometimes costly repair later. Note also that neglecting routine maintenance can impact applicable limited warranty coverage on all, or part, of your home.

By attentively caring for your home, you ensure uninterrupted warranty coverage, as well as years of enjoyment. The attention provided by each homeowner also contributes significantly to the overall value of your home and of the community.

Some manufacturers' warranties may extend beyond the first year and it is in your best interests to know about such coverage. Remember to either register online or mail in any registration cards you receive with manufacturer materials. Being in the manufacturer's system assures that in the event of a recall, the company can contact you and arrange to provide the needed correction.

We make every effort to keep the information in this homeowner guide current. However, if any detail in our discussion conflicts with the manufacturer's recommendations, please defer to the manufacturer's recommendations.

## Warranty Guidelines

While we strive to build a high-quality home, we know that with repeated use, an item in the home may fail to perform as it should. When this occurs, we coordinate with the appropriate trade partner to make necessary corrections so that the item meets our warranty guidelines.

**We provide you with a Two-Year Limited Builder Warranty covering materials, workmanship, and distribution systems. The guidelines described in the following pages apply to the two-year time period unless otherwise stated.**

In addition, your new home is covered by America's Choice® 2-10 Home Buyers Warranty® which is a third-party insurance backed warranty. This warranty covers the builder's workmanship for one year, the plumbing, electrical and mechanical systems for two years, and structural for ten years.

Please refer to the 2-10 Home Buyers Warranty® booklet that you received at your Purchase Agreement Meeting for additional details on covered items. Shortly after closing and moving into your new home, you will receive another copy of this booklet along with the actual warranty certificate outlining coverage on your home.

Follow the instructions outlined in the 2-10 Home Buyers Warranty® booklet to report a structural defect. Read the information below to learn how to report covered defective items under the two-year builders or the two-year systems warranties.

If you sell your home during the warranty period, advise us of the new owner's name and the date of closing. Please pass this homeowner guide to the new owners or suggest they contact New Tradition Homes to request one of their own. **Any remaining portion of the Two-Year Builder Workmanship Warranty is non-transferrable.** The 2-10 Home Buyer's Warranty® remains in place for its duration.

Also see *Additional Warranty Coverage* at the end of this chapter.

## Warranty Service Requests

Providing warranty service for a new home is more complicated than other products. When you purchased your home, you actually purchased hundreds of items and the work of 35 to 50 independent trade contractors. With so many details and people involved, a planned system is essential. Our system includes numerous types of service, as follows:

- Emergency service (the only service requests we accept by phone)
- Primary visit (typically 30 to 60 days after your closing)
- Anniversary visit (typically after one year but before the 2-year builder warranty expires)
- Interim warranty service (this visit applies to any periodic warranty concern that may arise)

If you are ever in doubt as to which applies to your situation, contact our warranty office for assistance.

**Note that New Tradition Homes does *not* warranty appliances. Appliance service is provided direct from the manufacturer.**

### Emergency Service

While emergency warranty situations are rare, when they occur, prompt response is essential. The first step in addressing an emergency is to check the home components that you can, including: plumbing, heating, electrical, roofing, and water heater. Please refer to the individual category in this homeowner guide for troubleshooting tips. You may be able to solve the problem immediately, or to mitigate the situation until a technician arrives. If your efforts do not address the problem, the information you gather will be useful to the service person you contact.

**During business hours**, call our warranty office at 360-448-4750 (Southwest WA); 509-542-8476 (Eastern WA)

**If the emergency request is on a weekend or after hours**, please contact a subcontractor directly. Refer to the emergency contact phone numbers below.

#### **Southwest Washington**

Prairie Electric	360-573-2750
Clark P.U.D.	360-992-3000
Area Heating & Cooling	360-737-0811
Service First Heating & Cooling	360-591-7274
N.W. Natural Gas	800-882-3377
Schlecht Plumbing	360-687-3925
Centurylink	800-315-1025
Cherry Roofing	360-574-7248

#### **Eastern Washington**

Royal Roofing	866-598-7663
Waterways Inc. (Plumber)	360-601-5120
Chinook Heating	509-736-1121
Campbell & Co. (HVAC)	509-545-9848
Prairie Electric	509-545-1752

In the event that neither New Tradition Homes or the responsible subcontractor is available, it is the homeowner's responsibility to contact a qualified subcontractor on their own. New Tradition Homes will reimburse such charges only if an attempt has been made to contact both New Tradition Homes and the responsible subcontractor first, and the deficiency falls within the respective warranty coverage periods.

Our trade contractors or local utility companies provide emergency responses to the following conditions:

- Total loss of heat during winter weather months (October to May)
- Total loss of electricity
- Total loss of water
- Plumbing leak that requires shutting off the entire water supply
- Gas leak (If you suspect a gas leak, leave the home immediately and call the gas company from another location to request emergency service.)

Note that if a utility service (gas, electricity, water) is out in an entire area, attention from the local utility company is needed. Trade contractors are unable to help with such outages.

If you have contacted one of the mechanical trades directly outside our normal business hours, please inform our warranty office the next business day so that we can document the situation and follow up as appropriate.

### ***Roof Leak***

While we agree with homeowners that a roof leak is indeed an emergency, repairs often cannot safely or effectively be performed while the roof is wet. During business hours, contact our warranty office with the information, take all possible steps to mitigate damage, and we will follow up when conditions make repairs possible. See *Roof* for more details.

### ***Other Emergencies***

In addition to emergency situations covered by our limited warranty, be prepared for other kinds of emergencies. Post phone numbers for the fire department, police, paramedics, and poison control near phones in your home. Have companies in mind that you would use in the event you need a locksmith, water extractor, glass breakage repair, or sewer router service. If you are new to the area, neighbors may be able to recommend good service providers.

## **Appliance Warranty Service**

**New Tradition Homes does not warranty appliances.**

**In Southwest Washington**, the manufacturers of kitchen appliances have asked to work directly with you if any repairs are needed for their products. They may be able to resolve the issue by talking with you over the phone and if they cannot, they prefer to set an appointment directly with you. Even though the kitchen appliance manufacturer will address your issue, please alert us as well so we can document your file and follow up with you as needed.

**In Eastern Washington**, if you have a kitchen or laundry appliance warranty request (for appliances included in your contract) call Fred's Appliance service department at (509) 736-9595. Be prepared to provide the model and serial number of the item and the closing date on your home.

Appliance service phone numbers are listed in the use and care materials for each appliance. The manufacturer, or their service provider, will ask for the model and serial number of the item and the closing date on your home. A form is included at the end of this homeowner guide so you can note appliance details in one convenient place for future reference.

## **Primary Visit (typically between 30 and 60 days after closing)**

During this appointment, we intend to accomplish the following:

1. Review key maintenance points and answer any questions you have about the care and operation of your home's features.
2. Use our checklist as a guide to inspect your home to confirm all of the components are performing as expected. A Warranty Visit Agenda appears later in this chapter.
3. Review any items you believe may require warranty attention to determine appropriate action.

Your primary warranty visit will be scheduled to occur during our normal warranty office hours: 8:00 am to 4:00 pm, Monday through Friday. You will receive a reminder for this appointment by email. Make note of questions or warranty concerns you have prior to this appointment so that we can address them during the primary warranty visit. Please ensure that the person at home for the warranty visit is over the age of 18 and is familiar with any concerns or questions you have.

## **Interim Warranty Items**

If you need to initiate non-emergency warranty service between the primary and anniversary visits, you may do so by sending a warranty request through the New Tradition Homes' website. Please include your name, address, phone numbers, and a list of your concerns

## Anniversary Visits

The purpose of the anniversary visit is to provide us opportunity to review your home's performance with you, go over any items that may require warranty attention (one time repairs), and assist you in continuing to maintain your home after the Workmanship Warranty expires. Please bring notes to this visit about items you would like us to review.

We provide several one-time repairs. The following outlines items appropriate for a one-time repair:

- Drywall: separation and nail pops
- Ceramic tile: grout cracks
- Countertops: separation from wall or backsplash
- Interior caulking: wood trim separations or cracks

New Tradition Homes will send you notification as we near the end of the warranty period, allowing you to schedule your Anniversary Visit. This will be done by email approximately 21 months from your original closing date to give time to schedule the meeting, and work orders to be issued, so agreed upon warranty items can be completed by the end of the warranty period.

**Warranty items must be completed at least 45 days before the warranty expiration date. Items submitted after this time period are subject to denial of warranty coverage.**

**New Tradition Homes will *not cover* warranty request items submitted after the warranty expiration date.**

## Put it in Writing!

Creating a written report of items requiring warranty service provides you with maximum protection. Not only will there be a document for each item placed in your warranty file, but this also allows us to operate efficiently and provide faster service to all homeowners. Retain a copy, along with the date, each time you submit written documentation for a warranty item. You may submit warranty requests in the following ways:

1. **The New Tradition Homes website:** [www.newtraditionhomes.com](http://www.newtraditionhomes.com)  
Click on Warranty Information, fill out the warranty request and submit; you may include photos if you wish.
2. **You may mail your request:**

### **For Southwest Washington**

New Tradition Homes  
11815 NE 113th Street, Suite 110  
Vancouver, WA 98662

### **For Eastern Washington**

New Tradition Homes  
9825 Sandifur Parkway, Suite A  
Pasco, WA 99301



## Help Us to Serve You

We can provide service faster and more accurately if we have all the necessary information. With any interim warranty request, please include:

- Your name, address, and preferred method of contact during business hours.
- A complete description of the problem; for example, “guest bath—cold water line leaks under the sink,” rather than “plumbing problem”.
- Include any pictures relevant to the repair request.
- Any additional information you think we should know to expedite service – for instance, the best days or times to reach you.

## Inspection and Repair Hours

New Tradition Homes understands the desire for appointments outside normal business hours. In investigating how such appointments could be arranged, we discovered several factors that make extended service hours impractical:

- A significant portion of repairs require daylight for proper execution, including drywall, paint, and exterior work.
- We also found that most of the 35 to 50 independent trade contractors who helped us build your home—many of whom operate as small companies—were unable to work all week and also be available for extended hours. Therefore, the few repairs that could be performed in off-hours failed to eliminate the need for repair appointments during normal business hours.
- Administrative staff and supervisors would need to be available to answer questions. Having these personnel work extended hours would mean being short-staffed during normal business hours.

We appreciate your understanding and cooperation with our warranty hours: Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

## Access to Your Home

Whether for inspection or repair appointments, we refrain from accepting keys and entering your home in your absence—as do our trade contractors. While we recognize this means that resolving warranty items may take longer, we believe your peace of mind and security should be our first concern.

We conduct warranty visits when an adult is available to accompany our representative and point out the items you have listed. Our in-house service technicians, and those of our trades or suppliers, will perform repairs only when you, or an individual 18 years or older who has your written authorization, admit service personnel and sign completed work orders.

## Renters

If you rent your home, written authorization is required to permit us to work directly with your renter or property manager. You will receive copies of all correspondence and work orders. Without such authorization, we are only able to accept warranty service requests from you.

## **Warranty Repairs**

Items listed on warranty requests fall into one of three categories:

- Trade contractor item
- In-house item
- Home maintenance item

If a trade contractor or an in-house employee is required to perform repairs, we issue a warranty work order describing the situation that needs to be addressed. If the item is a home maintenance task, we will review the maintenance steps with you and provide appropriate informational assistance. Occasionally an inspection step is unnecessary. In that case, we issue the needed work orders for an inspection and notify you that we have done so.

## Warranty Decisions

In addition to the information contained in the limited warranty document itself, this homeowner guide includes details about the criteria we will use to evaluate concerns you report. The purpose is to let you know what our warranty commitment is for the typical concerns that can come up in a new home. Descriptions include the corrective action we will take in many common situations.

Our Warranty Repair Criteria meets established guidelines as defined by the National Association of Homebuilders and the 2-10 Home Buyers Warranty. If a warranty question arises other than those discussed here, we will assess them according to industry and regional standard practices.

### ***Homeowner Maintenance vs. Warranty***

With a product as complex as a home, differences of opinion can occur regarding which tasks are homeowner maintenance responsibilities and which are our warranty responsibilities. If you request warranty service on a maintenance item, we will explain the steps you should take to care for the item. We are available to answer your home-care questions during and after your warranty period. Providing normal maintenance for your home is your responsibility.

## Trade Day Appointment

Depending on the number and nature of items that need attention, we may ask you to designate a Trade Day Appointment—a date a minimum of 15 days from the inspection date—for repairs to be made. This time frame allows us to notify appropriate trades people, order materials or parts, and arrange for the majority of repairs to occur on the same day.

Occasionally work must occur in sequence and more than one appointment may be needed, however, this system works well in the majority of situations.

Please be sure that you are available the entire time that the trades are working in your home. This creates an opportunity to have as many trades as possible complete their warranty work on the same day. If a particular trade is unavailable, or if the work needs to be completed in sequence, other arrangements will be made with you.

## Exterior Items

Exterior items can usually be inspected or repaired without an adult present, provided access is available (i.e. gate is unlocked, pets are restrained).

## Children

Children are naturally curious about tools and work occurring on their home. However, to protect them from possible injury and to allow repair personnel an uninterrupted opportunity to work, we ask that youngsters be cared for away from ongoing work. This policy is for the protection of your children, our employees, and trades personnel. We have instructed all repair personnel to reschedule the appointment if children are in, or around, the work area.

## Pets

We recognize that many homeowners count their pets as members of their households. To prevent the possibility of a pet giving in to its natural curiosity about tools and materials used for repairs and becoming injured or lost, we ask that you restrict all pets to a comfortable location during any warranty visit, whether for inspection or warranty work. This policy is also for the protection of our employees and trades personnel. Again, we have instructed all personnel to reschedule the appointment if pets have access to the work area.

## Your Belongings

Protection of your furnishings and personal items is an important goal during all warranty work. When work is needed in your home, we ask that you remove vulnerable items or items that might make performing the repair difficult. This includes furniture, or personal items, in or near the work area. We will reschedule the repair appointment rather than risk damaging your belongings.

## Surfaces

We expect all personnel who work in your home to arrive on time, park in the street, and have appropriate materials to cover the work area, protecting your home from damage and catching dust or scraps from the work being performed. Similarly, all personnel should clean up the work area when they are finished, removing any excess materials they brought in.

Prior to beginning any work, we require that repair personnel check the work area for any existing damage to surfaces. They will document any scratches, chips, or other cosmetic damage with you prior to beginning repairs to avoid any later disagreement about how and when such damage occurred.

## Signatures on Work Orders

Signing a work order acknowledges that a technician worked in your home on the item and on the date listed. Your signature on a work order does not negate any of your rights under the warranty, nor does it release us from any confirmed warranty obligation. If you prefer not to sign the work order, the technician will note that, sign the work order and return it to us for our records.

We may contact homeowners by e-mail survey to ask for feedback about the repair process. We want to hear if you have suggestions on how we can improve the service we provide. If you are dissatisfied with a provided service, please note that on the work order, call the warranty office with your feedback, or make us aware on the email survey. We are available to review your concerns and determine whether our requirements have been met.

The team at New Tradition Homes and the trades we partner with sincerely appreciate your compliments if we exceeded your expectations.

## Completion Time

Regular review of outstanding work orders is part of our office routine. Checking with trades and homeowners alike, we strive to get warranty work completed within a reasonable amount of time. If not, we seek to identify and address the cause for a delay.

We intend to complete warranty work orders within 15 workdays of the inspection unless you are unavailable for access. We will let you know if a back-ordered part, or similar circumstance, causes a delay. Likewise, when weather conditions prevent the timely completion of exterior items, we track those items and follow up to ensure they are addressed when conditions are right. This can mean a wait of several months.

## Missed Appointments

Good communication is one key to successfully completing warranty items. We strive to keep homeowners informed and minimize inconveniences in the process. One of our challenges is when unexpected events sometimes result in missed appointments.

If an employee or a trade person will be late, he or she should contact you as soon as the delay is recognized, offering you a choice of a later time the same day or a completely different appointment.

If you must miss an appointment, we appreciate being alerted as soon as you realize your schedule has changed. We can put work orders on hold for 10 to 30 days and re-activate them when your schedule offers a better opportunity to arrange access to the home.

## Construction Defect Litigation Solicitation

We suggest you contact us immediately if you receive any Construction Defect Litigation Solicitation, whether by mail, phone, or through the efforts of a neighbor engaged by the law firm.

Regardless of the status of your warranty, New Tradition Homes stands ready to investigate any claim of a construction defect. This is not merely fair but more importantly, our company's integrity demands it. Should an actual construction defect be discovered, we will correct it. If the condition falls under your maintenance responsibilities, we will assist you with information. In either case, a lawsuit is simply unnecessary.

## Primary Warranty Visit Meeting Details

<b>Appointment Set by</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Warranty Department</li></ul>
<b>Appointments Available</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Monday through Friday between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.</li></ul>
<b>Where</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Your New Home</li></ul>
<b>Attendees</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Homeowner(s)</li><li>• Warranty Staff Member</li></ul>
<b>Length</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 30 minutes to 1 hour, depending on your questions</li></ul>
<b>Purposes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review our warranty inspection agenda and/or your list of items</li><li>• Discuss any questions you have</li></ul>
<b>Preparation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Note items or maintenance questions you want to discuss</li></ul>

### Notes:

[illegible]

## Warranty Visit – Sample Agenda

<i>Homeowner</i>		<i>Homeowner</i>		<i>Date/Time</i>
<b>Name</b>				<b>Community</b>
<b>Home</b>				<b>Home Site</b>
<b>Business</b>				<b>Floor Plan</b>
<b>Cell</b>				<b>Elevation</b>
<b>Email</b>				<b>Contract Date</b>
<b>Address</b>				<b>Specifications</b>
				<b>Closing Date</b>

*\*Indicate preferred method of contact*

<b>Interior performance review</b>	<b>Exterior performance review</b>	<b>Garage</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> HRV	<input type="checkbox"/> Concrete care	<input type="checkbox"/> Electrical panel
<input type="checkbox"/> GFCI's	<input type="checkbox"/> Grading	<input type="checkbox"/> Overhead garage door(s)
<input type="checkbox"/> Furnace	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscaping	<input type="checkbox"/> Sprinkler Controls
<input type="checkbox"/> Nest Thermostat		<input type="checkbox"/> Water Heater
<input type="checkbox"/> Winterization		

### Action Items

Task	Response	Completed

☐ See Supplemental Notes

### Anniversary Warranty Visit

***We will confirm this warranty visit appointment with you one or more days prior to the appointments. For details about warranty service between these visits or in an emergency, please refer to the Caring for Your Home chapter in your Homeowner Guide.***

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_

### Confirmation

***Your signature confirms we discussed the items checked above and noted all action items for attention.***

Purchaser signature _____	Date _____
Purchaser signature _____	Date _____
New Tradition Homes name _____	
New Tradition Homes signature _____	Date _____

# Air Conditioning

## Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Air conditioning can greatly enhance the comfort of your home, but if it is used improperly or inefficiently, wasted energy and frustration will result. These hints and suggestions are provided to help you maximize your air conditioning system.

Your air conditioning system is a whole-house system. The air conditioning unit is the mechanism that produces cooler air. The air conditioning system involves everything inside your home including, for example, drapes, blinds, and windows.

Your home air conditioning is a closed system, which means that the interior air is continually recycled and cooled until the desired air temperature is reached. Warm outside air disrupts this process and makes cooling impossible. Therefore, you should keep all windows closed. The heat from the sun shining through windows with open drapes is intense enough to overcome the cooling effect of the air conditioning unit. For best results, close the drapes on these windows.

Time is an important consideration in your expectations of an air conditioning system. Unlike a light bulb, which reacts instantly when you turn on a switch, the air conditioning unit only begins a process when you set the thermostat.

For example, if you come home at 6:00 pm when the temperature has reached 85 degrees and set your thermostat to 65 degrees, the air conditioning unit will begin cooling, but will take much longer to reach the desired temperature. During the whole day, the sun has been heating not only the air in the house, but the walls, carpet, and furniture. At 6:00 pm the air conditioning unit starts cooling the air, but the walls, carpet, and furniture release heat and nullify this cooling. By the time the air conditioning unit has cooled the walls, carpet, and furniture, you likely have lost patience.

If evening cooling is your primary goal, set the thermostat at a moderate temperature in the morning while the house is cooler, allowing the system to maintain the cooler temperature. The temperature setting may then be lowered slightly when you arrive home, with better results. Once the system is operating, setting the thermostat at 65 degrees will *not* cool the home any faster and can result in the unit freezing up and not performing at all. Extended use under these conditions can damage the unit.

### ***Adjust Vents***

Maximize air flow to occupied parts of your home by adjusting the vents. Likewise, when the seasons change, readjust them for comfortable heating.

### ***Compressor Level***

Maintain the air conditioning compressor in a level position to prevent inefficient operation and damage to the equipment.

*See also Grading and Drainage.*

### ***Condensate Line***

An air conditioning system will include several lines running out the base of the furnace and home to the exterior condenser unit. Under normal operating conditions, water will come out of the condensate line.

### ***Furnace Filter***

Regularly changing the furnace filter is probably the most important air conditioning system maintenance.

### ***Humidifier***

If a humidifier is installed on the furnace system, turn it off when you use the air conditioning; otherwise, the additional moisture can cause a freeze-up of the cooling system. Cold air holds less moisture than warm air and there is ample ambient moisture in summer air. If your humidifier adds more, it can overwork the air conditioner and reduce its cooling effect.

### ***Manufacturer's Instructions***

The manufacturer's guide specifies maintenance for the condenser. Review and follow these points carefully. Since the air conditioning system is combined with the heating system, also follow the maintenance instructions for your furnace as part of maintaining your air conditioning system.

### ***Service Contract***

You can also purchase a maintenance contract with a licensed HVAC professional to maintain the efficiency of your system. For more information, contact your HVAC installer.

### ***Temperature Variations***

Temperatures may vary from room to room by several degrees. This is due to such variables as floor plan, orientation of the home on the home site, type and use of window coverings, and traffic through the home.

### ***Trial Run***

Have a trial run early in the spring to test the air conditioning (the same applies to heating in the fall). If service is needed, it is much better to discover that before the cooling season is underway and service personnel become extremely busy.

### **TROUBLESHOOTING TIPS: NO AIR CONDITIONING**

Before calling for service, check to confirm the following:

- Thermostat is set to “cool” and the temperature is set below the room temperature.
- Blower panel cover is installed correctly for the furnace blower (fan) to operate. Similar to the way a clothes dryer door operates, this panel pushes in a button that lets the fan motor know it is safe to come on. If that button is not pushed in, the furnace will not operate.
- Air conditioner and furnace breakers on the main electrical panel are on. (Remember if a breaker trips, you must turn it from the tripped position to the off position before you can turn it back on.)
- Switch on the side of the furnace or located near the furnace is in the on position.
- Fuse in the furnace is good. (See furnace manufacturer literature for size and location.)
- Filter is clean to allow airflow.
- Vents in individual rooms are open.
- Air returns are unobstructed.

Even if the troubleshooting tips do not identify a solution, the information you gather will be useful to the service provider you call.

### **Warranty Guidelines**

The air conditioning system should maintain a temperature of 75 degrees Fahrenheit or a differential of 15 degrees from the outside temperature, measured in the center of each room at a height of 5 feet above the floor. Lower temperature settings are often possible, but neither we nor the manufacturer guarantee this.

### ***Compressor***

The air conditioning compressor must be in a level position to operate correctly. If it settles during the warranty period, we will correct this.

### ***Non-Emergency***

Lack of air conditioning is not an emergency. Air conditioning contractors in our region respond to air conditioning service requests during normal business hours and in the order received.

## **Alarm System**

### **Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines**

If your home selections included an alarm system, you will arrange for the final connection and activation after you move in. The alarm company will demonstrate the system, instruct you in its use, and provide identification codes for your family. We recommend that you test the system according to their instructions.

### **Warranty Guidelines**

We will correct wiring that does not perform as intended for the alarm system. We make no representation that the alarm system will provide the protection for which it is installed or intended.

# Appliances

## Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Please read and follow the manufacturer instructions for the use and care of your appliances. The Appliance Service sheet at the end of this chapter offers a convenient location for details about appliances whether they are part of your original home purchase or you have them delivered subsequent to closing. By gathering these details as part of getting settled into your new home, you will have them readily available in the event you need to call a manufacturer for service.

Websites where you may find additional details about using and caring for your appliances include:

[www.kitchenaid.com](http://www.kitchenaid.com)

[www.whirlpool.com](http://www.whirlpool.com)

[www.insinkerator.com](http://www.insinkerator.com) (garbage disposal)

## Warranty Guidelines

As applicable, we confirm that all appliance surfaces are in acceptable condition during your Homeowner Orientation. We assign all appliance warranties to you, effective on the date of closing. Typical appliance warranties are for one year. The appliance manufacturers warrant their products directly to you according to the terms and conditions of these written warranties. Be certain to register, either by mail or online for all manufacturer warranties. This can be valuable for you in the event of a product recall.

# Asphalt

## Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Asphalt is a flexible and specialized surface. Like any other surface in your home, it requires protection from things that can damage it. Over time, the effects of weather and earth movement will cause minor settling and cracking of asphalt. These are normal reactions to the elements and do not constitute improperly installed asphalt or defective material. Avoid using your driveway for one week after asphalt is installed. Keep people, bicycles, lawn mowers, and other traffic off of it.

### ***Chemical Spills***

Asphalt is a petroleum product. Gasoline, oil, turpentine, and other solvents or petroleum products can dissolve or damage the surface. Wash such spills with soap and water immediately, and then rinse them thoroughly with plain water.

### ***Hot Weather***

Avoid any concentrated or prolonged loads on your asphalt, particularly in hot weather. High-heeled shoes, motorcycle or bicycle kickstands, trailers, or even cars left in the same spot for long periods can create depressions or punctures in asphalt.

### ***Nonresidential Traffic***

Prohibit commercial or other extremely heavy vehicles such as moving vans or other large delivery trucks from pulling onto your driveway. We design and install asphalt drives for conventional, residential vehicle use only: family cars, vans, light trucks, bicycles, and so on.

### ***Sealcoating***

Exposure to sunlight and other weather conditions will fade your driveway, allowing the surface gravel material to be more visible. This is a normal condition and not a material or structural problem. You do not need to treat the surface of your asphalt driveway.

However, if you choose to treat it, wait a minimum of 12 months and use a dilute asphalt emulsion, rather than the more common coal tar sealant. Hairline cracks will usually be filled by the sealing process. Larger cracks can be filled or patched with a sand and sealer mixture prior to resealing.



## Warranty Guidelines

We perform any asphalt repairs by overlay patching. New Tradition Homes is not responsible for the inevitable differences in color between the patch and the original surface. Sealcoating can eliminate this cosmetic condition and is your responsibility.

### ***Alligator Cracking***

If cracking that resembles the skin of an alligator develops under normal residential use, New Tradition Homes will repair it. If improper use, such as heavy truck traffic, has caused the condition, repairs will be your responsibility.

### ***Settling***

Settling next to your garage floor of up to 1-1/2 inches across the width of the driveway is normal. Settling or depressions elsewhere in the driveway of up to one inch, in any eight-foot radius, are considered normal. We will repair settling that exceeds these measurements.

### ***Thermal Cracking***

Your driveway will exhibit thermal cracking, usually during the first 12 months. These cracks help your driveway adapt to heating and freezing cycles. Cracks should be evaluated in the hottest months; likely July or August. We will repair cracks that exceed 1/2 inch in width.

## **Attic**

### Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

The attic space is an unheated space and is neither designed nor intended for storage.

#### ***Attic Access***

We provide access to this area for maintenance of mechanical services that may traverse the attic space. Access to the attic is through a trap door, or scuttle hole, generally located in one of the upstairs bedroom closets or laundry room. Additionally, some floor plans include access to a small attic area directly above the garage.

When you perform needed tasks in the attic, use caution and avoid stepping off wood members onto the drywall. This can result in personal injury or damage to the ceiling below. Your limited warranty coverage excludes such injury or damage.

Also, watch out for nails protruding through roof sheathing.

Avoid storing any items in the attic unless the attic was specifically designed for that purpose and includes load bearing attic trusses. Inspect attic for any obstructions to air vents and look for signs that they are obstructed or that animals have found a way in.

#### ***Frozen Attic Condensation***

Frozen condensation is a condition that can develop in an attic space. In spite of superior construction techniques, homes can be subject to attic condensation under certain weather patterns and conditions.

A condition that can add to the condensation level in the attic is air infiltration from the warm finished areas of the home. This can occur due to small openings in the air barrier (i.e. the ceiling) through which required equipment penetrates into the attic (such as attic access weather stripping, plumbing stacks, and electrical wiring). These openings are sealed at construction, but no home is 100 percent airtight.

During extended periods of extremely cold temperatures, moisture in the attic air can freeze on the roof sheathing and/or roof trusses and may continue to accumulate during extended periods of unusually cold weather. The result can be a substantial amount of frost or ice (sometimes referred to as attic frosting).

Normally the spring temperatures gradually melt the frost allowing the moisture to evaporate. However, if the temperature rises above zero very rapidly (which can occur in our climate), this frost or ice may melt so quickly that water collects in your attic.

When this occurs, moisture or water can infiltrate into the interior of your home. Evidence of this can show as staining on the ceiling or walls, or actual water dripping from the bath fan or a light fixture.

This natural phenomenon is outside the control of any builder and therefore is excluded from warranty coverage. If you observe any of these conditions, follow the trouble shooting tips below.

**TROUBLESHOOTING TIPS: FROZEN ATTIC CONDENSATION**

- If you notice water in a light fixture, do NOT turn the light on. Turn off the breaker to the light and call for service.
- Wipe up water off of floors, carpet, and furniture.
- Run your bathroom exhaust fans, ventilation fans, and range hood fans to help remove extra moisture.
- Turn down your humidifier, if you are using one.
- Allow for adequate air movement in your attic by ensuring that roof vents are clear of ice, snow, or debris.
- Keep your attic hatch closed. When open, it allows warm moist air to escape from your home into the attic.
- Take steps to mitigate damage to your home and furnishings.
- If damage occurs, contact your homeowner's insurance company.

*See also Condensation, Roof, and Ventilation.*

**Warranty Guidelines**

The construction department inspects the attic before your closing to confirm insulation is correct.

***Frozen Attic Condensation***

If a construction defect allows excessive warm, moist air from the home to enter the attic, we will correct it.

## **Brick and Cultured Stone**

### **Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines**

Brick and stone (masonry) are among the most durable and lowest maintenance finishes for a home's exterior. A record of your brick or stone color is included in your selection sheets.

#### ***Cracks***

We repair masonry cracks that exceed 1/4 inch or that are visible from a distance of twenty feet.

#### ***Efflorescence***

The white, powdery substance that sometimes accumulates on masonry surfaces is called efflorescence. This is a natural phenomenon and cannot be prevented. In some cases, you can remove it by scrubbing with a stiff brush and vinegar. Consult your home center or hardware store for commercial products to remove efflorescence. Scrubbing Cultured Stone can affect coloration; check manufacturer instructions for cleaning directions.

#### ***Tuck-Pointing***

After several years, face brick may require tuck-pointing (repairing the mortar between the bricks). Otherwise, no regular maintenance is required.

#### ***Weep Holes***

You may notice small holes in the mortar along the lower row of bricks. These holes allow moisture that has accumulated behind the brick to escape. Do not fill these weep holes or permit landscaping materials to cover them.

### **Warranty Guidelines**

We check the masonry work during your homeowner orientation to confirm correct installation of designated materials.

## **Cabinets**

### **Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines**

Your selection sheets are your record of the brand, style, and color of cabinets in your home. If you selected wood or wood veneer cabinets, expect differences in grain and color between, and within, the cabinet components due to natural variations in wood grain and the way each piece takes stain.

#### ***Cleaning***

Cleaning of wood cabinets can be accomplished using a damp sponge or rag and a mild, non-abrasive detergent.

Consult your manufacturer's recommendations regarding other products to use in caring for your cabinets. Follow container directions. Use such products a maximum of once every three to six months to avoid excessive build-up. Avoid paraffin-based spray waxes and washing cabinets with water, as both will damage the finish. Scratches can be filled using a matching touch-up crayon available at most hardware or home improvement stores.

#### ***Hinges***

If hinges catch or drawer glides become sluggish, a small amount of silicone lubricant will improve their performance.

#### ***Moisture***

Damage to cabinet surfaces and warping can result from operating appliances that generate large amounts of moisture (such as a crockpot) too near the cabinet. When operating such appliances, place them in a location that is not directly under a cabinet. Turning on the range hood fan while preparing meals can also help minimize or avoid this problem.

#### ***Wood Grain***

The cabinets in your home are a natural wood product. Each species of wood shows characteristics unique to that type of wood. Expect variation in both the original materials, and the way those materials accept stain and finish products. These properties are part of the beauty of wood.

Discoloration may occur over time as the wood is exposed to the ultra-violet rays of sunlight. This is to be expected and not a flaw in the wood or finish. More variation can be expected in darker species of wood.

### ***Painted Cabinets***

If your home has painted cabinets, special care should be used when cleaning. Keeping the cabinets dry and free of dirt and debris will extend the life of the paint. Cleaning can be accomplished with a soft cloth and mild detergent. Do not use abrasive cleaners or rough cleaning materials.

Some chipping and scratching will occur in the painted surface if impacted during use. Even rings and longer fingernails can scratch or chip the surface. It is recommended always to use the handles when operating the doors and drawers. Chipping is considered normal wear and not a defect in the paint and will require a professional to touch up the surface if chipping or scratching occurs.

### **Warranty Guidelines**

During your homeowner orientation, we will confirm that all cabinet parts are installed and that their surfaces are in acceptable condition.

### ***Alignment***

Doors, drawer fronts, and handles should appear level and even when viewed from a normal position.

### ***Operation***

Cabinets should operate properly under normal use.

### ***Separations***

We will correct gaps exceeding 1/4 inch between cabinets and the ceiling, or exceeding 1/4 inch between cabinets and the walls, by caulking or other means. Locations behind appliances are exempt from this repair.

### ***Warping***

If doors or drawer fronts warp in excess of 1/4 inch against the cabinet face, we will correct this by adjustment or replacement. Replacements may have noticeable variations in wood grain and color compared to the original product.

### ***Wood Grain***

Readily noticeable variations in wood grain and color are normal in all wood or wood veneer selections. Replacements are not made due to such variations.

## **Carbon Monoxide Detectors**

### **Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines**

Read the manufacturer's literature for detailed information on the care of your carbon monoxide detectors and when they should be replaced.

### ***Cleaning***

For your safety, clean each carbon monoxide detector monthly to prevent a false alarm or lack of response when needed. After cleaning, push the test button to confirm the alarm is working.

### **Warranty Guidelines**

We will review carbon monoxide detectors during the orientation to familiarize you with the alarm. New Tradition Homes does not represent that the carbon monoxide detectors will provide the protection for which they are installed or intended.

## **Carpet**

### **Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines**

Please see the information our flooring contractor has provided regarding care and maintenance of your carpet flooring. Your selection sheets provide a record of the brand, style, and color of floor coverings in your home. Please retain this information for future reference. Refer to your manufacturer's recommendations for additional information on the care of your carpet.

### ***Burns***

Take care of any kind of burn immediately. First, snip off the darkened fibers, then use a soap-less cleaner and sponge with water. If the burn is extensive, talk with a professional about replacing the damaged area.

### ***Carpet Tack Strips***

Tack strips are used to hold the carpet to the floor. Typically the areas installed are on the perimeter of the carpet areas. There may also be multiple areas throughout your home where the flooring changes from carpet to other flooring types. In these areas, you may feel the tack strips when walking directly on the tack strip.

### ***Cleaning***

In order to maintain your manufacturer's warranty, professional cleaning is required. You can add years to the life of your carpet with regular care. Carpet wears out because of foot traffic and dirt particles that get trampled deep into the pile beyond the suction of the vacuum. The dirt particles wear down the fibers like sandpaper and dull the carpet. The most important thing you can do to protect your carpet is to vacuum it frequently.

Vacuum twice each week lightly and once a week thoroughly. Heavy traffic areas may require more frequent cleaning. A light vacuuming is three passes; a thorough job may need seven passes. Vacuuming high-traffic areas daily helps keep them clean and maintains the upright position of the nap. A vacuum cleaner with a beater-bar agitates the pile and is more effective in bringing dirt to the surface for easy removal. Although the beater bar will cause more wear, so does the dirt trapped in the carpet.

**Please note however, that beater bar vacuum attachments should not be used on any type of berber (or loop) carpeting. This may result in permanent damage to the carpet and voids the warranty.**

Wipe spills and clean stains immediately. For best results, blot or dab any spill or stain; avoid rubbing.

Have your carpet professionally cleaned regularly, usually after 12 to 18 months in your home and then annually thereafter.

*See also Stains.*

### ***Crushing***

Furniture and traffic may crush a carpet's pile fibers. Frequent vacuuming in high-traffic areas, and placing glides or cups under heavy pieces of furniture, can help prevent crushing. Rotating your furniture to change the traffic pattern in a room promotes more even wear. Some carpets resist matting and crushing because of their level of fiber, but this does not imply or guarantee that no matting or crushing will occur. Heavy traffic areas such as halls and stairways are more susceptible to wear and crushing. This is considered normal.

### ***Fading***

Science has yet to develop a color that will not fade with time. All carpets will slowly lose some color due to natural and artificial forces in the environment. You can delay this process by frequently removing soil with vacuuming, regularly changing air filters in heating and air conditioning systems, keeping humidity and room temperature from getting too high, and reducing sunlight exposure with window coverings.

### ***Filtration***

If interior doors are kept closed while the air conditioning or furnace is operating, air circulation from the closed room flows through the small space at the bottom of the door or in the area of the return air vent. This forces the air over the carpet fibers, which in turn act as a filter, catching particulate pollution. Over time, a noticeable stain may develop at the threshold, or vicinity, of the return air vent.

### ***Fuzzing***

In loop carpets, fibers may break. Simply clip the excess fibers. If it continues, call a professional.

### ***Pilling***

Depending on the type of carpet fiber and the type of traffic, pilling, or small balls of fiber, can appear on your carpet. If this occurs, clip off the pills. If they cover a large area seek professional advice.

### ***Rippling***

With wall-to-wall carpeting, high humidity may cause rippling. If the carpet remains rippled after the humidity has left, have a professional re-stretch the carpet using a power stretcher, not a knee-kicker.

### ***Seams***

Different types of carpets may show wear and seam lines differently. Carpet usually comes in 12-foot widths, making seams necessary in many rooms. Visible seams are not a defect unless they have been improperly made or unless the material has a defect, making the seam appear more pronounced than normal. The denser and more uniform the carpet texture, the more visible the seams will be.

Carpet styles with low, tight naps result in the most visible seams. Seams are never more visible than when the carpet is first installed. Usually with time, use, and vacuuming the seams become less visible. You can see examples in the model homes of how carpet seams diminish after they have been vacuumed repeatedly and have experienced traffic.

### ***Shading***

Shading is an inherent quality of fine-cut pile carpets. Household traffic causes pile fibers to assume different angles; as a result, the carpet appears darker or lighter in these areas. Vacuuming, which makes the pile all go in the same direction, provides a temporary remedy.

### ***Shedding***

New carpeting, especially pile, sheds bits of fiber for a period of time. Eventually these loose fibers are removed by vacuuming. Shedding usually occurs more with wool carpeting than with nylon or other synthetics.

### ***Snags***

Sharp-edged objects can grab or snag the carpet fiber. When this occurs, cut off the snag. If the snag is especially large, call a professional.

### ***Sprouting***

Occasionally you may find small tufts of fiber sprouting above a carpet surface. Simply use scissors to cut off the sprout. Do not attempt to pull it because other fibers will come out in the process.

### ***Stains***

No carpet is stain-proof. Although your carpet manufacturer designates your carpet as stain-resistant, some substances may still cause permanent staining. These include hair dyes, shoe polish, paints, and India ink. Some substances destroy or change the color of carpets, including bleaches, acne medications, drain cleaners, plant food, insecticides, and food or beverages with strongly colored natural dyes as found in some brands of mustard and herbal tea.

Refer to your manufacturer's website for recommended cleaning procedures for your particular fiber. Pretest any spot-removal solution in an inconspicuous location before using it in a large area. Apply several drops of the solution, hold a white tissue on the area, and count to ten. Examine both tissue and carpet for dye transfer and check for carpet damage.

### ***Static***

Cooler temperatures outside and resulting dry air often contribute to static electricity inside. If you have a humidifier, confirm that your humidifier is set appropriately to help control static build-up.

## Warranty Guidelines

During your Homeowner Orientation, we will confirm that your carpet is in acceptable condition. We will correct stains or spots noted at this time by cleaning, patching, or replacement. We are not responsible for dye lot variations if replacements are made. Concerns resulting from lack of cleaning and maintenance are excluded from warranty coverage. The use of beater bar vacuum attachments on berber carpet will void warranty coverage.

### ***Edges***

Edges of carpet along moldings and edges of stairs should be held firmly in place. In some areas, metal or other edging material may be used where carpet meets another floor covering.

### ***Seams***

Carpet seams will be visible. We will repair gaps or fraying due to manufacturer defect within the two-year warranty period.

### ***Stretching: One-Time Repair***

If wall to wall carpet becomes loose, we will re-stretch it one time during the warranty period.

## **Caulking**

### Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Time and weather will shrink and dry caulking so that it no longer provides a good seal. Caulking deterioration is wholly dependent on climactic conditions and exposure to the elements. Caulking around windows, doors, and corners needs to be maintained over time. As part of your routine home maintenance, check the caulking and make needed repairs. Caulking compounds and dispenser guns are available at hardware stores. Read the manufacturer's instructions carefully to be certain that you select an appropriate caulk for the intended purpose.

### ***Colored Caulk***

Colored caulking is available where larger selections are provided. As with any colored material, dye lots can vary.

### ***Ice Maker***

If an icemaker is installed on the refrigerator, it is a good idea to caulk the gap along the floor and baseboard in the refrigerator bay area.

### ***Latex Caulk***

Latex caulking is appropriate for an area that requires painting, such as in locations where wood trim meets the wall.

### ***Silicone Caulk***

Caulking that contains silicone will not accept paint and works best where water is present; for example, where the bathtub meets the tile or a sink meets a countertop.

## Warranty Guidelines

During your homeowner orientation we confirm that appropriate areas are adequately caulked.

*See also Countertops, Expansion and Contraction, Stairs, and Wood Trim.*

# Ceramic Tile

## Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Your selection sheets include the brand and color of your ceramic tile.

### *Cleaning*

Ceramic tile is one of the easiest floor coverings to maintain. Simply vacuum when needed. Occasionally, a wet mopping with warm water may be appropriate. Avoid adding detergent to the water. If you feel a cleaning agent is required, use a mild solution of warm water and dishwasher crystals (they will not result in a heavy, difficult-to-remove lather on the grout). Rinse thoroughly.

The ceramic tile installed on walls or countertops in your home may be washed with any nonabrasive soap, detergent, or tile cleaner. Abrasive cleaners will dull the finish.

### *Countertops*

We recommend that you seal the grout in between the tile on your countertops upon moving into your home. Food spills can stain the grout. Similar to tile flooring, cracks in the grout on tile countertops can be touched up with a color-matched caulking.

### *Grout*

Some minor cracking in the grout lines may occur as your new home settles and dries. A special caulk is available for repairing tile grout joints.

Use a brush, cleanser, and water to clean any grout surface that becomes yellowed or stained. Grout cleansers and whiteners are available at most hardware stores.

**The tile in your home has not been sealed following installation. Sealing grout is highly recommended at the time of move-in.** Once grout has been sealed, ongoing maintenance of that seal is necessary to maintain protection against staining. Grout sealants are readily available at most home improvement stores. See application instructions that come with the product.

### *Power Grout*

Before using any cleaning product, test it on a small, inconspicuous area and allow it to dry to ensure compatibility with the surface. Note that a powdered cleanser is not recommended for cleaning unsealed or unglazed tile.

Clean Power Grout with a PH neutral cleaner such as liquid dishwashing soap. For grease and soap scum, use an alkaline cleaner. Acid based cleaners will help with hard water deposits or inorganic stains. When cleaning tile floors, be careful to remove the mop water from the surface before it dries to avoid dirt residue from being deposited.

Wipe up spills immediately and if a stain remains, scrub the grout with warm water and a white nylon scrubbing pad for at least 60 seconds. If a stain is stubborn, sprinkle a household powdered cleanser on the surface, wait 15 seconds and rinse. If a second scrubbing is needed, repeat and let the cleanser stand for at least one minute before scrubbing.

### *Separations*

Expect slight separations to occur in the grout between tiles. Cracks in the grout can be filled using premixed grout purchased from flooring or hardware stores. Follow the package directions.

Tile around bathtubs or countertops may appear to be pulling up after time. This is caused by normal shrinkage of grout, caulk, or wood members as they dry out. If this occurs, the best remedy is to purchase tub caulk, or premixed grout, from a hardware store. Follow the directions on the container. This maintenance is important to protect the underlying surface from water damage.



## Warranty Guidelines

During your homeowner orientation, we confirm that tile and grout areas are in acceptable condition. We will repair or replace cracked, badly chipped, or loose tiles noted at that time. We are not responsible for variations in color or discontinued patterns. New grout may vary in color from the original.

### ***Grout Cracks: One-Time Repair***

Cracks appearing in grouting of ceramic tiles at joints or junctions with other materials are commonly due to shrinkage. We will repair cracks in grout joints in excess of 1/16 inch one time during the 2nd year. Cracks in grout are evaluated under normal viewing and lighting conditions. We are not responsible for color variations in grout or discontinued colored grout. Any grouting or caulking that is needed after the first year is your responsibility. If you adjusted, or replaced, any of the original grout, the warranty becomes void.

## **Concrete Flatwork**

Concrete is a versatile medium with unique characteristics. A thorough understanding of the material and your expectations of it is an important part of your ultimate satisfaction with it.

## Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

The concrete used on the driveways and patios, or any other exterior slab, is either exposed aggregate (exposed rock), broom finished, or a combination of both. The concrete in your garage has the same qualities as the driveway and patio concrete but has a smooth finish.

### ***Cleaning***

Avoid washing exterior concrete slabs with cold water from an outside faucet when temperatures are high and the sun has been shining on the concrete. The abrupt change in temperature can damage the surface bond of the concrete. We recommend sweeping the concrete to keep it clean. If washing is necessary, do this when temperatures are moderate. Repeated cleaning of the garage floor by hosing can increase soil movement by allowing water to penetrate any existing cracks. We also recommend sweeping to clean the garage floor.

Avoid using soap on an unpainted basement floor. Because of the porous nature of concrete, soap (or any cleaner that lathers) is extremely difficult to rinse off. Instead, use plain water and washing soda or, if necessary, a scouring powder.

### ***Conduit under Driveway***

One additional special feature of your home worth noting is that we've placed a 3-inch conduit PVC pipe under your driveway. These are typically found near the mid-point of the driveway. We include this to aide you with any future plans for exterior low voltage wiring or a front yard sprinkler system.

### ***Control Joints***

The most widely used method to control random cracking in concrete slabs is to place contraction/control joints in the concrete surface. Control joints are grooves tooled, or sawed, into concrete flatwork in an effort to keep cracks in those locations rather than having them occur randomly. As concrete hardens, there is a reduction in volume (shrinkage), often resulting in cracking of concrete. Joints produce an aesthetically pleasing appearance since the crack takes place in a controlled manner below the finished concrete surface. The concrete will or can crack, which is **normal behavior**, but the reduction of random cracks at the concrete surface gives an improved appearance of the concrete sections.

### ***Cracks***

Concrete is a durable building material but is also rigid. Because concrete is a water based product, shrinkage and cracking will occur. The severity of a crack can be characterized in terms of its direction, width, and depth; cracks may be longitudinal, transverse, vertical, diagonal or random. Different risks for cracking exist for cured versus uncured concrete, and for reinforced concrete. Breakages occur through thermal, chemical or mechanical processes causing shrinkage, expansion or flexural stress. For example, a typical concrete slab 10 feet across can shrink approximately 5/8 inch as it cures. Some of this shrinkage shows up as cracks. Cracking of concrete flatwork also results from temperature changes that cause expansion and contraction.

As cracks occur, seal them with a waterproof concrete caulk (available at hardware or home improvement stores) to prevent more moisture from penetrating to the soil beneath.

Types of cracks include:

*Plastic-shrinkage cracking:* Cracks that run to the mid-depth of the concrete are distributed across the surface unevenly and are usually short in length. This most often occurs while concrete is curing due to the surface of the concrete drying more rapidly relative to the concrete below.

*Crazing/Map cracking/Checking:* A web of fine, shallow cracks across the surface of the concrete. These also occur during curing due to the surface of concrete drying faster than the interior concrete, but the surface drying occurs at a lesser depth. Because this type of cracking is limited to the surface, it does not usually pose serious *structural problems*.

*Hairline cracking:* Very thin but deep cracks due to the settlement of the concrete while it is curing. Due to their depth, these cracks can allow for more serious cracking once the concrete is hardened.

*Pop-outs:* Conical depressions in the concrete surface which occur when a piece of aggregate near the concrete surface is particularly absorbent, causing it to expand and pop out of the surface of the concrete.

*Scaling:* Small pock marks on the concrete surface which expose aggregate underneath. Once cured, if concrete does have an adequate finish to prevent water penetration, water that seeps into the concrete will expand when it freezes, pushing off pieces of the concrete surface. Scaling can also be caused by delamination which occurs when too much water (due to insufficient curing) or air (due to insufficient vibrating) remains in the concrete when it is finished. The water and air rise to the top and form pockets below the surface. These pockets may form blisters which may open to create scaling.

*D-Cracking:* Cracks that run roughly parallel to, or stem from, a concrete joint and are deeper than surface cracks. These are due to moisture infiltration at the joint.

*Offset cracking:* Cracks where the concrete on one side of the crack is lower than the concrete on the other side. Due to uneven surfaces below the concrete, such as subgrade settlement or pressure from objects such as tree roots, previously placed concrete, or rebar.

*Diagonal corner cracking:* Cracks that run from one joint to its perpendicular joint at the corner of a slab. The corners of concrete slabs can be prone to curling (due to differences in temperature at different depths in the curing concrete) or warping (due to differences in moisture evaporation at different depths in the curing concrete). The dryer or colder level of concrete will shrink more and create cracks as the concrete dries. Because the warped or curled-up corners often have some empty space below them, they are also prone to cracking after curing due to weight overload causing the corner to snap downward into the empty space.

### ***De-Icers***

**Avoid use of salt or any other type of de-icer on concrete driveways, porches, patios, or sidewalks.** This will cause damage to the concrete surface and will void warranty coverage.

### ***Garage Floor Expansion Joints***

Expansion joints are placed in the floor in an effort to control cracking. These joints may be in the form of a saw cut in a straight line, or a plastic strip that is placed in the concrete just below the surface when it is poured. Expansion joints will ultimately open up slightly.

### ***Garage Floor Sealant (Southwest WA)***

All garage floors are sealed shortly after they are poured with an acrylic curing agent/sealant. To keep all concrete looking good and performing optimally, we recommend that you re-seal the garage floor every 2-3 years.

### ***Heavy Vehicles***

Prohibit commercial or other extremely heavy vehicles, such as moving vans and large delivery trucks, from pulling onto your driveway. We design and install concrete drives for conventional residential vehicle use only: family cars, vans, light trucks, bicycles, and so on.

### ***Ice, Snow, and Chemicals***

Driving, or parking, on snow creates ice on the driveway, which magnifies the effects of snow on the concrete surface. Remove ice and snow from concrete slabs as promptly as possible after snowstorms. Protect concrete from abuse by chemical agents such as pet urine, fertilizers, radiator overflow, repeated hosing, or de-icing (i.e. road salt that can drip from vehicles). All of these items can cause spalling (chipping of the surface) of concrete.

**Caution: The use of de-icers or salt on your concrete may damage the surface and will void warranty coverage.**

### ***Sealer***

A concrete sealer, available at paint stores, will help you keep concrete flatwork clean and protected from moisture. Sealant should be applied annually according to the manufacturer's directions.

### ***Spalling (Surface Chips)***

These are surface depressions that are larger and deeper than scaling, often linear when following the length of a stick of rebar. It results from pressure from under the surface of the concrete and most often occur due to improperly constructed joints or the corrosion of rebar in the concrete. Corrosion creates pressure as rust forms, which can push away large chunks of concrete, and expose the corroded metal below. Spalling that exposes corroded metal can be particularly problematic because the corrosion is likely to accelerate due to exposure to air and water.

Causes of spalling include repeated hosing of concrete for cleaning, animal urine, radiator overflow, fertilizer, un-cleared snow and ice, ice-melting agents, and road salts from vehicles. Repair of spalling is a home maintenance task unless it results from faulty material or workmanship.

### **Warranty Guidelines**

Basement concrete slabs are floating—they are not attached to the home's foundation walls. These are not a structural (load-bearing) element of the home and are covered by the two-year material and workmanship warranty.

### ***Color***

Concrete slabs vary in color. Color variation is not consider a defect in concrete. We provide no correction for this condition.

### ***Cracks***

If cracks appear in the garage floor and they are in excess of 3/16" in width or displacement, we will repair them with concrete caulk. We will repair cracks in excess of 1/4 inch in width or displacement in driveways and patios, excluding chips. When repairs are necessary, the color and texture of the repair materials will vary from the original concrete.

### ***Separation***

We will correct separation of concrete slabs from the foundation wall if it exceeds one inch.

### ***Spalling (Surface Chips)***

Spalling is excluded from warranty coverage.

### ***Settling or Heaving***

We will repair differential movement between stoops, or steps, in excess of one inch.

# Condensation

## ***New Construction***

Some experts have estimated that a typical new home contains 50 gallons of water; a home constructed during wet weather contains even more. Water is part of lumber, concrete, drywall texture, paint, caulk, and other materials used in building. This moisture evaporates into the air as you live in your home—adding to the moisture generated by normal living activities. Over time, this source of moisture will diminish.

## **Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines**

Condensation occurs when warmer, moist air comes in contact with a colder surface. Outside you see this as dew; inside you may see it as moisture on a glass containing a cold beverage, windows, or glass doors. This condensation comes from high humidity within the home, combined with low outside temperatures and inadequate ventilation. Family lifestyle significantly influences two out of three of these conditions.

During cold weather in particular, ensure that warm air from the heat registers located near windows can flow unobstructed. This helps minimize condensation. Also ensure that window coverings are open, at least slightly, for the same reason.

## ***Daily Habits***

Your daily habits can help keep your home well-ventilated. Tips include the following:

- Do not cover, or interfere with, the fresh air supply to your home's systems.
- Follow manufacturer recommendations for the use of your heat recovery ventilator (HRV).
- Keep the dryer exhaust hose clean and securely connected.
- Develop the habit of running the hood fan while you are cooking.
- Run your bath fans for a minimum of 30 minutes after bathing or showering.
- Air your house by opening windows periodically when weather permits.

## ***Frozen Attic Condensation***

Please refer to *Frozen Condensation* under the *Attic* section above.

## **TROUBLESHOOTING TIPS: CONDENSATION**

### ***Humidifier Operation***

If your home includes a humidifier, closely observe manufacturer's directions for its use. Instructions to turn the humidifier off during air conditioning season are typical. Moderate settings in winter can maintain desired comfort levels without contributing too much moisture to your home. You may need to experiment to find the correct level for your family's lifestyle.

### ***Normal Activities***

As you live in your home, your daily lifestyle contributes to the moisture in the air. Cooking, laundry, baths and showers, aquariums, plants, etc. all add water to the air in your home. Conversely, your daily routine can mitigate the amount of moisture in your home and reduce condensation on interior surfaces.

### ***Temperature***

Avoid setting your thermostat at extreme temperatures. Heating your home will cause materials to dry out faster, generating more moisture into the air. Drying materials out too quickly also increases shrinkage cracks and separations.

Please refer to *Troubleshooting Tips: Frozen Attic Condensation* under the *Attic* section above.

## Warranty Guidelines

Condensation results from weather conditions and a family's lifestyle. We have no control over these factors. The limited warranty coverage excludes condensation.

### ***Frozen Attic Condensation***

If a construction defect allows excessive warm, moist air from the home to enter the attic, we will correct it.

## **Countertops**

### Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

#### ***Caulking***

The caulking between the countertop and the wall (along the joint at the backsplash), and around the sink may shrink, leaving a slight gap. Maintaining a good seal in these locations is important to prevent warping by keeping moisture from reaching the wood under the laminates or granite.

#### ***Cleaning***

Use the following tips for cleaning your countertops:

- Use a clean cloth to apply a small amount of clean water mixed with mild detergent to the countertop surface.
- Dry the countertop with a soft, clean cloth.
- Do not allow water to sit on the surface, especially on the seams.
- Do not use scrub pads or acidic cleaners.
- Avoid abrasive cleaners or scouring pads that will damage the luster of the surface.

### Laminate

Laminate countertops are made from many layers of paper materials, combined with resins that are then bonded to a wood base.

#### ***Cutting***

Use a cutting board to protect your counters when you cut or chop.

#### ***Heat***

Protect the counter from heat and from extremely hot pans. To prevent possible damage, use a protective pad under the item. If you cannot put your hand on it, do not put it on the counter. Do not use countertops as ironing boards and do not set lighted cigarettes or candles directly on the counter.

#### ***Moisture***

Coffee pots, electric fry pans, slow cookers, etc. are the major cause of swelling problems. Rubber drain mats can trap moisture beneath them, causing the laminated plastic to warp and blister. Dry the surface as needed.

### Granite/Quartz

Granite is a term used to refer to a family of natural quarried stone products that come from various parts of the world. No two pieces of granite will have the same pattern or exactly the same color. The granite installed in your home will vary in color and pattern from the sample you selected.

#### ***Acids***

Remember that acid from citrus fruit or soda can etch some natural stone surfaces.

#### ***Cleaning***

Blot up spills immediately. Acidic substances are likely to stain, especially: wine, tomato sauce, fruit juices, alcoholic beverages, coffee and soft drinks. Cooking oils can also stain if not wiped up immediately.

In addition to the cleaners listed above for general countertop care, a specialty cleaning agent made especially for stone or denatured alcohol can be used. To use this cleaning product:

- Thoroughly rinse and dry the surface.
- Avoid using too much cleaner or soap as it can leave a film, cause streaks, or dull the surface.
- Avoid the use of steel wool or similar items.

- Bleach; kitchen degreasers; glass cleaners that contain acid; bathroom, grout, tub & tile cleaners; ammonia; vinegar; orange or lemon should NOT be used as cleaners.

### ***Cutting***

Always use a cutting board when cutting or chopping. Although granite is scratch resistant, it can still be damaged by a knife.

### ***Edges***

Avoid putting unnecessary weight on the edges of the counters. Using the countertop to climb up, grabbing the edge of the counter for balance, should be avoided.

### ***Sealer***

Granite is highly resistant to chips and scratches, but is porous. The granite surface should be treated every six to twelve months with a sealer to help prevent staining. If droplets of water “bead up” when they are dripped on the countertop, the sealer is still doing its job. If not, the sealer should be applied. While sealants do not prevent staining, they do increase the window of clean up time.

*See also Ceramic Tile.*

## **Warranty Guidelines**

During your Homeowner Orientation, we confirm that all countertops are in acceptable condition. We repair noticeable surface damage such as chips, cracks, and scratches noted on your Homeowner Orientation Agenda. Repair of surface damage noted subsequent to your Homeowner Orientation is one of your home maintenance responsibilities.

### ***Separation from Wall***

Separation of countertops from the walls, backsplash, and around sinks results from normal shrinkage of materials. Separation can also be caused on exterior walls by temperature differences between the exterior and the interior of the home.

If needed, re-caulking of these areas will be one of your home maintenance responsibilities.

## **Laminate**

Laminated countertops may have one or more discernible seams. We confirm that seams are tight and uniform at your Homeowner Orientation. Any seam with a gap in excess of 1/16 inch will be repaired.

## **Granite/Quartz**

Edges should be smooth and even. The top edges should be even where backsplash joints occur at corners.

# **Crawl Space**

## **Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines**

The crawl space is not intended as a storage area for items that could be damaged by moisture. Additionally, wood stored in a crawl space can attract termites. You may notice slight dampness in the crawl space; however, landscaping that is correctly installed helps prevent excessive amounts of water from entering crawl spaces. Report accumulated water for inspection.

*See also Ventilation.*

## **Warranty Guidelines**

Soils in the crawl space may be damp but should not have standing water. Provided that you have not altered the drainage, nor caused excessive moisture to accumulate due to incorrect landscaping, New Tradition Homes will correct the conditions that result in the persistent accumulation of water.

# Damp-proofing

## Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

If you have a basement, your basement foundation walls are sprayed with a damp-proofing material in the areas where exterior soil comes in contact with the wall. Although we make every effort to assure a dry basement foundation, during times of excessive moisture you may notice some dampness. Careful maintenance of positive drainage will also protect your basement from this condition.

## Warranty Guidelines

We will correct conditions that allow actual water to enter the basement or crawlspace, unless the cause is improper installation of landscaping or failure to adequately maintain drainage.

# Decks

## Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Decks add to the style and function of your home, but are a high maintenance part of your home's exterior.

### ***Effects of Exposure***

Decks are subject to shrinkage, cracking, splitting, cupping, and twisting. Nails or screws may also work loose and will need routine maintenance. Plan to inspect your deck regularly—a minimum of once each year—and provide needed attention promptly to maintain an attractive appearance and forestall costly repairs. We also recommend that you treat, or re-stain, your deck annually to keep it looking its best.

### ***Foot Traffic***

Abrasives and grit on shoes can scratch, or dent, the wood surface. Although it is impossible to prevent altogether, you can mitigate the damage by sweeping regularly and using mats.

### ***Outdoor Furniture***

Use caution when moving grills, furniture, etc. as damage can be done to the surface of a deck including scratches and gouges.

### ***Sealing or Water Repellent***

To prolong the life and beauty of your deck, treat it periodically with a water repellent or wood preservative. Local home centers or hardware stores offer several products to consider for this purpose. Always follow manufacturer's directions carefully.

### ***Snow and Ice***

Heavy snow or ice that remains on a deck over long periods increases wear and tear on the deck. Prompt removal can reduce adverse effects, but use caution in shoveling to avoid scratching the deck boards.

### ***Stain***

Exposed decks that have been stained will readily show color variations. Each board takes the same stain differently at installation, and further color variations will occur over time and exposure to weather.

## Warranty Guidelines

Exposed decks are constructed to meet structural and functional design. During your Homeowner Orientation we will confirm that the deck is in satisfactory condition.

Your deck has a Two-Year Limited Warranty from the time of closing or the building of the deck (whichever is later).

### ***Color Variation***

Color variations are a natural result of the way in which wood accepts stain, and as a result, are excluded from limited warranty coverage.

### ***Replacement Boards or Rails***

Some shrinkage, cracking, splitting, cupping, and twisting are natural occurrences in decks and are excluded from limited warranty coverage. In extreme situations where personal safety is jeopardized, we may provide replacement boards or rails. However, the new material will vary in color from pieces that have been exposed to elements and use. Corrections to your deck resulting from lack of normal maintenance are your responsibility.

## **Doors and Locks**

### **Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines**

Doors installed in your home are made of a variety of materials and in several styles—each of which may have its own unique maintenance needs. Doors can be affected by a number of elements including: minor settling, normal wear and tear, expansion and contraction, and general weathering.

#### ***Bi-Fold Doors***

Interior bi-fold doors sometimes stick because of weather conditions (i.e. humidity levels). Apply a silicone lubricant to the tracks to minimize this inconvenience. These doors can easily lose alignment if something as minor as a coat sleeve is caught between the two doors as they close. A misaligned bi-fold door can be re-adjusted to its proper position. This is part of routine homeowner maintenance.

#### ***Bi-Pass Closet Doors***

Install 3-4 bumpers (felt or rubber) on the edge of the door, where it meets the wall when it closes, to protect the closet doors and jambs. This will also enable the bi-pass doors to close more quietly.

#### ***Closet/Den***

Some of the doors for the den, and/or closets, have a spring-loaded ball catch on the top leading edge of the door. This needs lubrication, with any type of household or 3-in-1 oil, on a regular basis.

#### ***Doorknobs/Hinges***

All doorknobs and door hinges will require lubrication over time. A small amount of household oil, graphite or silicone lubricant will suffice. For doorknobs, remove the knobs with a screwdriver, lubricate the moving parts inside the knob, and lubricate the latch in the door. For hinges, remove the hinge pin (with a hammer and a small screwdriver or nail setting tool), put a few drops of lubricant on the pin, and wipe off all excess before re-installing.

#### ***Exterior Doors***

For the entry door – check weather stripping for damage and proper operation of the deadbolt and door handle. Adjust the threshold if needed.

Your exterior doors will be painted according to the exterior color chart and the manufacturer's recommendations. The frequency of maintenance needed for painted finishes on exterior doors will be influenced by your home's exposure to sun or orientation on the home site.

#### ***Garage Service Door***

Check the weather stripping for damage and confirm proper operation of the deadbolt (if applicable) and door handle. Adjust the threshold if needed.

#### ***Garage to House Door***

Check the weather stripping for damage and confirm proper operation of the self-closing springs (this is a fire-protection feature) and door handle. Adjust threshold if needed.

#### ***Hinges***

You can remedy a squeaky door hinge by removing the hinge pin and applying a silicone lubricant to it. Avoid using oil, as it can gum up or attract dirt. Graphite works well as a lubricant but can create a gray smudge on the door, or floor covering beneath the hinge, if too much is applied.

#### ***Locks***

If required, lubricate exterior door locks with graphite or other waterproof lubricant. Avoid oil, as it will gum up.



### ***Master Keyed Door Locks with the Quickset Smart Key System***

On initial installation, the entry doors are master keyed on your home to allow access during construction. This includes the front entry door, the garage fire door, and (if applicable) the side garage service door.

See the manual provided with the manufacturer's material for additional information on the Qwikset Smart Key.

### ***Patio Doors***

Use a silicone spray in the track system, and a lubricant in the latch mechanism, for easier operation.

### ***Patio Screen Door***

Ensure that the door is not binding under normal usage. As needed, adjust the rollers and lubricate the roller and track; this door is easily damaged so caution needs to be exercised.

### ***Slamming***

Slamming doors can damage both doors and jambs and can even cause cracking in walls. Teach children not to hang on doorknobs and swing back and forth; this loosens the hardware and causes the door to sag.

### ***Sticking***

The most common cause of a sticking door is the natural expansion of lumber due to humidity changes. When swelling occurs during a damp season it may cause sticking. If a door still sticks after the weather changes, follow these steps:

1. Apply either a paste wax, light coat of paraffin, or candle wax to the sticking surface.
2. Tighten the screws that hold the door jamb or door frame.
3. Use sandpaper to smooth the door and paint the sanded area to seal against moisture. Do not plane the door unless it continues to stick after the weather changes and you have tried the first two steps.

### ***Threshold Adjustment***

Door thresholds can often be adjusted by loosening, or tightening, the threshold screws.

### ***Warping***

Some minor warping of interior doors is normal due to natural fluctuations in humidity caused by forced air furnaces, showers, dishwashers, etc. Interior doors may occasionally require minor adjustments. If a door warps slightly, keeping it closed as much as possible often returns it to normal.

The exterior doors installed in your home are made of either metal, or fiberglass materials, with interior wood frames. These products can also be subject to shrinkage and warping due to the temperature differential between inside and outside surfaces.

### ***Weather Stripping***

Weather stripping wears out over time. We recommend that each fall you inspect the weather stripping, striker plates around the perimeter of the entry doors; adjust or replace as necessary. Exterior door thresholds also occasionally require adjustment or replacement.

## **Warranty Guidelines**

During your Homeowner Orientation, we confirm that all doors are in acceptable condition and correctly adjusted. We will repair construction damage to doors noted on your Homeowner Orientation documents.

### ***Adjustments***

Because of normal settling of the home, doors may require adjustment for proper fit. We will make such adjustments one time, if needed, during the two year warranty period.

### ***Failure to Latch***

If a door will not latch because of minor settling during the first two years of occupancy, please notify the warranty office. We will make such adjustments one time, if needed, during the two year warranty period.

### ***Warping***

It should be relatively easy to engage and release door latches. We will repair doors that warp in excess of 1/4 inch, measured corner to corner. In the case of double doors, if either side permanently warps more than 1/4 inch beyond the face of the adjacent door, we will repair it.

### ***Weather Stripping***

Although extremely high winds may result in some air, water or dust infiltration, no exterior light should be visible when exterior doors are closed and latched.

## **Drywall**

### **Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines**

Slight cracking, nail pops, or seams may become visible in walls and ceilings. These are caused by the shrinkage of the wood, and normal deflection of framing members to which the drywall is attached.

With the exception of the one-time repair service that we provide, care of drywall is one of your maintenance responsibilities. Most drywall repairs can be easily made and is best done when you redecorate the room. We recommend that you wait through one complete seasonal cycle to do so.

Accidents happen and sometimes drywall will get damaged; have drywall spackle on-hand for those situations, as follows:

1. Use it to fill scratches, dents, and nail holes in your drywall.
2. Once the spackle has dried, use drywall texture (in a spray can) to bring the texture back.
3. When it is dry, you may repaint the damaged area.
4. Keep repair area as small as possible, to avoid the repair showing more than the original damage.

These products are available at hardware, or home improvement stores (read product instructions before using).

Repair hairline cracks with a coat of paint, but repair slightly larger cracks with spackle or caulking.

To correct a nail pop, or indentation caused by a sharp object:

1. Reset the nail with a hammer and punch (if it is a nail pop).
2. Apply two or three thin coats of spackle.
3. When dry, lightly sand the surface with fine-grain sandpaper.
4. Keep repair area as small as possible, to avoid the repair showing more than the original damage.
5. Paint.

### **Warranty Guidelines**

During your Homeowner Orientation, we confirm that drywall surfaces are in acceptable condition.

#### ***Lighting Conditions***

We do not repair drywall flaws that are only visible under particular lighting conditions.

#### ***Related Warranty Repairs***

If a drywall repair is needed as a result of poor workmanship (such as blisters in tape) or other warranty-based repair (such as a plumbing leak), we complete the repair by touching up the repaired area with the same paint that was on the surface when the home was delivered. If more than one-third of the wall is involved, we will repaint the wall corner to corner.

You are responsible for custom paint colors, or wallpaper that has been applied subsequent to closing. The effects of time on paint and wallpaper, as well as possible dye lot variations, mean touch-up can vary from the surrounding area.

#### ***Separations and Nail Pops: One-Time Repair***

One time during the materials and workmanship warranty, generally as part of your anniversary visit, we will repair drywall shrinkage cracks in excess of 1/16 inch in width, separated corner beads, and nail pops visible from a distance of six feet in normal lighting conditions. Remember that paint touch-ups will be performed using the original color of paint and may be visible.

Repainting the entire wall, or the entire room, to correct this difference is your choice and responsibility. You are also responsible for custom paint colors or wallpaper that has been applied subsequent to closing. Due to the effects of time on paint and wallpaper, as well as possible dye lot variations, touch-ups are unlikely to match the surrounding area.

### ***Truss Uplift***

Varying levels of humidity in lumber can cause the trusses to expand or contract, which is a condition known as “Truss Uplift”. Truss uplift can occur when outside temperatures are significantly colder than inside temperatures. The result appears as a minor crack along the joint of the ceiling and wall. We will repair separations in excess of 3/16 inch.

## **Easements**

### **Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines**

Easements are areas where things, such as utility supply or drainage lines, can pass through your property. They permit service to your home site and adjacent lots, now and in the future. Your home site will also include drainage easements: the runoff from adjacent lots may pass across your property. Likewise, water from your property may run across a neighboring lot. Easements are recorded and are permanent.

Trees, shrubs, gardens, play equipment, storage sheds, fences, or other items which you install in, or across these easements, may be disturbed if service entities—such as gas, electric, or phone companies—need access to lines for repairs or to connect service to nearby properties.

Utility companies, and others, have the right to install equipment in easements. These might include streetlights, mailboxes, or junction boxes. Neither you as the homeowner, nor we as your builder, have the authority to prevent, interfere with, or alter these installations. Plans for the location of such items are subject to change by the various entities involved. Because they have no obligation to keep us informed of such changes, we are unable to predict which sites will include such equipment.

*See also Grading and Drainage, and Property Boundaries.*

# Electrical System

## Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Know the location of the breaker panel; it includes a main shut-off that controls all the electrical power to your home. Individual breakers control the separate circuits. Each breaker is marked to help you identify which breaker is connected to which major appliances, outlets, or other service. Should an electrical failure occur in any part of your home, always check the breakers in the main panel box.

### ***ARC Fault Circuit Interrupter (AFCI)***

Designed as a safety feature, ARC Fault Circuit Interrupters are required for all bedroom outlets. They protect you from injury or damage due to appliances with damaged cords, loose connections, or nicked or pinched wires inside the walls. If an AFCI breaker trips, check any cords used in the effected outlet first before re-setting the AFCI break at the breaker panel. Turn the breaker “off”, then to “on” to reset it.

**If you find no explanation with an item you had plugged in, call for service.**

### ***Breakers***

Circuit breakers have three positions: ON, OFF, and TRIPPED. When a circuit breaker trips, it must first be turned OFF before it can be turned ON. Switching the breaker directly from TRIPPED to ON will not restore service.

### ***Breakers Tripping***

Breakers trip because of overloads caused by plugging too many appliances into the circuit, a worn cord or defective appliance, or operating an appliance with too high of a voltage requirement (such as a power tool) for the circuit. Starting an electric motor can also trip a breaker.

If any circuit trips repeatedly, unplug all items connected to it and reset the breaker. If it trips when nothing is connected to it, you need an electrician. If the circuit remains on, one of the items you unplugged is defective and will require repair or replacement.

### ***Exterior Outlets***

The exterior electrical outlets on your home should not require homeowner maintenance, but if you find that one or more exterior outlet(s) is not working, remember that the exterior outlets are on the same circuit as the Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI) plugs. To remedy, first check the related GFCI control to see if it needs to be reset. Next, check the main electrical junction box in the garage for any circuits that may need to be reset.

### ***Fixture Location***

We install light fixtures as near as possible to the locations indicated on the plans. Structural elements (framing) sometimes require location changes. Moving fixtures to accommodate specific furniture arrangements, or room use, is your responsibility.

### ***GFCI (Ground-Fault Circuit Interrupters)***

GFCI receptacles have a built-in element that senses fluctuation in power. Quite simply, the GFCI is a circuit breaker that offers personal protection against electric shock. Building codes require installation of these receptacles in bathrooms, the kitchen, and outside (i.e. areas where an individual can come into contact with water while holding an electric appliance or tool). Heavy appliances such as freezers, or power tools, will trip the GFCI breaker.

These outlets have the “test” and “reset” buttons on them and are ultra-sensitive to protect you from accidental electrocution if you are exposed to water and an electrical device. Push the “test” button at least once a month to trip the circuit. If the “reset” button does not pop out, consult with a qualified electrician as you may need to replace the GFCI switch. If the “reset” button does pop out, push it back in and repeat the following month.

GFCI outlets are generally located in the following locations in each home:

- There will be at least one outlet in your kitchen that will control the outlets above your kitchen counters.
- There is likely to be two outlets outside: one the back – and one in the front - of the house.
- There will be one outlet in a bathroom that controls all the other bathrooms.
- There will also be one outlet in the garage that controls garage outlets.

**Caution: Be aware when plugging a refrigerator or food freezer into a GFCI-controlled outlet. If the circuit overloads, the contents may spoil and the limited warranty excludes such damage.**

### ***Grounded System***

Your electrical system is a three-wire grounded system. Never remove the bare ground wire that connects to the box or device.

### ***Light Bulbs***

You are responsible for replacing burned-out bulbs, other than those specifically noted during your Homeowner Orientation. When changing light bulbs, please do not use a higher wattage than what is recommended by the fixture manufacturer. Also avoid changing exterior bulbs in rainy weather.

LED bulbs have been installed in all your light fixtures throughout your home, except any appliances that require a light bulb. LED bulbs have a lifespan and electrical efficiency which are several times greater than incandescent or fluorescent bulbs, and are significantly more efficient than most other bulbs. Similar to incandescent lamps and unlike most fluorescent lamps (e.g., tubes and compact fluorescent lamps or CFLs), LEDs come to full brightness without the need for warm-up time.

### ***Modifications***

If you wish to make any modifications, contact the electrician listed on the Emergency Phone Numbers you received at your Homeowner Orientation. Having another electrician modify your electrical system during the warranty period will void that portion of your limited warranty.

### ***Motion Switches***

One of the energy saving devices you may have in your home is the motion sensor. There are three set points on the switch: off, sensor, & on. When in the “on” position, the light will remain illuminated until you turn it off. When in the “sensor” position, the device senses your presence and turns on the light while you are in the space. After you leave, the light will automatically turn off. If you are using an LED or CFL bulb with this device, ensure you use a dimmable bulb; a regular LED or CFL bulb performs poorly in conjunction with motion switches.

### ***Outlets***

If an outlet fails to work, check first to see if it is controlled by a wall switch or GFCI. Next, check the breaker.

Install safety plugs to cover unused outlets if you have small children in your home. Education of children about electrical safety is important; they need to know how to use electrical outlets, sockets, and fixtures. Using safety plugs also minimizes air infiltration that sometimes occurs with outlets.

### ***Panel***

Your electric panel has a main circuit breaker that shuts off the entire panel and electricity to the house. Under this main breaker are smaller-sized breakers that control the individual appliance or circuit. These circuit breakers have three positions on them, ON, OFF and TRIPPED. They are designed to allow only a certain amount of electrical current to pass through the wires – usually 15 to 20 amps. Circuit breakers will trip if that amount of current is exceeded.

## **TROUBLESHOOTING TIPS: NO ELECTRICAL SERVICE**

### **No Electrical Service Anywhere in the Home**

Before calling warranty or the electrician, confirm:

- Service is not out in the entire area. If it is, contact the utility company.
- The main breaker, and individual breakers, are all in the “on” position.

### **No Electrical Service to One or More Outlets**

Before calling warranty or the electrician, confirm:

- The main breaker, and individual breakers, are all in the “on” position
- The applicable wall switch is “on”
- The GFCI is set (see details on GFCIs, earlier in this entry)

- The item you want to use is plugged in
- The item you want to use works in other outlets
- The bulb in the lamp is good

Even if the troubleshooting tips do not identify a solution, the information you gather will be useful to the service provider you call.

### ***Underground Cables***

Before digging, check the location of buried service leads by contacting utility locators. Maintain positive drainage around the foundation to protect electrical service connections.

### ***Under- or Over-Cabinet Lights***

The selection of optional under- or over-cabinet lighting provides either task lighting or atmosphere to your kitchen. We suggest you note the size, and type, of bulbs in these fixtures and keep replacements on hand.

## **Warranty Guidelines**

During your Homeowner Orientation, we confirm that light fixtures are in acceptable condition and that all bulbs are working. Our limited warranty excludes any fixture you supplied.

### ***Designed Load***

We will repair any electrical wiring that fails to carry its designed load to meet specifications. If electrical outlets, switches, or fixtures do not function as intended, we will repair or replace them.

### ***Power Surge***

Power surges are the result of local conditions beyond our control and are excluded from limited warranty coverage. They can cause burned-out bulbs, or damage to sensitive electronic equipment such as TVs, alarm systems, and computers. Damage resulting from lightning strikes is also excluded from limited warranty coverage.

## **Energy and Water Conservation**

*(Not all elements may apply to your home)*

A home built with respect for our environment is even more effective in achieving that goal when your daily use of features and products is well-informed. You may also save money as an additional benefit to conserving energy. Keep these hints in mind as you use your home's features:

### **Heating and Cooling**

- Keep your home's heating and cooling systems clean, and in good working order, to prevent inconvenience and maximize efficiency. Arrange for a professional to service heat and air conditioning systems at least once every two years.
- Keep filters clean or replace them regularly.
- Learn how to use your programmable thermostat for comfort and energy efficiency.
- Set schedules and temperatures appropriately, to maximize comfort and minimize energy consumption, if you have a zoned system (more than one furnace and separate controls).
- Plan landscaping elements that support efficient energy use:
  - Deciduous trees provide shade during summer and permit solar warming in winter.
  - Evergreen trees and shrubs can create a windbreak and reduce heating costs.
  - Position trees to shade the roof and still allow good air flow around the home.
  - Plant shrubs/trees to shade the air conditioner without obstructing air flow around it.
- Keep the overhead garage doors closed.
- Turn the heat down a few degrees if you expect a house full of dinner guests; the extra body heat will make up the difference.

### ***Winter***

- During cold days, open window coverings to allow the sun to warm your home. Close them when the sun begins to set.
- If applicable, limit use of a wood stove in extremely cold or windy weather when the chimney draft will draw room air out at an extreme rate.
- In some homes, humidifying the air during the winter allows the air to retain more heat and is a general health benefit. Note: If condensation develops on your windows, you need to lower the setting on the humidifier. The setting requirements change with the outside temperature; your manufacturer owner's manual contains a table defining these requirements.

### ***Summer***

- Ceiling fans use only one tenth as much electricity as air conditioners and the moving air allows you to feel comfortable at temperatures several degrees higher.
- On hot days, close all windows, and the window coverings on windows facing the sun, to minimize solar heating.
- Avoid use of a humidifier when you are using your air conditioner.

### **Water and Water Heater**

- Follow manufacturer instructions for the timing and steps to clean a tankless, or heat pump, water heater .
- Correct plumbing leaks, running toilets, or dripping faucets as soon as possible.
- Keep aerators clean.
- Front loading washing machines require less than half the water of top-loaders. They also cause less wear and tear on clothing and because they wring more water out in the spin cycle, laundry dries faster.

### **[www.H2ouse.org](http://www.H2ouse.org)**

This site offers tips for saving water in every area of your home, reports on how much each type of water-using device consumes in typical homes, and includes basic directions for minor home repairs involving water-using items.

### **Appliances**

- In selecting your home's appliances (Washer, Dryer and Refrigerator), compare the information on the (black and yellow) *EnergyGuide* sticker. Sometimes spending a bit more up front can reduce operating costs over the life of the appliance, conserving energy at the same time.
- Use cold water when operating your garbage disposal. This not only saves hot water you pay to heat, but it also preserves the disposal motor.
- When baking, preheat your oven just five minutes before you use it. When possible, bake several items at the same time or, at least, consecutively. Turn the oven off a few minutes before baking time is done.
- If your oven includes a convection setting, use it regularly—it can save both time and energy, allowing you to set the temperature 25 degrees lower for most recipes.
- If you will be running the dishwasher immediately, scrape rather than rinse the dishes.
- Run the dishwasher when it has a full load and allow the dishes to air-dry. A full dishwasher uses one half of the energy and one-sixth the water of washing dishes by hand.
- Avoid regular use of the “rinse and hold” cycle on your dishwasher.
- Use a phosphate free detergent in your dishwasher.
- Select an appropriate size refrigerator for your needs; two small refrigerators use more energy than one large one.
- Refrigerators with freezers on top generally use significantly less energy than side-by-side models. Bottom freezer models are the most energy-efficient models available.
- Refrigerator shelves are warmer near the door and coolest near the bottom, back of the unit. If possible, keep your meats and dairy products in those cooler places.

- A full refrigerator works less to keep cool, but do not pack it too tightly—good air circulation is important to efficient operation. Likewise, keep your freezer full.
- Avoid putting containers of hot food in the refrigerator; allow them to cool first.
- Regularly check refrigerator seals to ensure they are working correctly: if a dollar bill slides out without a tug, you may need to replace them.
- Keep dust off of the refrigerator condenser by cleaning it every three months, or as needed.

## Electrical

Unplug small appliances when they are not in use. Small items such as hair dryers and MP3 players draw electricity even when they are not in use. Unplug them, or plug them into power strips that you can conveniently turn off, when they are not in use.

## **Extended Absences**

Whether for a vacation, business travel, or other reasons, nearly all of us occasionally leave our homes for days or weeks at a time. With some preparation, such absences can be managed uneventfully. Keep these guidelines in mind and add additional reminders that are appropriate to your situation.

### Plan in Advance

- Ask a neighbor to keep an eye on the property. If possible, provide them with a way to reach you while you are away.
- If you will be gone an especially long time (over two weeks), consider arranging for a house-sitter.
- If applicable, arrange for someone to mow the lawn or shovel snow.
- Notify local security personnel, or police, of the dates you will be away.
- Stop mail, newspapers, and other deliveries.
- Consider the use of lighting timers (available at hardware stores for \$10 to \$20).
- Confirm that insurance policies covering your property and belongings are current and provide sufficient coverage. Some insurance policies stipulate how often your home should be checked while you are away; contact your insurance carrier to make certain you understand and comply with these requirements.
- Mark valuable items with identifying information. Consider whether you have irreplaceable items that should be stored in a bank vault or security box.

### As You Leave

- Forward phone calls to a relative or close friend.
- Unplug computers and other electronic devices that might be harmed in an electric storm.
- Leave window coverings in their most typical positions.
- Confirm that all doors and windows are locked and the deadbolts are engaged.
- Shut off the main water supply and drain your water lines. See *Plumbing/Extended Absence* for additional details.
- Set the thermostat on the water heater to “vacation” to save energy or shut off the water heater. Check manufacturer's directions for instructions on the steps involved in this process.
- Store items such as your lawn mower, bicycles, or ladders in the garage.
- Disengage the garage door opener by pulling on the rope that hangs from the mechanism. Some manufacturers suggest snapping a vise grip on the track, above the roller, when you will be absent for an extended period of time. To restore normal operation upon your return, remove the vise grip and re-engage the motor by pushing the button that operates the opener. See *Garage Overhead Door* for additional details.



- Leave a second car in the driveway.
- Be energy conscious: change the settings on your thermostat for both summer and winter usage. Leaving the temperature in your home at a minimum 55 degrees in cold weather and 75 degrees in warm weather will help to eliminate any problems in the home. In winter months, leave room doors open and also open doors on cabinets that contain plumbing to allow circulation of heat
- Arm your security system, if applicable.

## Expansion and Contraction

### Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Most building materials will expand and contract, subject to changes in temperature and humidity.

Not all materials expand and contract at the same rate resulting in small drywall and paint cracks, as well as small separations of other materials. This occurrence is very normal in a new home, even with the highest quality construction. Shrinkage of the wood and drywall items in your home is inevitable; this will be most noticeable during the first year after construction.

The ceiling is attached to the roof trusses. Cracking may occur where the wall joins the ceiling due to trusses expanding at a different rate than the walls. These cracks may open and close with the seasons because the attic is not a controlled environment.

### Warranty Guidelines

We may provide one-time repairs to some of the effects of expansion and contraction during the two-year warranty period. See individual categories such as drywall for details.

## Fencing

### Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

The fencing that is provided as a standard item varies by community; your community may have pre-stained wood or vinyl fencing. All fences constructed by the homeowner must be built according to specifications provided in homeowner documents. Also, verify that placement is in accordance with the specific CC&Rs for your community.

#### ***Color***

The standard stain color for wood fencing is **Olympic #708 Walnut**. Matching certain stain colors may be required in certain communities and should be verified by community CCRs, before staining. If not required to be stained by community guidelines, fences may also be left natural or sealed with a clear sealant.

#### ***Drainage***

Fencing should be installed only after the final grade has been established and approved. In planning, installing, and maintaining fencing, ensure that existing drainage patterns function unimpeded. When installing a fence, use caution in distributing the soil you removed to set posts to avoid blocking drainage swales. Plan enough space under the bottom of a wood fence for water to pass through.

#### ***Developer/Homeowner Association Architectural Guidelines***

If you choose to add fencing after moving into your new home, keep in mind the architectural requirements of your subdivision may dictate the type, style, and color of fencing permitted.

Specific community requirements about fence type, color, style, height, and position on your home site are described in the current architectural guidelines, which you received as part of your purchase documents. You can also obtain this information from the homeowners' association management company.

Special requirements apply to homes on corner lots where drivers must have adequate visibility. Additionally, in some communities, zoning laws may impact private fencing. Your responsibilities include checking on such details.

We recommend that you engage the services of professionals to install your fence. Be certain to inform any fence installer of your architectural requirements.

*See also Property Boundaries.*

#### **Variation**

Height and location of installed fences will vary with home site size, topography, and shape.

#### **Wood Fences**

The lumber used to construct wood fences is typically rough cedar (or comparable). Over time it will naturally crack, warp, and split. Unless extreme, these conditions require no action on your part. As the wood ages and shrinks, nails may come loose and require attention. Also, check the posts and gates twice a year, and tighten hardware or make needed adjustments.

#### **Wrought Iron Fencing**

Wrought iron is subject to rusting unless regular maintenance is provided. Use touch-up paint on any scratches or chips. Inspect the fence twice a year and touch-up as needed, then plan to repaint the entire fence every one to two years to keep it looking its best.

As with wood fencing, prevent sprinklers from spraying your wrought iron fence or rails. Check monthly to confirm that water does not pool around the fence posts. Make corrections to drainage, as needed, to prevent this.

*See also Utility Locates.*

### **Warranty Guidelines**

If fencing is part of your home purchase, we will confirm the acceptable condition of the fence during your Homeowner Orientation. Although developer-installed fencing falls outside our limited warranty, we may be able to assist in communicating any concerns you have and obtaining a response. If we installed your fence, we will correct fence posts that become loose during the warranty period.

#### **Weather Damage**

Damage to fencing caused by severe weather should be referred to your homeowner insurance company and is specifically excluded from warranty coverage.

## **Fireplace**

### **Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines**

*See also Fire Prevention.*

Most of us feel a fireplace is an excellent way to create a warm, cozy atmosphere. However, without sufficient information, your use of the fireplace can result in heat (and dollars) being wasted. To help prevent that, consider the following points:

We offer direct-vent gas fireplaces. If your home includes a fireplace, we demonstrate use during your Homeowner Orientation.

#### **Read and follow all of your fireplace manufacturer's directions.**

A slight delay between turning the switch on and flame ignition is normal. The flames should ignite gently and silently. If you notice any deviation from this and smell gas, immediately shut off the switch and report it to the gas company.

Please note that materials (i.e. paints, sealants, lubricating oils or gasket adhesives) on the exterior of wood or gas fireplaces can produce odors and small amounts of carbon monoxide the first few times the fireplace is used. This is normal. You may

even see a little smoke; again a normal condition of the first time. This is called curing or burning-in. It would be advisable to open a window or door to clear any odors.

**Caution: The exterior vent cover for a direct-vent gas fireplace becomes extremely hot when the fireplace is operating.**

## **Warranty Guidelines**

Fireplaces are not intended to be the sole heat source in the home. The fireplace should function properly when the manufacturer's directions are followed.

### ***Downdraft***

Extremely high winds can result in a downdraft, however, this condition should be temporary and occasional. We will determine and correct continuous malfunction if caused by a construction, or design, defect.

### ***Glass Panel***

During your Homeowner Orientation we confirm that the glass fireplace panel, when included with the home, is in acceptable condition. Use the cleaning product recommended by the manufacturer to clean the panel. Cleaning the fireplace panel with glass cleaner will damage the glass; this damage is excluded from warranty coverage.

### ***Water Infiltration***

In unusually heavy or prolonged precipitation, especially when accompanied by high winds, some water can enter the home through the vent. The limited warranty excludes this occurrence.

## **Fire Prevention**

All family members should practice fire safety. Awareness of potential dangers and preventive actions are preferable to even the fastest response. Keep these hints in mind and add your own reminders in the space provided on the next page. For additional tips, contact your local fire department.

### **Train Family Members**

- Ensure that all family members know what escape routes exist in your home.
- Conduct a fire drill with family members.
- Test the smoke detectors to confirm that they function and so that everyone recognizes the sound.
- Follow the manufacturer's directions for cleaning and servicing all of your smoke detectors.
- As soon as possible, teach young children how, and why, to dial 911.
- Have a general-use fire extinguisher and teach all family members about its location and operation.
- Teach children how to safely use appliances, such as irons and toasters.
- If you smell gas, leave and call for help from another location. Do not use a phone or cell phone, and do not turn on any lights.

### **Practice Prevention**

- Store lighters and matches away from children and heat sources.
- Avoid smoking indoors, and always use a fire safe receptacle to extinguish smoking material.
- Avoid leaving small children home alone, even for a short time.
- Maintain appliances in clean and safe working condition.
- Avoid overloading electrical outlets.
- Ensure that all electrical cords are in good repair.
- Avoid having any flammable objects or materials near the stove.

- Avoid leaving anything that you are cooking unattended.
- Prevent a build-up of grease by keeping the range hood filter clean.
- Allow space for cooling around electrical equipment. Maintain a clear space of at least three feet around furnaces.
- Unplug the iron when it is not in use. Do not leave an iron that is on unattended.
- Use electric blankets with care, following manufacturer's directions.
- Use the correct wattage of bulbs in all light fixtures.
- Use candles safely:
  - Never leave a burning candle unattended.
  - Keep them away from children and pets.
  - Wicks should be cut to 1/4 inch.
- Store volatile materials (paint, gasoline for the lawn mower, etc.) in appropriate containers, away from flames (such as pilot lights) or heat sources. Many trash collection services offer a means for you to dispose of hazardous items; check with your service provider for details.
- Gas Grill: Keep the barbeque clean and regularly soap test the lines of a gas grill for leaks. A quarter, to a half turn provides enough propane; do not turn the valve on all the way. When lighting your barbeque manually, have the match or lighter already burning with the lid open before you turn on the gas.
- Charcoal Grill: Wait for at least a full minute before lighting fluid-soaked coals. Before you light the coals, move the lighter fluid a safe distance away. Never use gasoline to start a charcoal barbeque and never spray more fluid on hot coals. After barbequing, wear an oven mitt and use tongs to submerge spent coals in a metal pail of water.
- All Grills: Use the barbeque outdoors, at least 10 feet from the house. Grilling in the garage, even with the door open, does not allow enough ventilation and could result in carbon monoxide poisoning. Never leave a lit barbeque unattended. Keep children and pets away from all grills.
- If your home includes a gas fireplace, follow all directions and do not leave the fireplace unattended when it is on.
- If you have a wood burning stove:
  - Maintain the spark arrester on the chimney.
  - Never use liquid fire starters (i.e. charcoal barbeque starters) in an indoor fireplace.
  - Ensure glass doors are closed when a fire is burning.
  - Confirm the fire is out before closing the flue.
  - Do not leave the wood stove unattended while a fire is burning.
- During holidays, ensure that all cords and connections are in good condition and have appropriate capacity for electrical decorations.
- If you remodel, finish the basement, or add onto your home, obtain a building permit and work with professionals. Ensure that all building department inspections occur and that the work complies with all applicable codes. This also applies to installing a gas line for an outdoor barbeque, gas fireplace, gas firepit, clothes dryer, etc.

## Fixtures (Plumbing)

### Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Manufacturers typically treat fixtures with a clear protective coating, electrostatically applied, to provide beauty and durability. Even this coating will show wear and tear. Atmospheric conditions, sunlight, caustic agents such as paints, and scratches from sharp objects can cause the protective coating to crack or peel, exposing the brass and resulting in spotting and discoloration.

#### *Cleaning*

Initial care of these products requires only periodic cleaning with a mild, nonabrasive soap and buffing with a soft cloth.

#### *Corrosion*

Water having a high mineral content can be corrosive to fixtures.

### ***Polish***

When peeling, spotting, or discoloration occurs, you can sometimes restore the beauty of the metal by completely removing the remaining coating and hand polishing the item with a suitable polish. Maintain the gloss by applying a light coat of wax and buffing with a soft cloth.

## **Warranty Guidelines**

During your Homeowner Orientation, we will confirm that fixtures are in acceptable condition. Corrosion damage, to the external surfaces or internal workings of plumbing fixtures, is excluded from warranty coverage.

## **Foundation**

### **Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines**

We install the foundation of your home according to the recommendations of our consulting engineer. The footings and walls of the foundation are poured concrete with reinforcing steel rods. To protect your home's foundation, follow the landscaping and drainage installation and maintenance guidelines found in this Homeowner Guide.

### ***Cracks***

Surface cracks can develop in footings and foundation walls. Surface cracks are not detrimental to the structural integrity of your home. If a crack develops in a foundation wall that allows visible water to come through (e.g. into a basement or crawlspace), follow the procedures for submitting a warranty request.

### ***Crawl Space Vents***

The vents located in the foundation around your home help to keep air circulating in the crawlspace under the home. Monitor the grade of your yard if you are altering it from its original grade. Ensure that the grade slopes away from the vents and is not level with the bottom of the vents, or use a vent well when vents are below grade. By taking these steps, you help prevent water from entering the crawlspace through the vents.

### ***Frozen Pipes***

A seasonal concern during winter is frozen pipes. Styrofoam vent covers can be added to the foundation vents to help guard against this during prolonged cold weather (several consecutive days below 32 degrees). The covers can be purchased at most hardware or home supply stores. Be sure to remove the covers once the temperature has risen above freezing to keep air circulating under the home.

## **Warranty Guidelines**

The foundation walls are a structural element of your home; therefore, they carry an additional limited structural warranty which is described at the end of this chapter.

### ***Cosmetic Imperfections***

Slight cosmetic imperfections in the foundation walls, such as a visible seam where two pours meet or slight visible aggregate, known as honeycombing, are possible and require no repair unless they permit water to enter.

### ***Cracks***

Shrinkage or surface cracks are common in foundation walls, especially at the corners of basement windows. We will seal cracks that exceed 1/4 inch in width.

### ***Leaks***

We will correct conditions that permit water to enter the basement provided you have complied with the drainage, landscaping, and maintenance guidelines.

# Framing

## Warranty Guidelines

### ***Bowed Walls***

We will correct bowed walls when the bow exceeds 1/2 inch within a 32-inch horizontal distance, or 1/2 inch with any 8-foot vertical measurement.

### ***Floor Deflection***

Floors will deflect (bend or flex) when walked on. This will be more noticeable next to hutches, bookcases, pianos, chairs, and other heavy furniture. This is not a structural deficiency and we will take no action for this occurrence.

### ***Floor Level***

Within a room, the floor should appear level when seen from a normal viewing position. We will correct ridges or depressions that measure more than 1/4 inch within a 32-inch distance.

### ***Party Wall Items***

In attached home or condominium communities, you may have a shared wall (i.e. party wall) with your neighbor on one or both sides of your home. You may also have a shared ceiling/floor with your neighbor. These walls and ceiling/floors are built to meet, or exceed, noise and fire protection requirements.

Care should be taken to avoid any damage or changes to these building components, as this will increase possible noise transmission and reduce fire resistance. Some sound transmission will still be evident when you have a common wall, floor, or ceiling. Loud music or high impact noise transferring is common and is excluded from the warranty.

### ***Plumb Walls***

We will correct walls that are out of plumb, more than one inch in an eight foot distance of the wall.

### ***Squeaks***

Some floor and stair squeaks are unavoidable. We do not warrant against floor squeaks, however we will make a reasonable effort to correct them one time during your warranty period.

## Garage Overhead Door

### Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Because the garage door is a large, moving object, periodic maintenance is necessary.

### ***Elements***

Weather conditions may result in some precipitation entering around the garage door. Likewise, dust may enter, especially until most homes in the community have landscaping installed. When freezing temperatures occur, the rubber may not seal along the bottom of the door; this unavoidable condition is a natural result of weather conditions and is excluded from warranty coverage.

### ***Keyless Entry***

Each brand has a different method for programming; please refer to your manufacturers guide for reprogramming instructions.

### ***Light Visible***

Garage overhead doors cannot be airtight. Some light will be visible around the edges and across the top of the door.

### ***Lubrication***

Regularly apply a lubricant, such as silicone spray, to all moving metal parts: rollers, hinges, pulleys, bearings, moveable lock parts, and springs. Lubrication is not required on plastic/neoprene rollers and plastic idler bearings. Refer to the door manufacturer's manual or website for recommendations. Avoid over-lubricating to prevent drips on vehicles or the concrete floor. Also, ensure that all fasteners are tight on the hardware and the overhead door is operating as intended, without binding or scraping.

### *Opener*

To prevent damage to a garage door opener, be sure the door is completely unlocked (and the rope-pull has been engaged) before operating the opener.

**Caution: Operating an opener when the manufacturer's overhead door lock is engaged in the track could cause the opener to fail. In fact, garage door companies recommend against even leaving a lock installed once an opener has been added. Side locks can stick, or get caught in the track, and cause the cables to come off which creates a major inconvenience and repair. If a manual lock is required due to a power outage or leaving for an extended period of time, we suggest disengaging the opener (with the rope pull) and snapping a vise grip on the track (above a roller). Either way, to restore normal operation upon your return, unlock the garage door and remove the vise grip first, then re-engage the motor (push the button to operate the opener and it will reconnect).**

If you have an opener installed on your home after closing, we suggest that you order it from the company that provided and installed the garage door to assure uninterrupted warranty coverage. Be familiar with the steps for manual operation of the door in the event of a power failure.

If we installed a door opener as one of your selections, during the Homeowner Orientation we demonstrate the electric eye that provides a safety stop in the event someone crosses through the opening while the overhead door is in motion. Use care not to place tools or other stored items where they interfere with the function of the electric eye.

Expect to replace the battery in the garage opener remote controls annually. The battery is usually a 9-volt battery. Check your manufacturer's manual for correct battery size and other maintenance needs of your remote controls.

### *Painting*

Garage doors are insulated metal. Repaint the garage door when you repaint your home, or more often if needed, to maintain a satisfactory appearance. The color of your overhead garage door may be a requirement of the architectural controls in your area. Therefore, the color of the door may be pre-determined and unable to be changed. Please refer to your exterior color selections for further information regarding your architectural requirements.

### *Safety*

Follow the manufacturer's instructions for safe and reliable operation. Do not allow anyone, except the operator, near the door when it is in motion. Keep hands and fingers away from all parts of the door except the handle. Do not allow children to play with, or around, the door.

For your safety, have any needed adjustments made by a qualified specialist. Garage door springs are under a considerable amount of tension and require special tools and knowledge for accurate and safe servicing. Have the door inspected by a professional garage door technician after any significant impact to the door.

### *Sag*

The garage door may sag slightly due to its weight and span. This is a normal condition and does not require attention.

## **Warranty Guidelines**

The garage door should operate smoothly and with reasonable ease. The door can become misaligned and require adjustment, which we will provide during the warranty period, unless the problem is caused by the installation of a garage door opener subsequent to closing of the home.

## **Gas Shut-Offs**

### **Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines**

You will find shut-offs on gas lines near their connection to each item that operates on gas. In addition, there is a main shut-off at the meter. We point these out during your Homeowner Orientation. All gas shut-offs are in the open, or on, position when the valve is in line (parallel) with the gas line. It is off when it is turned 90 degrees (perpendicular).

### ***Fireplace***

At the bottom of the fireplace, a removable panel covers the controls and the gas shut-off. The gas shut-off valve is typically a red color.

### ***Furnace***

The gas shut-off for the furnace is located on the gas supply line that is readily visible in front of each unit. The shut-off valve is typically colored red.

### ***Gas Range***

The shut-off for the range is located at the inside back of the lower cabinet on one side, or behind the range.

### ***Main***

The main natural gas shut-off is located on the exterior of the garage side wall. The shut-off valve is on the gas line between the gas meter and the line entry into the home. This valve requires a wrench to turn it.

### ***Leak***

If you suspect a gas leak, leave the home immediately and **call the gas company for emergency service from another location**. Avoid using your cell phone in your home if you suspect a gas leak.

### ***Other Gas Supply Lines***

Your home may be equipped with a gas supply line for a (future) clothes dryer, patio barbeque grill, or hot tub. There should be a shut-off valve just prior to the capped-off gas supply stub.

### ***Water Heater***

The gas shut-off for the water heater is located on the gas supply line that is readily visible in front of each unit. The shut-off valve is typically **colored red**.

## **Warranty Guidelines**

The gas company is responsible for leaks up to the meter. We correct leaks from the meter into the home.

## **Ghosting**

### **Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines**

Recent feedback from homeowners (in both old and new homes) regarding black sooty stains which develop on home surfaces (carpets, walls, ceilings, appliances, mirrors, and around area rugs, etc.) have caused much investigation and research.

The conclusion of the research and laboratory tests has been that the majority of this staining or "ghosting" (also known as "carbon black") results from air pollution in the home caused by burning scented candles. Incomplete combustion of hydrocarbons as these candles burn contributes a considerable amount of soot to the air. This sooty substance then settles, or accumulates, on surfaces of the home. The sooty deposits are extremely difficult to remove; on some surfaces (i.e. light-colored carpet), they are impossible to clean away completely.

The popularity of scented candles has increased many-fold in recent years. If this is an activity that is part of your lifestyle, we caution you about the potential damage to your home. When this condition results from burning candles or other lifestyle choices, the resulting damage is excluded from our limited warranty coverage.

*See also Carpet/Filtration.*

## **Grading and Drainage**

### **Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines**

Early in land development, general drainage patterns are established in partnership with municipal and other regulatory, authorities. You and your neighbors share an overall drainage plan for the community that was predetermined before the homes were built. Yards drain from one to another. Yards may drain from front to back, back to front, or have split drainage.



Use caution when installing landscaping, fencing, or additions to your home to prevent causing water problems on your lot or adjacent lots. The final grade surrounding the home should not be modified. It is designed to drain water away from the home, into backyard drains or along the side yards swales, to the street. Modifying the final grade may void the warranty related to moisture in the crawlspace of your home.

### ***Backfill Settlement***

The area we excavated for your home's foundation was larger than the home to allow room to work. In addition, some trenching is necessary for installation of utility lines. Although we replaced the soil, it does not return to its original density. Some settling will occur especially after prolonged or heavy rainfall, or melting of large amounts of snow. Settling can continue for several years. Inspect the perimeter of your home regularly for signs of settling and fill settled areas, as needed, to maintain positive drainage.

### ***Drainage***

The grade around your home should slope away from the house. Drainage swales may, or may not, follow property boundaries. Maintain the slopes around your home to permit the water to drain away from the home as rapidly as possible. This is essential to protect your foundation. Failure to do so could result in major structural damage and void your structural warranty.

### ***Easements***

Most lots have an easement, which is a section of land in front, on the sides, and/or in the back of your home site where public utilities are installed. In some areas, an easement, or right-of-way, is required for grass or concrete drainage swales. Easements are shown on the approved plot plan.

### ***Erosion***

Until your yard is established and stable, erosion will be a potential concern. Heavy rain, or roof runoff, can erode soil. The sooner you restore the grade to its original condition, the less damage will occur.

Erosion is of special concern in drainage swales. If swales become filled with soil runoff, they may not drain the rest of the yard, causing further problems. Correcting erosion is your responsibility.

### ***Main Water Line***

The main water line meter to your new home is typically located in the front yard and encased in a concrete vault (in some cases according to subdivision design it may be located in the back yard). Governing municipalities require this main line meter be visible.

### ***NPDES: National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (Southwest WA)***

Beginning October 1, 2006, the State of Washington's Department of Ecology implemented new standards regarding storm water runoff. The new, higher standards help to ensure that pollutants and sediment are not entering the neighboring watersheds via runoff during site construction.

In accordance with these new standards, each community must have a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) in place for each home site prior to the start of construction, and up through the completion of construction in the community.

The coverage for your home's portion of the NPDES general permit will transfer into your name when you sign your closing documents at the title company. From that point on, you will be responsible for maintaining the SWPPP for your home site until the completion of the community you live in, and the termination of the NPDES general permit for the entire community.

Please don't hesitate to ask a member of the New Tradition Homes' team if you have further questions.

### ***Roof Water (Southwest WA)***

Gutters and downspouts carry roof water through foundation drains per the governing stormwater guidelines.

Maintain any caps or connections of these products.

### ***Rototilling***

Rototilling can significantly change drainage swales. You can minimize the potential concern by rototilling parallel to the swales, rather than across them.

### ***Subsurface Drains***

Occasionally the developer will install a subsurface drain to ensure that surface water drains from a yard adequately. Keep this area, and especially the drain cover, clear of debris so that the drain can function as intended.

### ***Swales***

Drainage swales are shallow-sided, sloped ditches designed to convey surface run-off away from your home toward the nearest street, land, dry pond, or storm water management pond. These swales are usually located along common property lines and sometimes at the back of a lot. After heavy rain or snow, water may stand in swales up to 48 hours.

*See also Landscaping and Utility Locates.*

## **Warranty Guidelines**

We established the rough or final grade to ensure adequate drainage away from the home. Once we have met our commitment as described in your purchase agreement documents, maintaining this drainage is your responsibility. If you alter the drainage pattern after grade approval, or if changes in drainage occur due to lack of maintenance, the limited structural warranty may be impacted.

### ***Backfill Settlement: One-Time Repair***

Backfilled, or excavated, areas around the foundation and at utility trenches should not interfere with the drainage away from your home. We will fill the area to restore positive drainage, one time during the warranty period, if these areas settle more than six inches around the perimeter of the home.

### ***New Landscaping***

Temporary drainage problems can be caused by severe weather conditions, as well as new landscaping, and the extra watering that accompanies it. If sod, trees, or shrubs are part of your purchase agreement, proper watering and care of these items are your responsibility.

### ***Recommendations***

In order for us to complete grading after closing (when that is necessary), concrete must be poured and the ground must be dry and free of frost. Your property must be clear of personal property or structures (i.e. dog runs, swing sets, vehicles). Please refer to our entry on *Seasonal Work* in chapter 6, *Homeowner Orientation*, for further details.

### ***Swales***

We do not alter drainage patterns to suit individual landscape plans. Changes in grade often affect adjacent, or nearby lots, because a home site typically receives water from neighboring home sites and passes water on to other home sites. We advise against making such changes. After heavy rain or snow, water may stand in swales that connect to adjacent yards up to 24 to 48 hours.

### ***Under Concrete: One-Time Repair***

As we complete grading, or one time during the first year warranty, we will fill visible sunken areas under your concrete. Following that, any further settlement is your responsibility to correct.

### ***Winter Grading***

Due to weather conditions, especially during winter and early spring, the grade may not have been established at the time of closing. If this occurs, we document the grading status at the time of delivery and finish grading work when conditions permit. Confirm that we have completed your grading before continuing with additional yard construction such as fencing.

## **Green Home Care**

In addition to saving water and energy, numerous lifestyle details can have a significant impact on the environment. You will find many ideas by reviewing the following suggestions, consulting the sources listed under various subjects, or reviewing “Additional Information” resources at the end of this entry.

## Cleaning

- Look for products whose manufacturers spell out all ingredients. A long list of ingredients you cannot pronounce is usually an indication that the product contains chemicals which you and the environment are better off without.
- You might also want to consider replacing expensive, chemically laden products with an all-purpose cleaner you mix yourself. Frequently used ingredients include baking soda, white vinegar, salt, corn starch, cream of tartar, and borax; all of which are safer for the environment than many of the chemicals found in commercial cleaning products. Experiment to see which recipes work best for your needs.
- For products you purchase, look for concentrated formulas in containers made from recycled materials; powders contain fewer chemicals and use less energy to transport.
- Whichever cleaner you are using, use just the amount you need to complete the job and not one drop more.
- Replace paper towels with micro-fiber cleaning cloths; they are just as effective and you can wash and reuse them.

For more information visit [www.turi.com](http://www.turi.com) - *Toxics Use Reduction Institute* comes from the University of Massachusetts, Lowell. It includes a library of over 14,000 environmental abstracts with links to full text on the Web. Equally interesting, it provides safety details on ingredients used in do-it-yourself cleaning products, recipes, and test results on a variety of those recipes.

## Gardening

- Buy natural fertilizers with ingredients such as bone meal, kelp meal, alfalfa meal, or vermiculture castings (worm poop). These break down slowly which is beneficial to plants. Look for certified organic products and use them sparingly to avoid run-off.
- Start a compost pile. Local nurseries or hardware stores carry compost bins. Visit [www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org) and search for “composting” to find an article and pictures that to teach you how to compost, as well as helpful links on the composting process.
- Consider a manual or electric push mower to eliminate emissions from a gas-powered model if your lawn is relatively small and flat; this will provide more opportunity to exercise at the same time. Visit [www.reelmowerguide.com](http://www.reelmowerguide.com) for information about mowing with reel mowers and product reviews.

## Laundry

- Use the recommended amount of detergent for your washing machine. Using too much will leave a residue on clothing; using too little will fail to clean your clothes adequately.
- A quarter cup of baking soda mixed in with your detergent boosts cleaning power and reduces static cling. Residue from fabric softener reduces the ability of towels to absorb water. Residue from dryer sheets can build up on lint screens, reducing efficiency of your dryer.
- Skip hot water unless the load of wash is especially soiled. Warm water should be sufficient for washing; use cold water for the rinse cycle.
- A half-cup of vinegar added to the last rinse will soften your clothes, reduce lint, and control static cling. For delicate items, add only one or two tablespoons to the last rinse. For blankets, two cups of vinegar added to the final rinse will help remove soap scum from the laundry.

## Additional Information

### [www.greenerchoices.org](http://www.greenerchoices.org)

This address takes you to consumer reports with a focus on home energy use and product test results. It also has label and certification search capabilities.

### [www.thegreenguide.com](http://www.thegreenguide.com)

This site comes from National Geographic and is one of the best sources of information about green living. The content is well-researched, timely, and relevant.

[www.ewg.org](http://www.ewg.org)

The Environmental Working Group offers comprehensive environmental news. Register for a free monthly newsletter or customize your profile to receive updates on the topics of greatest interest to you. The site also includes a feature titled “Skin Deep” that lists, and ranks, the chemical ingredients in over 40,000 personal care products, resulting in an overall rating number that can guide your purchases.

[www.greenhome.com](http://www.greenhome.com)

An environmental products store website, this source includes an “information” tab that gets you to useful articles, newsletters and Living Magazine archives (issue 001 includes “Which Eco Cleaners Work?” which reports actual results on products ranging from dishwasher liquid through toilet bowl cleaners).

## **Gutters and Downspouts (Southwest WA)**

### **Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines**

The gutters are typically connected to a rain-drain system through the downspouts that exits at the street or goes into a drywell in the backyard. Some homes also have an area drain to collect surface run-off. This drain should not be covered up.

Some homes have a catch basin attached to the rain drain system, installed in the backyard. This catch basin is intended to be a collection point for leaves and debris that may wash off the roof and into the gutters. Periodically inspect this catch basin and clean out as necessary.

#### ***Cleaning***

Seasonally inspect the gutters and scoop out any leaves or debris with a small hand shovel. Materials that accumulate in gutters can slow water drainage from the roof, cause overflows, and clog the downspouts. The accumulation of natural debris (pine needles or leaves) or gravel from the roofing materials is a home maintenance concern. Removing such material is your responsibility.

#### ***Ladders***

Use caution when leaning ladders against gutters as this may cause dents.

#### ***Leaks***

If gutter seams leak, use a commercial gutter caulking compound available at hardware stores to caulk the inside joint.

#### ***Snow and Ice***

Clear excess snow from downspouts, as soon as possible, to allow the gutter to drain and prevent damage. Severe ice or snow build-up can damage gutters and/or cause ice damming and potential water leakage.

*See also Roof/Ice Damming.*

### **Warranty Guidelines**

Gutters over three feet long are installed with a slight slope so that roof water will flow to the downspouts.

#### ***Leaks***

We correct leaks that occur during the warranty period.

#### ***Overflow***

Gutters may overflow during periods of excessively heavy rain; this is expected and requires no repair.

#### ***Standing Water***

Small amounts of water (up to 3/4 inch) will stand for short periods of time in gutters immediately after rain. No correction is required for this condition.

# Hardware

## Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Doorknobs and locks should operate correctly with little attention. Over time they may need slight adjustments due to normal shrinkage of the framing. Occasionally, you may need to tighten screws or provide lubrication.

## Warranty Guidelines

We confirm that all hardware is in acceptable condition during your Homeowner Orientation. The limited warranty excludes repairs for cosmetic damage subsequent to the closing.

We will repair hardware items that fail to function as intended.

# Hardwood & Laminate Floors

## Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

In daily care of hardwood floors, preventive maintenance is the primary goal. Please see your flooring manufacturer's instructions or Website.

### **HARDWOOD FLOORING**

#### ***Appliances***

Delivering, installing, and moving appliances for cleaning purposes may damage the hardwood floor surface. Use extreme caution when moving appliances; repair of such damage is your responsibility.

#### ***Cleaning***

Sweep on a daily basis, or as needed. Never wet-mop a hardwood floor; also avoid the use of floor steamers. Excessive water causes wood to expand and can possibly damage the floor. When damp-mopping, remove all excess water from the mop. Check with the hardwood company if your floor has a water-based finish.

#### ***Dimples***

Placing heavy furniture, or dropping heavy or sharp objects, on hardwood floors can result in dimples.

#### ***Filmy Appearance***

A white, filmy appearance can result from moisture, often from wet shoes or boots, or from wet-mopping.

#### ***Furniture Legs***

Install proper floor protectors on furniture placed on hardwood floors. Protectors will allow chairs to move easily over the floor without scuffing. Regularly clean the protectors to remove any grit that may have accumulated.

#### ***Humidity***

Wood flooring, being a natural product, has some water in it at all times. The ideal humidity for hardwood flooring is between 30 and 50 percent. Keeping it within this range throughout the year will greatly minimize any expanding and contracting.

The moisture content in wood will naturally change with the moisture changes that occur in our environment. As the temperature drops in the winter, we turn on our heating systems and keep our doors and windows tightly sealed. This heat dries out the home and sucks the moisture out of the air and wood, causing the wood to shrink and cracks or gaps to appear between boards. This can be somewhat minimized by having a humidifier attached to the heating system.

As temperature and humidity changes occur in summer, seasonal cracking should remedy itself. As moisture is replaced back into the air, moisture is also absorbed back into the wood. Expansion occurs and wood floors return to the state in which they were before the winter season.

We recommend that you avoid the use of wood filler on your wood floor during the winter months in an attempt to remove the cracks and gaps. When the wood expands again in summer, it will either force out the excess fill or the boards will warp. The wood must have somewhere to go as it expands and returns to its natural position.

This seasonal shrinkage is normal. We recommend that you wait until spring or summer before determining whether any maintenance attention is needed.

### ***Mats and Area Rugs***

Use protective mats at the exterior doors to help prevent sand and grit from getting on the floor, however if sand and grit accumulate under these mats, further damage to flooring may occur. Gritty sand is wood flooring's worst enemy. Also be aware that rubber backing on area rugs or mats can cause yellowing and warping of the floor surface.

### ***Separation***

Expect some shrinkage around heat vents, heat-producing appliances, or during seasonal weather changes.

*See also Warping.*

### ***Shoes***

Stiletto shoes can focus the weight of a 125-pound person to more than 2000 pounds per square inch—that is enough weight to damage hardened concrete; it will mark your wood floor.

### ***Spills***

Clean up food spills immediately with a dry cloth.

### ***Splinters***

Small splinters of wood can appear when floors are new.

### ***Sun Exposure***

Exposure to direct sunlight can cause irreparable discoloration to hardwood floors. Install and use window coverings in areas of concern to preserve the beauty of your hardwood floors.

### ***Traffic Paths***

A dulling of the finish in heavy traffic areas is likely.

### ***Warping***

Warping will occur if the floor repeatedly becomes wet or is thoroughly soaked even once. Slight warping in the area of heat vents or heat-producing appliances is typical.

### ***Wax***

Waxing and the use of products like oil soap are neither necessary, nor recommended.

## **LAMINATE WOOD FLOORING**

Laminate is a durable, wood-look alternative to hardwood flooring. As with all materials in your home, protecting and cleaning your laminate flooring with appropriate products will keep them looking good long-term. Please see our flooring contractor's (or manufacturer's) information for more detailed information regarding care and maintenance.

One special item to note regarding laminate flooring is that it is often installed as a floating floor system; any noises heard while walking on the floor may be attributed to movement of the floor itself.

### ***Appliances***

To move heavy appliances – use an air sled, as it will prevent dragging and scratching across the floor.

### ***Avoid Steam Cleaners***

Avoid using steam cleaners; the moisture will damage your flooring.

### ***Cleaning***

Sweep or vacuum laminate floors to remove dust and dirt. Occasional cleaning with a slightly damp microfiber mop can be performed, as needed.

Do not use any chemical cleaners to clean laminate floors, including Swiffer Wet Jet, Murphy's Oil, etc. Divine Flooring sells an all-natural laminate/hardwood floor cleaner.

### ***Furniture Legs***

As with a natural wood floor, protect your laminate from the effects of moving furniture by installing felt pads under the legs of all furniture. There are also hardwood/laminate safe castors for office furniture.

### ***Humidity***

Although laminate floors are more stable than hardwood, it is still important to maintain proper humidity levels in your home (30 – 50% is recommended).

### ***Spills***

Please note that standing water from pet dishes, plants, or mopping (too often or with too much water) can cause the laminate boards to swell.

### ***Touch Ups***

A touch up pen can be used to touch up small scratches; find a color match to the laminate from the installer or a home improvement center.

## **Warranty Guidelines**

During your Homeowner Orientation, we will confirm that hardwood floors are in acceptable condition. We will correct cosmetic details, listed during your Homeowner Orientation, when they are readily noticeable under normal lighting conditions from a standing position.

### ***Separations***

Shrinkage will result in separation between the boards of hardwood floors. Gaps that exceed 1/8 inch over the length of the board in normal moisture conditions will be repaired. You are responsible for removing excess filler that may appear on the surface later if the boards expand due to subsequent humidity changes.

## **Heating System: Gas Forced Air**

### **Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines**

The furnace installed in your home is built to be a reliable, low-maintenance unit. Good maintenance of your furnace can save energy dollars and prolong the life of the furnace. Carefully read and follow the manufacturer's literature on use and maintenance. The following guidelines only provide general information:

### ***Adjust Vents***

Experiment with the adjustable registers in your home to establish the best heat flow for your lifestyle. Generally, you can reduce the heat in interior or seldom-used rooms. This is an individual matter and you will need to balance the system for your own family's needs.

During cold weather in particular, ensure that warm air from the heat registers located near windows can flow unobstructed. This helps minimize condensation. Also ensure that window coverings are open, at least slightly, for the same reason.

### ***Avoid Overheating***

Do not overheat your new home. Overheating can cause excessive shrinkage of framing lumber and may damage the materials used in the home. In the beginning, use as little heat as possible to be comfortable and increase it gradually.

### ***Combustion and Fresh Air Ducts***

Furnaces we install include combustion and fresh air ducts. The outside end of these ducts are covered with a screen to minimize insects or animals entering the ducts. Cold air coming in through these ducts means they are functioning as they should.

**Caution: Never block exhaust, combustion, or fresh air vents. In periods of heavy snow, regularly check to ensure the exterior vent is free of snow in order to draw combustion air in so that the furnace can function. The system will shut down if this vent is covered and air cannot circulate.**

### ***Damper***

The damper, located in the main air duct next to the furnace, is also a good tool to maintain peak heating and cooling efficiency. The air duct transfers air to the second floor (if applicable) and the damper allows the homeowner to seasonally regulate the flow of cool and warm air. Please refer to the diagram attached to the damper control handle for more information.

### ***Duct Cleaning***

We recommend that you have your home's ducts cleaned every three to five years. Annual cleaning is only necessary if health issues are a factor.

### ***Ductwork Noise***

As the system operates, popping, pinging or rubbing sounds are the natural result of ductwork heating and cooling in response to airflow. Noises may also be the result of the location of the heat ducts in relation to plumbing lines.

### ***Electronic Ignition***

Your furnace does not have a standing pilot light; this saves gas. Instead, the manufacturer has installed a silicon nitride hot surface igniter. This igniter will glow when heating up to allow ignition of the natural gas and is designed for many years of use. There are no maintenance requirements for this item. Contact a professional if a replacement is required.

### ***Filter***

We recommend that you change the furnace air filter at least every six to nine months, or as the filter appears dirty. You will need to clean the filter every 30-60 days if you have an electrostatic system.

A clean filter will help to keep your home clean and reduce dusting chores. Remember to check (and change or clean as needed) the filter monthly during the heating season (year-round if you also have air conditioning). A clogged filter can slow airflow and cause cold spots in your home. Although it takes less than one minute to change the filter, this is one of the most frequently overlooked details of normal furnace care.

You will find the size and type of filter that is in your furnace printed along the edge of it. Buy filters in large quantities for the sake of convenience.

If you have a permanent, washable, removable filter, you need to clean this monthly. Turn the furnace off for a brief period and use only water to clean the filter; do not use soaps or detergents on it. Either tap the filter to dry it or let it air dry.

### ***Fresh Air***

Fresh air supplied to your home through your Heat Recovery Ventilator (HRV). This is designed to run continuously. Please refer to Heat Recovery Ventilator under the Ventilation section.

### ***Furnace Fan Cover***

You need to position the blower panel cover correctly for the furnace blower (fan) to operate. Similar to the way a clothes dryer door operates, this panel pushes in a button that lets the fan motor know it is safe to come on. If that button is not pushed in, the furnace will not operate. The furnace blower will typically cycle on and off more frequently, and for shorter periods, during severe cold weather.

### ***Furnished Home***

The heating system was designed with a furnished home in mind. If you move in during the cooler part of the year and have not yet acquired all of your draperies and furnishings, the home may seem cooler than you would expect.

### ***Gas Odor***

If you smell gas, leave the home immediately and call the gas company from another location.

### ***Odor***

When you first turn on a new heating system, it may emit an odor for a few moments. An established system may emit an odor after being unused for an extended time (i.e. after the summer months if you do not use air conditioning). This is caused by dust that has settled in the ducts and should pass quickly.



### ***On-Off Switch***

The furnace has an on-off blower switch. This switch looks like a regular light switch. When turned off, this switch overrides all furnace commands and shuts down the blower. This is usually done only when maintenance service is being performed. However, be aware that children have been known to turn the furnace off using this switch.

### ***Programmable Thermostat***

A programmable thermostat is a great way to save energy dollars. Your NEST thermostat can be programmed to keep temperatures lower while you're away and increase them when you return. You can program the thermostat for up to a seven day cycle. Refer to the manufacturer's literature for details or visit their website: <https://nest.com/thermostats/>.

### ***Registers***

Heat register covers are adjustable. Keeping registers open improves comfort and moisture management, especially during winter months. You have the choice of adjusting the dampers in these covers to regulate the heat flow within your home. Registers in rooms farther away from the furnace will usually need to be opened wider. Educate your children that these registers are not playthings—they should not be removed; neither toys nor debris should be thrown into them.

### ***Return Air Vents***

Arrange furniture and draperies to allow unobstructed airflow to travel from registers and to cold air returns for maximum comfort and efficient energy use. If cold air is unable to return to the furnace, the flow of heated air to that area of your home becomes restricted.

### ***Temperature***

The temperature will vary from floor to floor, especially on extremely cold days, depending on details such as: the style of home, room orientation, number and size of windows, type and use of window coverings, and whether doors are open or closed. Room temperatures can also be affected by whether a room is situated over an unheated area of the home. Especially during winter months, continuous operation of the furnace fan will improve comfort and moisture management.

### ***Thermostat***

The furnace will come on automatically when the temperature at the thermostat registers below the setting you have selected. Once the furnace is on, setting the thermostat to a higher temperature will not heat the home faster. Thermostats are calibrated to within plus or minus two degrees Fahrenheit.

### ***Trial Run***

Have a trial run early in the fall to test the furnace (the same applies to air-conditioning in the spring). If service is needed, it is much better to discover that before the heating season is underway and service personnel become extremely busy.

## **TROUBLESHOOTING TIPS: NO HEAT**

Before calling for service, check to confirm that:

- The thermostat is set to "heat" and the temperature is set above the room temperature.
- The furnace fan cover is installed correctly for the furnace fan to operate. This panel compresses a button that tells the blower it is safe to operate. Similar to the way a clothes dryer door operates, this panel pushes in a button that lets the fan motor know it is safe to come on. If that button is not pushed in, the furnace will not operate.
- The breaker on the main electrical panel is on. Remember if a breaker trips you must turn it from the tripped position to the off position before you can turn it back on.
- The furnace switch is on.
- The gas line is open at the main meter and at the side of the furnace.
- The filter is clean to allow airflow.
- Vents in individual rooms are open.
- Air returns are unobstructed.
- The exhaust vent is not blocked by snow or ice.

Even if these tips do not identify a solution, the information you gather will be useful to the service provider you call.

## Warranty Guidelines

We will install heating systems according to national and local building codes, as well as to designs of the particular home. Building codes specify that heating systems should be capable of maintaining an indoor air temperature of 70 degrees in the center of the room, five feet above the floor. In extremely cold temperatures (10 degrees below or colder) the system should be able to maintain a temperature differential of 80 degrees from the outside temperature.

### ***Duct Placement***

The exact placement of heat ducts may vary from those positions shown in similar floor plans.

### ***Furnace Sounds***

Expansion or contraction of metal ductwork results in ticking or popping sounds. While eliminating all these sounds is impossible, we will correct oil canning. Oil canning occurs when a large area of sheet metal, like those found in air ducts, makes a loud noise as it moves up and down in response to temperature changes.

### ***Thermostat***

Thermostats are calibrated to plus or minus two degrees.

## **Heating System: Heat Pump**

### Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

If your home contains a heat pump system, you should be aware of the performance characteristics unique to these systems. As with any system, read the manufacturer's literature and follow all instructions for efficient operation and maintenance. Clean or replace filters once a month and provide professional service for your system at least once every two years. Additional tips include:

#### ***Air Circulation across Coils***

Keep the outside unit clear of any materials that would interfere with air circulation. Snow, ice, landscaping materials, trash, leaves, and other accumulating items can cause inefficiency or damage the unit.

#### ***Air Conditioning and Heating***

A heat pump system operates differently from a gas forced-air furnace. The same system provides both heat and air conditioning. This is possible because a refrigerant flows back and forth in the coils of the heat pump, controlled by a reversing valve. In the heating mode, the heat pump removes heat from the outside air and transfers it to the inside air. In the cooling mode it does just the opposite, removing heat from the inside air and discharging it outside of the home. The thermostat inside your home controls this heating or cooling activity.

#### ***Air Temperature at Vents***

Do not expect dramatic temperature differences in the air coming from the vents as is common with other kinds of systems. The coils used in a heat pump system operate at lower temperatures than those common in a gas forced-air system.

During cold weather in particular, ensure that warm air from the heat registers located near windows can flow unobstructed. This helps minimize condensation. Also open window coverings, at least slightly, for the same reason.

#### ***Auxiliary Heat System***

At lower outside temperatures, less heat is available for the heat pump to draw from the exterior air. Therefore, from time to time, the auxiliary heat system will come on to maintain the temperature you set at the thermostat. The auxiliary system will also come on whenever the temperature on the thermostat is moved .5 degree or more. Contact a service person, if the light stays on when the outside temperature is more than 35 degrees Fahrenheit.

#### ***Defrost Cycle***

When the heat pump operates in the heat mode, the coils outside may reach below freezing temperatures. Moisture in the air will condense into frost and accumulate on the coils under these circumstances. From time to time, the system will go into defrost mode to clear accumulated frost from the coils. This is a normal operation of the system and will occur automatically.

During the defrost cycle, the outside fan will stop temporarily. The temperature of airflow into the home will be a bit lower during the defrost cycle. The defrost cycle can only occur once every 90 minutes and lasts no longer than 10 minutes.

### ***Night Setback***

Do not turn the thermostat down in the evening unless you have a night setback thermostat designed to work with a heat pump system. Adjust the temperature a fraction of a degree at a time until a comfortable, permanent setting is found.

### ***Register Adjustment***

Registers will require adjustment from time to time to maximize your family's comfort. Do not completely close off more than one supply register at a time. This can restrict the airflow too much and reduce the efficiency of the system.

A good technique is to completely open all of the vents and gradually move the temperature setting up until the coolest room is comfortable. Once the coolest room is comfortable, gradually close the vents in the warmer rooms until all rooms are comfortable. Reverse the process for air conditioning.

### ***Return Air Vents***

As with any heating system, return air vents must be clear so the air flows through the ducts unimpeded. Avoid placing furniture where it blocks the return air vents.

### ***TROUBLESHOOTING TIPS: No heat, or auxiliary heat stays on when outside temperature is 35° Fahrenheit or above.***

Before calling for service, confirm the following:

- The thermostat is set to “heat” and the temperature is set above the room temperature.
- The breaker on the main electrical panel is on. Remember, if a breaker trips, you must turn it from the tripped position to the off position before you can turn it back on.
- The filter is clean to allow airflow.
- Vents in individual rooms are open.
- Air returns are unobstructed.
- Outside snow, or other materials, do not block the unit.
- The outside coil is not clogged with snow or ice.

Even if the troubleshooting tips do not identify a solution, this information will be useful to the service provider you call.

### **Warranty Guidelines**

Refer to the manufacturer's limited warranty for information regarding warranty coverage.

## **Humidifier (Eastern WA)**

### **Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines**

Operate a humidifier only with the furnace, not with the air conditioner. If you notice condensation on windows, the humidifier should be adjusted to a lower setting. Clean the moisture dispenser according to the manufacturer's instructions and suggested timetable.

### **Warranty Guidelines**

Refer to the manufacturer's limited warranty for information regarding warranty coverage.

# Insulation

## Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

The effectiveness of blown insulation is diminished if it is uneven. The last step to any work performed in your attic (e.g. speaker wire installation) should be to confirm that the insulation lays smooth and even. Do not step on drywall ceilings, because this can result in personal injury or damage to the drywall.

Attic insulation will settle over time; this natural occurrence is taken into account in planning the amount of insulation originally installed.

Electrical outlets may emit detectable amounts of cold air when outside temperatures are low.

## Warranty Guidelines

We will install insulation to meet or exceed the building codes and Energy Star/Built Green Washington requirements applicable at the time of construction, and as outlined in your purchase agreement.

# Landscaping

Most homes come with front yard landscaping. Unless included in your contract, installing landscaping in other areas is your responsibility. Please check your homeowner association requirements for landscaping guidelines and adhere to them carefully.

In planning your landscaping, think of proportion, texture, color, mature size, maintenance needs, soft and hard surfaces, lighting, fencing, edging, and water requirements. A beautiful yard requires considerable planning and regular attention. Most homeowners take years to achieve the yard they want. Planning to install items in stages can spread the cost and work over several seasons.

Plan to install the basic components of your landscaping as soon after closing as weather permits. In addition to meeting your Homeowner Association landscaping requirements in a timely manner, well-designed landscaping prevents erosion and protects the foundation of your home.

## Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Providing complete details on landscape design is beyond the scope of this Homeowner Guide. Many excellent books, videos, and computer software programs are available to offer that information. Local nurseries and landscape professionals can also assist you. The following entries will provide the most common points:

### ***Architectural Requirements***

Front yard landscaping is included with your home. The sod, shrub beds, shrubbery, and trees are chosen to adhere to the architectural requirements established for your community. You agree to maintain the landscaping according to these requirements when you sign your Purchase Agreement.

### ***Additions***

Review the Homeowner Association's design requirements for your community before installing patio additions, or other permanent improvements.

### ***Backfill Settlement***

We construct the foundation of your home beginning with an excavation into the earth. When the foundation walls are complete, the area surrounding them is backfilled. Soil in this area is not as compact as undisturbed ground. Some settlement is normal and not a warranty concern. However, water can penetrate through the backfill area to the lower areas of your foundation causing problems including: wet basements, cracks in foundation walls, and floor slab movement. Avoid this through proper installation of landscaping and good drainage maintenance.

Backfill areas will settle and require prompt attention to avoid damage to your home and voiding of the structural warranty. Routine inspection of downspouts, backfill areas, and other drainage components is an excellent maintenance habit.

*See also Grading and Drainage.*

### ***Bark or Rock Beds***

Do not allow edging around decorative rock or bark beds to prevent the free flow of water away from the home. You can use a non-woven landscape fabric between the soil and rock or bark to restrict weed growth, while still permitting normal evaporation of ground moisture. Ensure that you leave a hole in the fabric large enough to provide good aeration around the base of trees or shrubs.

### ***Erosion***

Until your yard is established and stable, erosion will be a potential concern. Heavy rains or roof runoff can erode soil. The sooner you restore the grade to its original condition, the less permanent damage will occur.

Erosion is of special concern in drainage swales. If swales become filled with soil runoff, they may not drain the rest of the yard, causing further problems. Correcting erosion is your responsibility. You may need to protect newly planted seeds with erosion matting, or reseed to establish grass in swales. It can take several years to fully establish your lawn in challenging areas.

### ***Hired Contractors***

You are responsible for changes to the drainage pattern made by any landscape, concrete, deck, or pool contractor. Discuss drainage with any company you hire to provide a yard installation. Do not permit them to tie into existing drainage pipes without approval from the municipality.

### ***Natural Areas***

During construction, we take care to prevent construction debris from accumulating in natural areas. Removing dead wood, tree limbs, fallen trees, or other natural items is your responsibility.

### ***Planning***

Locate plants and irrigation heads out of the way of pedestrians, bicyclists, or car bumpers. Space groves of trees, or single trees, to allow for efficient mowing and healthy growth. Group plants with similar water, sun, and space requirements together.

### ***Plant Selection***

Plant with regard to your local climate; favor native over exotic species. Consider ultimate size, shape, and growth habit of the species.

*See also Property Boundaries.*

### ***Requirements***

In addition to complying with applicable developer requirements, check with your local building department and Homeowner Association before designing, installing, or changing landscaping to meet required regulations.

### ***Sod***

Lawn care is one of your maintenance responsibilities. Keep the following points in mind regarding watering sod:

- The first 12 hours after new sod has been laid down is when it is most vulnerable to drying out. If gaps start to appear between rows of new sod, this is an indication that your sod is drying out.
- Sod installed against your foundation, especially along the south and west sides, is subject to drying out.
- Except to water it, stay off your new sod as much as possible.
- Be prepared by having enough hose to reach all corners of your yard.
- A good sprinkler is necessary to ensure proper watering of the entire yard; avoid watering by hand as it distributes water unevenly.
- Water on grass acts like a magnifying glass and will burn your new sod. Use caution when watering during the warmer months.
- New sod should be watered to the point that the soil is soft when you step on it.
- Water every day for seven days then cut back to once every other day. If temperatures are hot and dry, water more often; if precipitation occurs, water less.
- Keep in mind that you can't over-water sod, but you can under-water sod.

Be aware that new sod, and the extra watering it requires, can sometimes create drainage concerns (in your yard or your neighbor's) that will disappear when the yard is established and requires normal watering.

### ***Sprinkler Systems***

Some homes are equipped with sprinkler systems. Refer to the operator's manual for detailed instructions on setting the timer and adjusting the sprinkler heads. The timer control box is mounted in the garage on the wall adjacent to the GFCI outlet. Take the time to familiarize yourself with the controls.

The main control valve is located in the yard, usually near the sidewalk. You will find it encased in a black plastic conduit with a circular green lid. Inside the conduit is the main shut-off valve for the sprinkler system. Seasonal maintenance (i.e. during winter months) includes shutting off the sprinkler control valve and blowing the water out of the system. The rectangular boxes with the green lids house the valve stations and the system's backflow device.

In Eastern Washington, all filters should be cleaned as needed when using irrigation water.

Avoid over-watering plants and shrubs located next to the foundation. Adjust the sprinkler system to avoid over-spraying the house or causing puddles near the foundation.

### ***Stones***

The soil in your area may have stones and rocks. Removing these naturally-occurring elements is a maintenance activity. Large rocks will be picked up, and surface raking performed, if we install seed or sod. You will need to provide continued attention to this condition as you care for your yard.

### ***Trees and Shrubs***

We respect and value trees as one of the features that contribute to an attractive community and add value to the homes we build. We take steps to protect and preserve existing trees in the area of your home. In spite of our efforts, existing trees located on construction sites often suffer damage from construction activities, which manifest months after the completion of construction.

Damage to existing trees can be caused by such things as compaction of soil in the root zone, changing patterns of water flow on the home site, disturbing the root system, and removing other trees to make room for the home. The newly exposed tree may react to conditions it is unaccustomed to. Caring for existing trees, including pruning dead branches, or removing these trees altogether, is your responsibility.

Trees are planted in conjunction with the sod placement and are warranted for 30 days from the time of planting. As with sod, watering newly planted trees and shrubs is crucial. Watering tips include:

- Trees and shrubs should begin on the same watering schedule as the sod. However, unlike sod, trees and shrubs can be over watered. Therefore, attention is needed through the landscape season to determine how much, and when, to water.
- The leaves on trees and shrubs will turn yellow from over watering; they will turn brown if watering is insufficient.
- Landscape fabric holds moisture in the ground and can cause root-rot. Avoid installing landscape fabric and rocks around trees and shrubs, unless you leave a hole in the fabric large enough to provide good aeration around the base.
- Avoid piling excess soil around the base of your trees and shrubs because this can also cause root rot.
- Avoid tilling or planting flowerbeds around trees. This is especially important while trees are recovering from the construction process.
- Water your trees and shrubs thoroughly in the late fall to encourage budding in the spring.
- Water your trees and shrubs if the weather turns warm in the winter, to help with premature thawing.
- Freeze/thaw cycles may result in vertical tearing of tree bark; this usually repairs itself over time.
- Trees and shrubs require regular inspection for insect infestation; early detection and prompt treatment may prevent further damage.

### ***Utility Lines***

A slight depression may develop in the front lawn along the line of the utility trench. To correct this, roll back the sod, spread topsoil underneath to level the area, and then relay the sod. Before any significant digging, check the location of buried service leads by contacting utility locators.

*See also Easements and Utility Locates.*

### ***Waiting to Landscape***

If you leave the ground un-landscaped, it erodes. Correcting erosion that occurs after the final grading is your responsibility.

### ***Weeds***

Weeds will appear in your new lawn whether seed or sod is used; when soil is disturbed, dormant seeds come to the surface and germinate. Your yard will quickly begin to show weeds if left unmaintained. Regular care and attention is the best way to maintain a healthy lawn.

## **Warranty Guidelines**

We will confirm the healthy condition of all plant materials during your Homeowner Orientation. Landscape materials, including seed and sod, which we install are warranted for 30 days from the time of planting.

### ***Disturbed Landscaping***

If a repair that we provide under warranty necessitates disrupting your landscaping, we will restore it as closely as possible to the original.

### ***Erosion***

Erosion is excluded from the limited warranty.

### ***Native Trees & Plants***

Trees, and other plant materials, that existed on the home site when construction begins are excluded from warranty coverage. Landscaping damaged from freeze/thaw cycles or insects are also excluded from warranty coverage.

Some developers and County or City requirements place trees and shrubs on the boulevards and common areas within a community. Developer-installed trees are also excluded from our warranty coverage.

## **Mildew**

### **Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines**

Mildew is a fungus that spreads through the air in microscopic spores. Mildew loves moisture and feeds on surfaces or dirt. On siding, it looks like a layer of dirt.

Cleaning mildew from your home is your responsibility. Solutions that remove mildew are available from local paint or home improvement stores. Wear protective eyewear and rubber gloves for this task; the chemicals that remove mildew are unfriendly to humans.

### **Warranty Guidelines**

We will remove any mildew noted during your Homeowner Orientation. Our warranty excludes mildew after this point.

# Mirrors

## Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Use any reliable liquid glass cleaner or polisher (available at most hardware or grocery stores) to clean your mirrors; do not use acidic cleaners (i.e. cleaners containing ammonia or vinegar). Also avoid splashing water under the mirror or getting glass cleaners on plumbing fixtures. Acidic cleaners, water under the mirror, and glass cleaners on plumbing fixtures can cause deterioration of the finishes.

## Warranty Guidelines

We will confirm that all mirrors are in acceptable condition during your Homeowner Orientation. We will correct scratches, chips, or other damage to mirrors noted on your Homeowner Orientation Agenda.

# Mold Prevention

## Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Mold is a type of fungus that spreads through the air in microscopic spores. Mold occurs naturally and is found everywhere that life can be supported. Over 100,000 kinds exist in the world and 1,000 of these are found in the U.S. In order to grow, mold requires food, air, water, and a temperature between 40° and 100° Fahrenheit.

While not all molds are harmful, growth of mold within a home is inappropriate and can potentially cause serious side effects, such as allergic reactions and infections for the occupants, in addition to damaging the material on which it grows. Experts are studying whether more serious side effects are possible. At this point, no agency has been able to set guidelines on how much exposure is harmful because each of us reacts to mold differently.

Designing or building homes that exclude mold spores is impossible. If conditions are right, mold will grow in your home. Items commonly found in all homes such as wood, carpet, drywall, fabric, and insulation, can be a food source to mold. Likewise, air and temperature in most homes meet the needs of mold spores. Mold can develop within 24 to 48 hours if moisture is present on a mold food source.

Moisture is the only mold growth factor that can be controlled in a home. By minimizing moisture, you reduce or eliminate mold growth. Moisture in your home comes from many sources. The activities of daily living, spills, leaks, overflows, condensation, and high humidity all can play a role in providing moisture for mold growth.

Effective housekeeping and home maintenance are essential in your effort to prevent mold growth. The following points outline some routine inspections and maintenance steps that can help you prevent mold growth.

### ***Caulking***

Maintain all caulking around areas such as windows, doors, sinks, and tubs.

### ***Cleaning***

Mold grows well on dust and dirt, therefore, vacuum and dust regularly. Clean or replace filters in accordance to the manufacturer's recommendations. Keep weep holes for brick and windows clear. Most bath tile cleaning products contain chemicals that remove, and help protect, against mold growth. Wipe up spills immediately.

### ***Condensation***

Condensation on surfaces inside your home is a sign of high humidity. If you notice condensation, wipe it up and take steps to reduce the humidity level in your home.

### ***Humidifier***

If your home includes a humidifier, operate it in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and clean it as recommended in the manufacturer's literature. If condensation develops, turn the humidifier down or off.

### ***Inspections***

Check your home regularly for signs of water intrusion. These might include a musty odor, staining, or standing moisture. Remember to check for these signs inside cabinets, under all sinks, and behind toilets, as well as in seldom-used closets. If



applicable, confirm your sump pump functions correctly. Check weather stripping, caulking, grout, weep holes, refrigerator icemaker water line, and air conditioning condensation line for signs of mold growth.

### ***Landscaping and Drainage***

Maintain positive drainage around your home. Avoid grade changes or exterior additions that interfere with drainage away from the home; this includes edging or borders that dam water near the home. Regularly inspect any sprinkler system for correct function; adjust sprinkler heads to avoid spraying the home and correct leaks immediately. Keep splash blocks or downspout extensions in place to channel roof water away from your home. Clean gutters as needed to prevent overflow.

### ***Leaks***

Immediately report any leak to New Tradition Homes warranty department. This includes roof, window, or plumbing leaks. Failure to report leaks promptly increases your risk and responsibility for repairs.

### ***Purchases and Stored Items***

Carefully inspect house plants and items you bring into your home, such as boxes that have been in storage, for any sign of mold, including musty odors.

### ***Tile Grout***

Inspect and maintain grout as a seal, to keep moisture from reaching the wall behind the tile.

### ***Valves***

Be familiar with the shut-off valves for all water supply lines in your home. In the event of a leak, immediately shut off the water at the appropriate valve to minimize the amount of water that is released. Clean up the water immediately.

### ***Ventilation***

The following daily habits can help keep your home well ventilated:

- Avoid covering, or interfering with, the fresh air supply to your furnace or HRV.
- Develop the habit of running the hood fan when you are cooking.
- Turn the bath fan on when a bathroom is in use.
- Connect your clothes dryer exhaust to the vent pipe. Clean the exhaust vent as needed.
- When weather permits, air out your house by opening windows.

### ***Weather Stripping***

Weather stripping on doors may need occasional adjustment to prevent moisture from getting in around the door, as well as to reduce air infiltration.

## **Warranty Guidelines**

We will respond to any leaks reported as described under individual categories such as plumbing and roof.

# Multi-Family Lifestyle (Townhomes)

## Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Townhome living offers many advantages. The close proximity of dwellings makes a collection of appealing services possible. Depending on the features of your particular community, you might enjoy access to shopping, restaurants, entertainment, and fitness facilities, etc. At the same time, each owner, their family, and their guests take on responsibilities for awareness and consideration of neighbors, and common areas, inherent to the multi-family lifestyle.

### ***Exterior and Common Area Maintenance***

Exterior and common area maintenance responsibilities vary depending on the services provided by the management company retained by the Homeowner Association, and may change periodically depending on the instructions from your Board of Directors. We recommend that you stay involved and apprised of the details included in the planned maintenance. Direct any questions, or concerns, you have to the designated management company or Board of Directors.

### ***Proximity Realities: Sound, Odor, Light***

This lifestyle also comes with several realities typical of close proximity living. Each owner takes on some responsibility for their neighbor's peaceful enjoyment of their home. Normal, daily activities result in numerous annoyances that may be noticed among neighbors occasionally, some of these include: sound and lighting variances, or cooking and smoking odors.

Your association creates building policies to ensure a balance between individual privacy and protection of neighbors' comfort. Periodically, these policies may be adjusted. Stay informed regarding these operating procedures and remember that family, guests, workmen, vendors, and other service providers are expected to be aware of, and adhere, to the same policies. Again, direct any questions you have to the designated management company or Board of Directors.

## Warranty Guidelines

Depending on your lifestyle and that of your neighbors, expect to hear some sounds resulting from the activities of daily living such as opening and closing doors, operating appliances, etc. Some vibrations may be noticed as well. Construction planning took this into account and steps were taken to mitigate sound transfer. However, no reasonable method exists that completely eliminates the transfer of sound and other factors such as those listed above.

Because lifestyles and schedules are outside of New Tradition Homes' control, sound transfer and your awareness of light and odors are excluded from warranty coverage.

# Paint and Stain

## Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

All interior walls are covered with a **satin finish paint**. Ceilings are painted the same as the walls in bathrooms, laundry rooms and closets. Ceilings in other areas are either painted the same as the walls or with a flat finish white paint, depending on the paint package that you chose when you purchased your home. For more information on Sherwin Williams paint products go to [www.sherwinwilliams.com](http://www.sherwinwilliams.com)

Because of changes in the formulas for paint (such as the elimination of lead to make paints safer), painted surfaces must be washed gently using mild soap and as little water as possible. Avoid abrasive cleaners, scouring pads, or scrub brushes. Flat paints show washing marks more easily than gloss paints do. Better results often come from touching up, rather than washing, a painted surface.

### ***Cleaning***

If walls need to be cleaned of dirt or debris, use a damp rag and wash lightly. A paint information folder was provided with your home, which includes interior and exterior paint information. Use this information to purchase paint for touching up areas that are not able to be washed clean.

### ***Colors***

Your selection sheets are your record of the paint and stain color names, or numbers, used in your home.

### ***Exterior***

Regular attention will preserve the beauty and value of your home. Check the painted and stained surfaces of your home's exterior annually. Repaint before much chipping, or wearing away, of the original finish occurs; this will save the cost of extensive surface repairs.

As it ages, exterior wood trim will develop minor cracks and raised grain. Much of this will occur during the first year. Raised grain permits moisture to get under the paint and can result in peeling. This is a natural occurrence, rather than a defect in materials or workmanship. Paint maintenance of wood trim and gutters is your responsibility.

The expected life of painted surfaces varies greatly due to several factors. One factor is the orientation of painted surfaces to the climactic conditions; such as exposure to sun and rain. Fading of paint is normal and not considered a deficiency.

Plan on refinishing any painted exterior surface of your home approximately every two to three years, or as often as your paint manufacturer suggests for your area and climate. Climatic conditions control the chemical structure of the paint used on the exterior. Over time, this finish will fade and dull a bit. Depending on the exposure to weather of each surface, the paint on some parts of your home may begin to show signs of deterioration sooner than others.

When you repaint the exterior of your home, begin by resetting any popped nails, and caulking the nail heads. Also, check all caulking for checking or shrinkage, and remove and recaulk as needed. On natural wood, remove blistered or peeling portions of paint with a wire brush or putty knife. Sand, spot with primer, and then paint the entire area. Use a quality exterior paint formulated for local climate conditions.

Avoid having sprinklers spray water on the exterior walls of your home. This will cause blistering, peeling, splintering, and other damage to the home.

### ***Severe Weather***

Hail and wind can cause a great deal of damage in a severe storm; inspect your home after such weather. Promptly report damage caused by severe weather to your insurance company. Repair of storm damage falls outside warranty coverage and is either your responsibility or that of your insurer.

### ***Stain***

For minor, interior stain touch-ups, a "furniture polish and stain treatment" is inexpensive, easy to use, and will blend with the wood grain. Follow directions on the bottle.

### ***Touch-Up***

When doing paint touch-ups, use a small brush and apply paint only to the damaged spot. The appearance and color will vary from the surrounding area even if the same paint mix is used. When it is time to repaint a room, prepare the wall surfaces first by cleaning with a mild soap and water mixture, or a reliable cleaning product.

When possible, we leave any paint that is left when your home is finished. Store these with the lids tightly in place and in a location where they are not subjected to extreme temperatures.

### ***Wall Cracks***

We suggest that you wait until after the first heating season to repair drywall cracks, or other separations due to shrinkage.

*See also Drywall.*

## Warranty Guidelines

During your Homeowner Orientation, we will confirm that all painted or stained surfaces are in acceptable condition. We will touch up paint as indicated on your Homeowner Orientation list. You are responsible for all subsequent touch-up, except any painting that we perform as part of another warranty repair.

### ***Coverage***

Paint coverage is evaluated at a distance of 6 feet under normal lighting conditions.

### ***Fading***

Expect fading of exterior paint or stain caused by the effects of sun and weather. Our limited warranty excludes this occurrence.

### ***Touch-Up Visible***

Paint touch-up is visible under certain lighting conditions.

### ***Wood Grain***

Because of wood characteristics, color variations will result when stain is applied to wood. This is natural and requires no repair. Today's water-based paints often make wood grain visible on painted trim. We do not provide corrections for this condition.

## **Painted Stucco**

### Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

The white, powdery substance that sometimes accumulates on stucco is called efflorescence. This is a natural phenomenon and cannot be prevented. In some cases, you can remove it by scrubbing with a stiff brush and vinegar. Consult your local hardware store for commercial products that remove efflorescence.

### Warranty Guidelines

We will confirm that stucco is complete, and in acceptable condition, during your Homeowner Orientation. We will repair areas needing attention that are noted during your Homeowner Orientation.

### ***Cracks: One-Time Repair***

One time during your two-year warranty coverage, we will repair cracks in stucco that exceed 1/16 inch in width or stucco that separates from the surface. Such repairs will vary in color from the original.

## **Pests and Wildlife**

### Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Insects such as ants, spiders, wasps, and bees; and animal life such as woodpeckers, squirrels, mice, may fail to recognize that your home belongs to you. Addressing pest and wildlife concerns goes with being a homeowner. Informational resources include, among others, animal control authorities, the local University Extension Service (consult your local directory service for the number of the nearest office), pest control professionals, the Internet, and the public library.

*See also Termites.*

# Plumbing

## Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Your plumbing system has many parts, most of which require little maintenance. Proper cleaning, occasional minor attention, and preventive care, will assure many years of good service from this system.

### ***Aerators***

In most cases, the plumbing lines are a closed system and should have a minimal amount of dirt or construction debris in them. Aerators on the faucets strain any foreign matter, or small amounts of minerals, that may have entered the line. Minerals caught in these aerators may distort the water streaming from the faucets; this is a sign that the aerator needs to be cleaned. If you notice water pressure is low, proceed with cleaning, as follows: unscrew the piece (aerator) at the end of the spigot, inspect the filter screen, wash out any trapped pieces of debris, and re-install the aerator.

*See also Dripping Faucet.*

### ***Cleaning***

Follow manufacturer's directions, or the following tips as appropriate, for cleaning fixtures:

- Avoid abrasive cleansers; they remove the shiny finish and leave behind a porous surface that is difficult to keep clean.
- Clean plumbing fixtures with a soft sponge and soapy water, nonabrasive cleaner, or liquid detergent.
- Polish the fixtures with a dry cloth to prevent water spots.
- Care for brass fixtures with a good-quality brass cleaner, available at most hardware stores.

### ***Clogs***

The main causes of toilet clogs are domestic items such as disposable diapers, excessive amounts of toilet paper, sanitary supplies, Q-tips, dental floss, and children's toys. You can usually clear clogged traps with a plunger. If you use chemical agents, follow directions carefully to avoid personal injury or damage to the fixtures.

Improper garbage disposal use also causes many plumbing clogs. Always use plenty of cold water when running the disposal. Cold water also cools the ball bearings which helps the motor last longer. Allow the water to run 10 to 15 seconds after shutting off the disposal. Review the manufacturer's literature to learn which food items can be put in the disposal and which should be avoided.

Adhere to the following steps to clean a plugged drain stopper (usually found in bathroom sinks):

- Loosen the nut under the sink at the back
- Pull out the rod attached to the plunger and lift the stopper
- Clean and return the mechanism to its original position

### ***Dripping Faucet***

Your faucets include ceramic disc valves. If the faucet is dripping and has a single handle:

- Lift the handle after pushing the spout to one side
- Use an allen wrench to remove the set screw and decorative cap
- Loosen the two visible screws and lift out the disc assembly.

You will see three inlet seals. Replace all of these and line up the holes with the faucet base. If this does not solve the problem you will need to replace the cartridge that holds the discs. Kits are available at home repair stores.

If the leak is at the handle, and you have double handles, you will need to replace the O-ring or stem unit assembly. If the leak is at the spout, pull the spring and seal out with long-nose pliers.

### ***Fiberglass Fixtures***

Use a nonabrasive bathroom cleanser and sponge, or nylon-cleaning pad, for periodic cleaning of fiberglass fixtures. Avoid steel wool, scrapers, and scouring pads.

### ***Freezing Pipes***

Pipes should not freeze if your home is heated to a standard temperature. Keep the garage doors closed to protect plumbing lines, running through this area, from freezing temperatures. Set the **heat at a minimum of 55 degrees if you are away during winter months.**

Open cabinet doors to allow warm air to circulate around pipes in unusually frigid weather, or if you will be gone more than a day or two. Use a hair dryer to thaw pipes that are frozen; never use an open flame.

### ***Garbage Disposal***

Always use cold water when operating the disposal. Avoid putting fruit peels or vegetable peels down the disposal as this may clog the unit, and/or clog the drain trap. If the disposal will not operate, unplug it and manually try to rotate the inner chamber from the bottom with the included allen wrench. After you have given the chamber a few turns, plug it back, press the reset switch on the bottom of the unit and try it again.

### ***Inspections***

As a matter of regular maintenance, make it a habit to inspect your home's plumbing system. The following steps will get you started:

- Simultaneously, turn the water on at all sinks, bathtubs, and showers; operate the dishwasher and washing machine; and flush all toilets.
- Check all drains to confirm there are no overflows.
- Look in cabinets, in closets, on the floor, under lower level ceilings and in crawl spaces for leaks in the water and sewer pipes. Water supply lines are copper, white or gray plastic. Sewer lines will be black (ABS) plastic.
- If any water line leaks are found, locate the shut-off valve nearest to the leak and turn the handle clockwise, or push in knob to stop the flow of water.
- If any sewer line leaks are found, trace the piping back to the area it serves and discontinue those fixtures until repairs are made. Request service if your home is still under warranty or consult with a qualified plumber, as necessary.

### ***Jetted Tubs***

If your home includes a jetted tub, follow manufacturer directions for its use and care. Never operate the jets unless the water level is at least three inches above the jets. Discuss the use of the tub with your doctor if you are pregnant, have heart disease or high blood pressure. To avoid a potentially dangerous event, pull up long hair to keep from getting tangled in the jets.

If the jets do not work, check to see if GFCI outlet or breaker is tripped.

Clean and disinfect the system every one to two months, depending on the usage. To do this:

- Fill the tub with lukewarm water and add one cup of liquid chlorine bleach.
- Run the jets for 10 to 15 minutes.
- Drain the water and fill the tub again.
- Run the jets for 10 minutes with plain water and then drain.

Avoid abrasive cleansers, which will damage the tub surface and make it difficult to keep clean.

### ***Leaks***

If a plumbing leak occurs:

1. First, turn off the affected area's water supply
2. Next, minimize damage to your home and personal property. This may mean shutting off water to the entire home.
3. Then contact the warranty office or, if the leak occurs after hours, the appropriate trade contractor's emergency number.

### ***Low Pressure***

Clean the aerators on your faucets, every three to four months, to allow proper flow of water. The local municipality's water department controls the overall water pressure.

### ***Meter & Shut Off***

The water meter and main water shut-off are located next to the sidewalk, inside a protective concrete enclosure. This is typically near one of the property boundaries. A wrench is required to turn the water valve.

### ***Outside Faucets***

Typically, two hose bibs (faucets/water spigots) are included on your new home (one in the rear near the patio and one in front on a garage wall).

Each water faucet is equipped with an anti-siphon device, attached to the threaded portion on which a hose is attached. This will typically drip water when it is first turned on, and again when the water is shut off.

If the water faucet in the garage has a separate shut-off valve, we recommend that you shut off the water supply to this faucet during periods of extremely cold weather, and drain the water out of the line from the faucet. After all the water is drained out, close the faucet to prevent the faucet from freezing.

The water faucet near the patio does not have a shut-off, nor does it need one. It is located in a wall that is in the heated portion of the home, and is not subject to freezing. A Styrofoam, dome-shaped cover can be placed over that faucet if the weather is extremely cold. If a hose is left attached, the water that remains in the hose may freeze and expand back into the pipe, causing the line to break. It is a maintenance item to repairing a broken line that feeds an exterior faucet. We recommend that you always remove hoses from any exterior or garage faucet.

### ***Porcelain***

Porcelain enamel (e.g. as on some sinks or tubs) can be damaged by scratching, or exposing to a sharp blow from a heavy object. Do not stand in a bathtub wearing shoes, unless there is a protective layer of newspaper over the bottom of the tub. If you splatter paint on porcelain enamel during redecorating, wipe it up immediately. If a spot dries before you notice it, use a recommended solvent.

### ***Running Toilet***

To stop running water, check the shut-off float in the tank. You will most likely find it has lifted too high in the tank, preventing the valve from shutting off completely. In this case, gently bend the float rod down until it stops the water at the correct level. The float should be free and not rub the side of the tank or any other parts. Also check the chain on the flush handle. If it is too tight, it will prevent the rubber stopper at the bottom of the tank from sealing, resulting in running water.

### ***Showers & Tubs***

If water pressure is low on shower heads, unscrew the shower head and flush it out, against the direction of normal flow, to clear any debris. A rubber plunger can usually unclog any drain obstruction in tubs and showers. **It is not recommended to use drain cleaner if the home is on a septic system.** Clean surfaces with a non-abrasive cleanser and warm water on a damp sponge or rag.

### ***Shut-offs***

The water shut-off for the entire house is located in the entry closet, closet under the stairs, laundry room, or next to the water heater (in the garage). The exact location will be specified during your Homeowner Orientation.

This shut-off is a standard faucet that needs to be turned clockwise to close. A separate shut-off for the front (garage wall) hose bib may be located near the whole house shut-off and can be identified by a smaller diameter faucet handle. In some cases, the hose bib shut-off will be located under a sink in the home.

### ***Sink Drains***

Try using drain cleaner if the sink is slow to drain. Avoid spilling an acidic cleaner on the basin surface.

**Drain cleaners are not recommended if your home is on a septic system.**

You can also try to clear a clogged drain by disassembling the trap (U-shaped pipe) under the sink and physically clearing any obstruction.

### ***Stainless Steel***

Clean stainless steel sinks with soap and water to preserve their luster. Avoid using abrasive cleaners or steel wool pads; these will damage the finish. Prevent bleach from coming into prolonged contact with a stainless steel sink, as it can pit the surface. An occasional cleaning with a good stainless steel cleaner will enhance the finish. Rub in the direction of the polish, or grain lines, and dry the sink to prevent water spots.

Avoid leaving produce on a stainless steel surface; prolonged contact with produce can stain the finish. Also avoid using the sink as a cutting board; sharp knives will gouge the finish.

Local water conditions affect the appearance of stainless steel. A white film can develop on the sink if you have over-softened water, or water with a high concentration of minerals. In hard water areas, a brown surface stain can form appearing like rust.

### ***Temperature Variation***

Expect water temperatures to vary, if water is being used in more than one location in the home at the same time. Hot water may take a minute or so longer to reach plumbing locations that are further away from the hot water heater.

### ***Toilet Tank Care***

Avoid exposing the toilet to blows from sharp or heavy objects, which can cause chipping or cracking. Avoid abnormal pressure against the sides of the tank. It is possible to crack the tank, at the location where it is attached to the bowl.

All the toilets in your home are low water usage, meaning they use 1.6 gallons of water per flush. Clean the toilet bowl often using a non-abrasive cleanser. If the toilet clogs and begins to overflow, turn off the water supply at the shut off valve behind the toilet. If the toilet runs constantly, try adjusting the float mechanism in the tank to shut the water off sooner.

**Never flush baby wipes, sanitary napkins, dental floss, hair, paper towels or diapers.** Condensation on the outside of the tank is not a leak; try purchasing a tank cover, if desired.

## **TROUBLESHOOTING TIPS: PLUMBING**

### ***No Water Anywhere in the Home***

Before calling for service, check to confirm that the—

- Main shut off on the meter inside your home is open.
- Main shut off at the street is open.
- Individual item shut-off is open.

### ***No Hot Water: See Water Heater***

### ***Leak Involving One Sink, Tub, or Toilet***

Before calling for service, check to confirm that the—

- Caulking and grout are in good condition.
- Shower door, or tub enclosure, was properly closed.

If these items do not resolve the issue, turn the water supply off to the item. Use other facilities in your home and report the problem during regular warranty business hours.

If a leak involves a main line, turn water off at the meter in your home and call the emergency number for service.

### ***Back Up at One Toilet***

If only one toilet is affected:

- Shut off the water supply to the toilet involved.
- Use a plunger to clear the blockage.
- Use a snake (if the plunger did not clear the blockage).



### ***Sewer Backup Affecting Entire Home***

- Contact the plumber listed on your Emergency Phone Numbers sheet and notify the New Tradition Homes warranty office.
- Relocate personal belongings to a safe location. If items are soiled, contact your homeowner insurance company.

### ***Winter Conditions***

Winter conditions or wind chills resulting in below freezing temperatures require additional steps to protect your plumbing system, including:

- Disconnecting garden hoses from all exterior faucets.
- Shutting off the water supply to the garage-side hose bib and drain faucet, if applicable.
- Covering all exterior faucets with insulation or Styrofoam faucet covers.
- Keeping your overhead garage door closed as much as possible; this should keep the garage temperature above freezing.
- Plugging foundation vents with fiberglass insulation or commercially-made Styrofoam vent covers. Be sure to remove these covers, as soon as weather is warmer, to retain adequate crawl space ventilation.
- Opening cabinet doors that are under sinks attached to exterior walls (only necessary in extreme temperatures). This will keep warm air circulating close to the pipes.
- Leaving interior faucets dripping, when not in use, to prevent lines from freezing.

### **Warranty Guidelines**

During your Homeowner Orientation, we will confirm that all plumbing fixtures are in acceptable condition, are functioning properly, and that all faucets and drains operate freely.

#### ***Clogged Drain***

We will correct clogged drains that are caused by construction debris and occur within 30 days after closing. However, if a household item is removed from a clogged drain, we will bill you for the drain service.

#### ***Cosmetic Damage***

We will correct any fixture damage noted during your Homeowner Orientation Agenda. Subsequent to your Homeowner Orientation, it is your responsibility to repairing chips, scratches, or other surface damage.

#### ***Outside Faucets***

We will repair leaks at exterior faucets (hose bibs) that are noted on your Homeowner Orientation list. Subsequent to the Homeowner Orientation, it will be your responsibility to repair a broken line to an exterior faucet. Damage caused from freezing, when a hose is left on the faucet, is specifically excluded from warranty coverage. Refer to *Outside Faucets* above for more information.

#### ***Freezing Pipes***

Provided the home is heated at a normal level, pipes should not freeze.

#### ***Leaks***

We will repair leaks in the plumbing system. We will repair or replace material (i.e. drywall, floor coverings) damaged from a plumbing item covered by warranty, if the damaged item was part of the home when originally purchased. Damage caused by the homeowner is excluded from coverage. Please note that payments, or adjustments, for secondary damages (i.e. damage to wallpaper, drapes, and personal belongings) may be covered by your homeowner insurance but are excluded from warranty coverage.

#### ***Noise***

Changes in temperature, or the flow of the water itself, will cause some noise in the pipes. This is normal and requires no repair. We will repair a persistent water hammer (a thump or bang that can be heard throughout the home, resulting from the rapid closing of a valve, high water pressure, or a missing strap).

### ***Supply***

We will correct construction conditions that disrupt the supply of water to your home if they involve service from the main water supply to your home, provided that your actions have not caused the problem. It is the responsibility of the local municipality to correct service disruptions resulting from a failure of the water department system.

## **Property Boundaries**

### **Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines**

At closing, you will receive a drawing (i.e. plot plan) that shows your home site and the location of your home on it. A steel peg, with a yellow cap, indicates a property boundary in the rear yards. Along streets, a small steel pin is embedded in the sidewalk or street.

We established the property boundaries and corners to construct the home. However, during construction, some of the property line markers may have been affected or covered by grading, excavation, installation of utility lines, or other typical construction activities. Therefore, you are responsible for retaining professional surveyors to locate and mark property boundaries, ensuring all corners are accurately located, if you wish to install a fence, swimming pool, deck or any other permanent structure.

*See also Easement.*

## **Railings**

### **Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines**

Stained or painted railings in your home require little maintenance beyond occasional dusting or polishing. Protect railings from sharp objects or moisture. Cover them during move-in to avoid dents or scratches.

Stained railings will show variation in the way the wood grain absorbed the stain. Some designs show seams where pieces of wood came together to form the railing.

### **Warranty Guidelines**

During your Homeowner Orientation, we will confirm that all railings are in good condition. We install railings in positions, and locations, to comply with applicable building codes. Under normal use, railings should remain securely attached.

## **Resilient (Vinyl) Flooring**

### **Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines**

Please see the care and maintenance tips available from your flooring trade contractor or Design Studio while you were making your flooring selections. Please also note that not all retail floor cleaning products are acceptable for use on vinyl flooring. Although resilient floors are designed for minimal care, they do have maintenance needs.

### ***Color and Pattern***

Your color selection sheets provide a record of the brand, style, and color of floor coverings in your home. Please retain this information for future reference.

### ***Limit Water***

As with all flooring surfaces, special care needs to be taken to ensure that water is not allowed to stand on the flooring surface.

Wipe up spills, and vacuum crumbs, instead of mopping or washing resilient floors frequently with water. Excessive amounts of water on resilient floors can penetrate the seams and get under edges, causing the material to lift and curl. Also be careful to avoid getting large amounts of water on the floor during baths or showers.

### ***Moving Furniture***

Moving appliances across resilient floor covering can result in tears and wrinkles. Install coasters on furniture legs to prevent damage. You can have the resilient floor successfully patched by professionals if you damage it. We will leave any remaining remnants of your floor covering, after installation is complete, in hopes that having the matching dye lot will make any necessary repairs less apparent.

### ***No-Wax Flooring***

We have installed the no-wax resilient flooring installed in your home. No wax means that this floor covering has a clear, tough coating that provides both a shiny appearance and a durable surface. However, even this surface will scuff or mark. Follow the manufacturer's recommendations for maintaining the finish.

### ***Seams***

Any brand or type of resilient flooring may separate slightly due to shrinkage. Seams can lift or curl if excessive moisture is allowed to penetrate them. You can use a special caulking at tub or floor joints to seal seams at those locations.

## **Warranty Guidelines**

We will confirm that resilient floor covering is in acceptable condition during your Homeowner Orientation. Our limited warranty excludes damage to resilient floors caused by moving furniture or appliances into the home. We can assist you in contacting professionals who can repair any damage that occurs during or after your move-in. We are not responsible for discontinued selections.

### ***Adhesion***

Resilient floor covering should adhere. We will repair lifting, or bubbling, and nail pops that appear on the surface.

### ***Ridges***

We have sanded and filled the joints of underlayment to minimize the possibility of ridges showing through resilient floor coverings. Ridging is measured by centering a 6-inch straight edge perpendicular to the ridge with one end tight to the floor. We will repair the condition if the opposite end of the straight edge is 1/8 inch, or more, from the floor.

### ***Seams or Gaps***

Seams will occur, and are sealed at the time of installation. We will correct gaps in excess of 1/32 inch when viewed under normal lighting conditions and from a normal viewing position. Note that strong sun light can cause a shadow and call attention to a seam. A gap in excess of 1/16 inch between resilient floor covering and an adjacent material will be repaired.

## **Roof**

### **Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines**

Visually inspect the roof for damage after any extreme weather or storm. Notify your homeowners insurance if there is storm damage.

Periodically, visually inspect roof valleys for debris build-up on the shingle surface. Exercise due caution if walking on roofs, particularly near valleys, to eliminate the possibility of shingle damage.

The shingles on your roof do not require any treatment or sealer. The exception to this would be moss control, which may need to be addressed in shaded areas. Follow all safety precautions for moss control application, or hire a roofing care specialist. The less activity that your roof surface experiences, the less likely it is that problems will occur.

### ***Clean Gutters (Southwest WA)***

Maintain the gutters and downspouts so that they are free of debris and able to quickly drain precipitation runoff from the roof.

### ***Frozen Attic Condensation***

*Please refer to Frozen Condensation under the Attic section above.*

*Please refer to Troubleshooting Tips: Frozen Attic Condensation under the Attic section above.*

*See also Condensation and Ventilation.*

### ***Ice Damming***

As rising heat from inside your home melts snow on the roof, water may run down and freeze when it reaches the cold eaves. An accumulation of this type of ice can dam the subsequent runoff causing water to back up and travel under shingles, ultimately leading into your home through windows or ceilings. Ice damming is a weather-related condition and therefore is excluded from warranty coverage. The likelihood of this occurring depends on your home's orientation and surroundings.

### ***Leaks***

Try to detect the exact location of a leak while it is occurring. This information will greatly simplify finding the area that requires repair once the roof has dried.

*See also Frozen Attic Condensation.*

### ***Limit Walking***

Limit walking on your roof. Your weight and movement can loosen the roofing material, and in turn, result in leaks. Never walk on the roof of your home when the shingles are wet—they are slippery. Please refer to local safety codes regarding walking, or completing repairs, on your roof.

### ***Severe Weather***

Complete a visual inspection of the roof for damage after severe storms. Notify your insurance company if you find pieces of shingle in the yard, or shingle edges are lifted on the roof, after extremely windy conditions. However, be aware that repairs are often less than the deductible.

*See also Tabbings.*

## **TROUBLESHOOTING TIPS: ROOF LEAK**

Even though roof leaks cannot be repaired while the roof is wet, you should report the condition immediately so repairs can be made as soon as conditions dry out. Complete the following steps before reporting the leak:

- Confirm the source of the water is the roof rather than from:
  - A plumbing leak
  - An open window on a higher floor
  - Ice damming
  - Attic condensation
  - A clogged downspout
  - Blowing rain or snow coming in through (code required) roof vents
  - A gap in caulking
- Where practical, place a container under dripping water.
- If a ceiling is involved, use a screwdriver to poke a small hole in the drywall to release the water.
- Remove personal belongings to prevent damage to them. If damage occurs to your personal belongings, contact your homeowner insurance company to submit a claim.
- Report the leak to us during the first available business hours.

Even if the troubleshooting tips do not identify a solution, the information you gather will be useful to the service provider you call.

## **Warranty Guidelines**

We will repair roof leaks unless they are caused by severe weather (e.g. hail damage) or an action you have taken (i.e. walking on the roof). We only repair roofs when they are dry.

### ***Frozen Attic Condensation***

If a construction defect allows excessive warm, moist air from the home to enter the attic, we will correct it.

### ***Ice Damming***

We will repair damage from ice damming if it results from a demonstrated defect in work or materials we supplied. However, most of the time ice damming occurs naturally and is excluded from our warranty. This damage may be covered by your homeowner insurance.

### ***Leaks***

Roof leaks will be repaired provided they are not resulting from your actions (such as installing a satellite dish). Please note that repairs are usually performed when the roof is dry.

### ***Manufacturer Shingle Warranty***

The asphalt roofing installed on your home comes with a manufacturer's limited warranty which we pass onto you. This coverage may provide protection beyond our warranty.

### ***Severe Weather***

Storm damage is excluded from warranty coverage. Notify your homeowner insurance company if storm damage is discovered.

### ***Tabbing***

Tabbing (or sealing) of your shingles occurs during the first extended warm period after installation. Heat from the sun shining on the roof causes the glue on shingle tabs to adhere to the surface below, forming a bond. Until this has occurred, high winds can more easily lift the edges of the shingles and may cause some shingles to blow off. If this occurs, and your home was shingled during fall or winter (or if you do not know when your roof was shingled), contact the warranty office and request a review of your circumstances.

## **Septic System**

### **Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines**

Some homes, usually built on acreage, have a septic system instead of a public sewer system. Know the location of your septic tank and drain field. A septic system consists of two basic parts: septic tank(s) and underground disposal field. Bacteria break down solids forming a sludge which is moved by incoming water out to the disposal field where it is filtered out into the soil. Do the following to help preserve the effectiveness of the system:

- Periodically check the drain field for a foul odor, excessive wetness, or overly lush grass growth; these may be warning signs of a failing system.
- Avoid planting anything but grass over, or near, the drain field. Tree and shrub roots may clog the drain field.
- Become familiar with the location and operation of your septic system pump alarms.
- Avoid disposing of chemicals such as solvents, oils, paints, etc. through the septic system.
- Avoid using commercial drain cleaners; they can kill the bacteria that are working to break down the solid waste matter.
- Keep in mind that:
  - Coffee grounds may clog the system.
  - Food from a disposal decomposes more slowly, and adds to the solids in the tank.
- Avoid disposing of any paper product (i.e. diapers, sanitary supplies, paper towels), other than toilet paper, through the system.
- Do not rely on yeast or chemical additives to digest sludge; they are not an alternative to regular pumping and may actually harm the system.
- Eliminate unnecessary sources of water in the disposal field area, drain surface water away from the disposal field, only plant sod over the disposal field, and avoid fertilizers in this area.

- Conserve indoor water use to put less strain on the system. This includes promptly correcting leaky faucets or running toilets. Keep in mind that a water softener will generate 30 to 85 gallons of water every regeneration cycle.
- Do not drive on the disposal field or build over it.
- Have your tank inspected regularly by a licensed contractor or health department official. Inspections will reveal problems before they become serious and indicate when the tank needs to be pumped.

### ***Pumping the System***

The matter not broken down by the bacteria can clog the system over time. This will happen in spite of careful use and good maintenance. Pumping to clean out the tank, every one to two years, is essential to avoiding serious problems; consider pumping more frequently if usage is heavy.

### ***System Failure***

Signs that your septic system is failing include:

- Black water with a foul odor backing up in drains or toilets.
- Toilets flush slowly.
- Water ponds on top of the disposal field.
- Grass staying green over the disposal field, even in dry weather.

If you believe your system requires attention, call a professional to assess the situation and have the system pumped. If a new system is required, a permit must be obtained from your local municipality.

### ***Water Softener***

Prior to installing a water softener, discuss with the vendor whether the system you are considering will adversely affect your septic system.

## **Warranty Guidelines**

During the Homeowner Orientation, we confirm that the septic system is working properly, and that you are familiar with the location of the tank and disposal field.

While we install the system in accordance with codes and plans based on your soil conditions, we do not warrant that the septic system will function indefinitely. Weather, ground water, environmental conditions, and topography, as well as your family's habits, can all generate unpredictable effects.

## **Shower Doors or Tub Enclosures**

### **Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines**

Shower doors, and tub enclosures, require minimal care. We recommend Gel Coat (or a similar product) for tub enclosures, and non-abrasive cleaners that are commercially available for the shower door.

#### ***Caulk***

Check caulking and touch-up as needed.

#### ***Cleaning***

Use cleaning products suggested by the manufacturer to avoid any damage to the trim and hardware. Using a squeegee to remove water after a bath or shower will minimize mineral residue and soap film.

#### ***Towels***

Avoid hanging wet towels on corners of swinging shower doors; the weight can pull the door out of alignment and cause it to leak.

## Warranty Guidelines

We will confirm that all shower doors and tub enclosures are in good condition during your Homeowner Orientation. We warrant that shower doors and tub enclosures will function according to the manufacturers' specifications.

## **Siding**

### Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

You may have noticed that your siding is not caulked at the joints (where two boards meet). This is by design and is an approved method of installation. Instead of caulking, flashing is placed behind each of the joints to ensure proper water management.

Siding expands and contracts in response to changes in weather. Slight waves are visible in siding under moist weather conditions; shrinkage and separations will be more noticeable under hot or dry conditions. Typically, the south and west sides of a home show more weathering. Dark, or intense colors, may fade more rapidly than lighter colors. These behaviors cannot be eliminated. Avoid excessive overspray from sprinklers on any type of siding.

#### ***Caulking***

Caulking should be touched-up where necessary prior to any application of paint to siding.

#### ***Cement Based Products***

Similar to wood product, cement-based siding may require repainting and caulking. Cement-fiber siding is a low-maintenance product. However, it will still need periodic pressure washing, or use of a soft bristle brush to clean and re-apply paint to keep it looking its best. Refer to the siding and paint manufacturer's recommendations for more detailed instruction.

#### ***James Hardie Siding***

Approximately every five years after closing, you should plan to re-paint Hardi-Plank siding. For additional information, visit the following websites: [www.jameshardie.com](http://www.jameshardie.com) and [www.sherwinwilliams.com](http://www.sherwinwilliams.com).

***Pressure Washing:*** Pressure washing needs to be done carefully to avoid pushing water behind the siding and/or into windows and eave vents. Also, make sure that the pressure is not set too high or it could cause permanent damage to your siding.

## Warranty Guidelines

We will confirm that siding is in good condition during your Homeowner Orientation. After the orientation, it will be your responsibility to repair any damage to the siding.

#### ***Joints***

We will correct any separation at joints, or where siding meets another material, if the separation allows water to enter the home.

#### ***Loose Siding***

If siding becomes detached from the home due to an installation error, we will correct it.

## **Smoke Detectors**

### Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Read the manufacturer's manual for detailed information on the care of your smoke detectors.

#### ***Battery Replacement***

If one or all smoke detectors start chirping, it is a sign to change the batteries in ALL smoke detectors.

The 9-volt smoke detector batteries will generally need to be changed annually. A good habit is to change the batteries when you change your clocks in either spring or fall, depending on when you moved into your home. More information can

be found at the following website: [www.prairieelectric.com](http://www.prairieelectric.com).

### ***Cleaning***

Clean each smoke detector monthly for your safety in preventing false alarms or lack of response in a fire. After cleaning, push the test button to confirm the alarm is working. This keeps it clean of dust particles that can set it off.

### ***Insurance***

You are responsible for obtaining fire insurance.

### ***Locations***

Smoke detectors are installed in accordance with building codes which dictate locations. Building codes prohibit New Tradition Homes from omitting any smoke detector; similarly, you should never remove or disable any smoke detector.

## **Warranty Guidelines**

We will review smoke detectors with you during the orientation to familiarize you with the alarm. New Tradition Homes does not represent that the smoke detectors will provide the protection for which they are installed or intended.

## **Stairs**

### **Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines**

No known stair installation method prevents all vibration or squeaks in a staircase. If painted wood trim is included, a shrinkage separation can develop where the stairs meet the wall. When this occurs, apply a thin bead of latex caulk and, when dry, touch up with paint.

### **Warranty Guidelines**

Stair vibration or squeaks are excluded from warranty coverage. However, we will make a reasonable effort to correct them one time during the warranty period.

## **Stucco**

### **Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines**

Stucco is a brittle cement product that is subject to expansion and contraction. Minor hairline cracks will develop in the outer layer of stucco; this is normal and does not reduce the function of the stucco in any way.

The elastomeric coating used in some homes requires no maintenance. The coating is waterproof so cleaning with a hose is permitted; however **peeling can occur if you use high pressure**. If damage occurs, the affected area can be patched and coating reapplied.

### ***Drainage***

To ensure proper drainage, keep dirt and concrete flatwork a minimum of six inches below the stucco screed (mesh underneath final coat of stucco). Do not pour concrete, or masonry, over the stucco screed or right up to the foundation.

### ***Efflorescence***

The white, powdery substance that sometimes accumulates on stucco surfaces is called efflorescence. This is a natural phenomenon and cannot be prevented. In some cases, you can remove it by scrubbing with a stiff brush and vinegar. Consult hardware store for commercial products used in removing efflorescence.

### ***Sprinklers***

To prevent leaks, avoid water spraying on stucco surfaces from irrigation or watering systems. Check the spray from the lawn and plant irrigation system frequently to make certain that water is not spraying, or accumulating, on stucco surfaces.



## Warranty Guidelines

We will confirm that stucco is in acceptable condition during your Homeowner Orientation.

### ***Cracks: One-time repair***

One time during the warranty period, we will repair stucco cracks that exceed 1/16 inch. The appearance of the repair will vary from the surrounding area due to natural fading and dye lot differences.

## **Sump Pump**

### Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

In some cases (e.g. basements), the foundation design may include weeping tile (drain) and/or a sump pump. The weeping tile runs around the foundation to gather water and channel it to the sump pit or storm sewer. When the water reaches a certain level, the pump comes on and pumps the water away from your home.

### ***Continuous Operation***

It is normal for the pump to run often, or even continuously, during a heavy storm with long periods of rain.

### ***Discharge***

Know where the discharge for your sump pump system is located and keep the end of this drain clear of debris so that water can flow out easily. In order to avoid re-circulating water through this system, maintain the distance of the discharge pipe as originally installed.

### ***Power Supply***

The pump cannot operate without power because it runs on electricity. If you lose power, you are at risk for storm water (not sewage) entering the basement. You may wish to install a back-up system to guard against this possibility. Homeowner insurance usually excludes damage to your property from this source; you may want to obtain a rider to cover this risk.

### ***Roof Water***

Ensure that roof water drains quickly away from the home to avoid circulating it through your sump pump. Keep downspout extensions, or splash blocks, in place to channel water away from your home.

### ***Routine Check***

Periodically check to confirm that the pump is plugged in, the circuit breaker is on, and the pump is operating. Annually check the operation of your sump pump by pouring five gallons of water into the sump pump crock (hole) and confirming that the pump comes on and pumps the water back out.

### ***Trees and Shrubs***

Avoid planting trees or shrubs with aggressive root growth patterns near your home's foundation. The roots can make their way into the perimeter drain and eventually clog the system.

## Warranty Guidelines

We will discuss the sump pump, and confirm that it is operational, during your Homeowner Orientation.

## **Swimming Pools**

### Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Be aware of important safety and care requirements if your home includes a swimming pool. Local ordinances require that you secure the pool area with a fence and locked gate to prevent unauthorized entry and use of your pool. Establish safe practices with children regarding proper pool behavior, and circumstances under which they can enter the water.

### ***Chemicals***

Carefully study and follow information regarding the pool's chemistry. You are responsible for supplying all appropriate chemical treatments.

### ***Cleaning***

Regular cleaning of the pool's surfaces is essential for comfortable and healthy enjoyment. Keep glass and debris out of the pool area.

### ***Filters and Pumps***

Maintain the pool filters and pumps according to each manufacturer's directions.

### ***Professional Services***

Consider retaining the services of a professional pool service to clean the pool, maintain the system, and treat the water.

## **Warranty Guidelines**

During your Homeowner Orientation, we will confirm that all pool surfaces are in acceptable condition. Repair of any surface damage noted subsequent to the Orientation is your responsibility. The pool installer will set a separate appointment with you to instruct you in the use and care of equipment and chemical treatment of the pool water.

Pool equipment should function as designed provided you follow all maintenance steps.

## **Telephone and Cable Outlets**

### **Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines**

Your home is equipped with telephone and cable connections, as shown on the building plans and selection sheets. Initiating phone service, cable service, additional service, or moving outlets for decorating, or convenience, are your responsibilities.

### ***Structured Wiring***

Structured wiring is a term used to describe many different types of residential wiring products that all have the same basic purpose—to effectively distribute a variety of data signals throughout your home. Signal types supported range from cable television and telephone, to Ethernet computer networks.

Structured wiring allows you to: play a DVD in one room and watch it on another TV in your home, listen to your stereo in any room, hook up multiple computers to one Internet connection, etc.

With a structured wiring system, wires are installed in a “home run” or “star topology” configuration. This means that each set of wires runs from the main panel to only one outlet, providing you with more reliable and consistent service for all uses. The exact type of wiring used is listed in your home's specifications.

## **Warranty Guidelines**

We will repair wiring, running from the phone or cable service box into the home that does not perform as intended. Care of the wiring, from the service box outward, is the responsibility of the local service provider.

## **Termites**

### **Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines**

Treatment for various insect or animal infestations is your responsibility. Regularly inspect your home for signs of termites or conditions that would allow their attack, including:

- Check for wrinkles or waves in wood trim.
- Tap wood to see if it sounds or feels hollow.

- Lift the edge of carpet in the corner of a room to inspect under the carpet tack strip. The tack strip is untreated and provides a convenient path for termites through your home.
- Watch for tubes of dirt, called mud tubes, which extend from the soil up to your home.
- Keep soil away from any wood parts of your home.
- Be certain all roof water and precipitation moves quickly away from your home's foundation.
- Avoid storing wood on the ground against your home.
- Maintain a safe zone of at least two feet in width around the perimeter of your home. Avoid planting grass or shrubs, installing any sprinkler device, or digging of any kind in this area. If you disturb this area, have it re-treated to restore protection.
- Chemically treat the area that will be underneath new material, such as stepping stones, river rock, concrete, etc., before installing it against the home.
- Be sure to treat the affected areas before you add onto, or change, the exterior of your home.

If you believe you see signs of termites or have any questions, contact your termite treatment company for guidance.

### Warranty Guidelines

Our warranty excludes treatment for any insect (e.g. ants) or animal (e.g. mice) infestations.

*See also Pests and Wildlife.*

## Utility Locations

### Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

It is essential to have utility lines located and marked before the following work begins: digging, augering, driving material into the ground (i.e. fence posts or stakes for concrete forms), or mechanical excavation.

**NEVER assume that a gas line is deeper than your planned ground disturbance.** The gas company responds to hundreds of damaged natural gas line calls each year.

Safety should be your first priority when working around natural gas pipelines. Contact with buried natural gas pipelines can result in serious injury, death, property damage, and interruptions in natural gas delivery service to others. All of these can be dangerous and/or costly to repair.

**Hand expose the natural gas line if you will be digging within three feet on either side of the location marks. Dig carefully. Some gas lines are made of polyethylene and can easily be cut with a shovel.**

If you damage a gas line—even if there is no odor or hissing sound—contact the gas company immediately. Also:

- Clear all people from the vicinity and cordon off the site.
- Do not attempt to repair the leak, or bend over the line, to stop the escaping gas.
- Shut off all equipment and vehicles.
- Remove other sources of ignition.
- Do not use a cell phone in the vicinity.
- Extinguish all smoking materials and open flames.
- Allow gas to vent to the atmosphere.

# Ventilation

## Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Homes today are built more tightly than ever; this saves energy dollars, but also creates a potential concern. If the ventilation system is not maintained and used regularly, condensation, cooking odors, indoor pollutants, and carbon monoxide may accumulate. We provide mechanical and passive methods for ventilating homes. Your attention to ventilation is important to health and safety.

### **Attic and Roof Vents**

Building codes require the installation of attic and roof vents to minimize accumulation of moisture. Attic ventilation occurs through vents in the soffits (the underside of the overhangs) and roof vents. Driving rain or snow sometimes enters the attic through these vents; do not cover them to prevent their entry. Precipitation that blows in, safely evaporates when proper ventilation is maintained.

### ***Frozen Attic Condensation***

*Please refer to Frozen Condensation under the Attic section above.*

### **TROUBLESHOOTING TIPS: FROZEN ATTIC CONDENSATION**

*Please refer to Troubleshooting Tips: Frozen Attic Condensation under the Attic section above.*

*See also Attic, Condensation, and Roof.*

### ***Daily Habits***

The following daily habits can help keep your home well-ventilated:

- Do not cover, or interfere in any way, with the fresh air supply to your furnace.
- Develop the habit of running the hood fan when you are cooking.
- Run your bath fans for a minimum of 30 minutes after bathing or showering.

Proper ventilation will prevent excessive moisture from forming on the inside of the windows. This helps reduce cleaning chores considerably.

*See also Condensation.*

### ***Heat Recovery Ventilator (HRV)***

Heat recovery ventilators bring fresh air into your home and expel an equal amount of stale air. The incoming fresh air is heated, or cooled, to reduce energy costs. HRVs are designed to run continuously in conjunction with your furnace fan..

Follow manufacturer instructions and time table for cleaning filters, replacing filters, and washing the recovery core. Also check the drain line regularly, if it is included with your unit. Ensure that the exterior vent is clear of debris such as leaves, insects, or snow.

Stay apprised on the manufacturer warranties, as they typically extend beyond one year for certain aspects of the HRV. You will find complete information in the manufacturer's literature.

## Warranty Guidelines

The warranty guidelines for active components (i.e. exhaust fans) are discussed under the appropriate headings such as electrical systems, heating system, etc.

### ***Frozen Attic Condensation***

If a construction defect allows excessive warm, moist air from the home to enter the attic, we will correct it.

# Water Heater

## Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

### **Tankless Gas Hot Water Heater (When natural gas is available):**

Your home is equipped with a *tankless* water heater. Tankless water heaters provide a plentiful, *continuous* flow of hot water once activated. This contrasts with a ‘tank-type’ conventional water heater that will only provide a limited flow of hot water. Since there is no tank and no ‘stand-by’ heat loss, *and* the unit is typically 20% more efficient than a conventional water heater, there are true energy savings.

The tankless heater is normally turned off but is equipped with flow sensors which activate it when water travels through it. The water circulates through a copper heat exchanger and is warmed to the pre-set temperature by a natural gas heating element. This process can result in a slightly longer wait time of a few seconds for the heated water to reach certain plumbing fixtures, but once heated water has reached the fixture, it is continuous.

### **Heat Pump Hot Water Heater (When natural gas is not available):**

Your home has been equipped with a Heat Pump Hot Water Heater. The water is stored in a tank with a heat pump mounted on the top side.

Heat pump water heaters use electricity to move heat from one place to another instead of generating heat directly. Therefore, they can be two to three times more energy efficient than conventional electric resistance water heaters.

To move the heat, heat pumps work like a refrigerator in reverse. While a refrigerator pulls heat from inside a box and dumps it into the surrounding room, a stand-alone air-source heat pump water heater pulls heat from the surrounding air and dumps it -- at a higher temperature -- into a tank to heat water.

### ***Safety***

For safety:

- Avoid using the top of a heater as a storage shelf.
- Maintain a 36” clear area around the tank or unit.

### ***Temperature***

The manufacturer, recommends setting the thermostat at 120 degrees Fahrenheit for everyday or “normal” use. Higher settings can result in wasted energy dollars and increase the danger of injury from scalding.

Hot water will take longer to arrive at sinks, tubs, and showers that are farther from the water heater. Unless your home includes a re-circulating pump, the cool water in the lines must be purged before hot water can reach the fixture.

## **TROUBLESHOOTING TIPS: NO HOT WATER**

Before calling for service, confirm the following:

- The water heater is plugged into an electrical outlet, and the display is visible
- The water supply valve is open
- Error code on display? Follow the manufactures recommendation for repair

Even if the troubleshooting tips do not identify a solution, the information you gather will be useful to the service provider you call.

### ***Cleaning***

Please refer to your specific water heater manufacturer manual for cleaning recommendations

### ***Draining***

Please refer to your specific water heater manufacturer manual for cleaning recommendations

## Warranty Guidelines

Refer to the manufacturer's limited warranty for information regarding coverage of the water heater.

*See also Plumbing.*

## **Windows, Screens, Sliding Glass Doors**

### Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

The vinyl windows in your home are either fixed (do not open), have a unit that slides up and down (single hung style), or have a unit that slides side to side (slider or vent style). To make the operation of either type of window easier, try spraying silicone on a rag and wipe both tracks with the spray. Both the single hung windows (up and down) and the slider windows (side to side) can be removed to aide in cleaning hard to reach areas, especially if you are trying to clean second-floor windows.

Refer to the following websites for more information: [www.plygem.com](http://www.plygem.com), [cascadewindows.com](http://cascadewindows.com) or [www.parr.com](http://www.parr.com).

Contact a glass company for reglazing of any windows that break. Glass is difficult to install without special tools.

#### ***Acrylic Block***

Clean acrylic blocks: during moderate temperatures, with a mild soap and warm water, using a sponge or soft cloth, and drying with a towel. Avoid abrasive cleaners, commercial glass cleaner, razors, brushes, or scrubbing devices of any kind. Minor scratches can often be minimized by rubbing with a mild automotive polish.

#### ***Condensation***

Condensation on interior surfaces of the window and frame is the result of high humidity within the home and low temperatures outside. Your family's lifestyle controls the humidity level inside the home. If your home includes a humidifier, closely observe the manufacturer's directions for its use. Cleaning and repair of damage caused by condensation is your responsibility.

During cold weather in particular, ensure that warm air from heat registers located near windows, can flow unobstructed. This helps minimize condensation. For the same reason, ensure that window coverings are open (even slightly).

#### ***Screen Storage and Maintenance***

Some homeowners remove and store screens for the winter to allow more light into the home. To make re-installation more convenient, label each screen as you remove it. Handle screens with care when removing and re-installing, as it is easy to perforate screens and bend frames. Clean the screens with a gentle spray of water prior to re-installing them.

#### ***Sliding Glass Doors***

Sliding glass doors are made with tempered glass, which is more difficult to break than ordinary glass. If broken, tempered glass breaks into small, circular pieces rather than large splinters which can easily cause injury.

Keep sliding door tracks clean for smooth operation and to prevent damage to the doorframe. Silicone lubricants work well on these tracks. Acquaint yourself with the operation of sliding door hardware for maximum security.

Under certain lighting conditions, the door glass may be hard to see. If you keep the screen fully closed when the glass door is open, your family will be accustomed to opening something before walking through. You may also want to apply a decal to the glass door to make it readily visible.

#### ***Sticking Windows***

Refer to the manufacturer's information if sticking occurs, or if excessive pressure is required, when opening or closing a window. You may also apply a silicone lubricant to aid in this problem; avoid petroleum-based products. An appropriate product is available at hardware stores.

### ***Tinting***

Applying tinting, or foil lining to dual pane windows can result in broken windows due to heat build-up. Some manufacturers void their warranty on the windows if you apply tinting or foil lining. Contact the manufacturer to check on their current policy before you apply such coatings.

### ***Weep Holes***

In heavy rains, water may collect in the bottom channel of window frames. Weep holes are provided to allow excess water to escape to the outside. Keep the bottom window channels, and weep holes, free of dirt and debris for proper operation.

## **Warranty Guidelines**

We will confirm that all windows, screens, and sliding glass doors are in acceptable condition during your Homeowner Orientation. We will repair, or replace, broken windows or damaged screens noted at your Homeowner Orientation. Windows should operate with reasonable ease and locks should perform as designed. If they do not, we will provide adjustments.

### ***Condensation***

Condensation on interior surfaces of the window and frame is the result of high humidity within the home and low outside temperatures. You influence the humidity level within your home and warranty coverage excludes this condition.

Condensation that accumulates *between the panes of glass* in multiple-glazed windows indicates a broken seal. We will replace the window if this occurs during the warranty period. Beyond the two-year warranty period, check with your window manufacturer for possible extended coverage for this condition.

### ***Infiltration***

Some air and dust will infiltrate around windows, especially during dry, windy weather. Our warranty excludes coverage of this occurrence.

### ***Scratches***

We will confirm that all window glass is in acceptable condition at your Homeowner Orientation. Minor scratches on windows can result from delivery, handling, and other construction activities. Refer to the manufacturer's warranty for information regarding flaws allowable in window glass.

*See also Condensation and Ventilation.*

## **Wood Trim**

### **Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines**

Wood trim will behave differently inside your home than it does outside. The materials used for interior trim are specifically selected for interior use and differ from those used for the exterior. Heating, air conditioning, traffic patterns, and other living activities readily affect some interior trim elements.

Sun exposure and weather will impact your home's exterior trim. We recommend that you initially re-paint wood trim between 2-3 years after installation.

### **INTERIOR**

Shrinkage of interior wood trim usually occurs within the first two years, depending on temperature and humidity. All interior lumber is more vulnerable to shrinkage during the heating season; maintaining a moderate and stable temperature helps to minimize shrinkage effects. Wood will shrink less lengthwise than across the grain. Wood shrinkage can result in separation at joints of trim; this condition can usually be corrected with caulking or touch-up paint.

### ***Cleaning***

Occasionally, you can wipe casings and baseboards with a damp cloth, but regular maintenance should only require dusting.

### ***Touch Up***

Careful painting or stain touch-up can often correct chips or scratches that occur on the trim. Wood filler may be needed in cases of severe damage. The appearance is likely to vary from the surrounding trim after touch up measures have been taken.

## **EXTERIOR**

As with interior wood components, most shrinkage will occur on exterior wood trim during the first two years (dependent upon climate conditions and exposure).

### ***Caulking***

Caulking should be touched-up, where necessary, prior to any application of paint to trim.

### ***Separations***

Shrinkage of exterior trim pieces can result in separation at joints—especially during hot summer temperatures. Correct this with caulking and touch-up paint. If a piece of trim pulls away from the house, re-nail the trim and touch-up it up with putty and paint.

### ***Splits***

Fluctuations in humidity and temperature can cause wood trim to split or cup.

## **Warranty Guidelines**

We will confirm that wood trim is in acceptable condition during your Homeowner Orientation. Minor imperfections in wood material will be visible and will require no action. We will correct easily noticeable construction damage (i.e. chips, gouges) that are listed during your Homeowner Orientation.

## **INTERIOR**

### ***Exposed Nail Heads***

In finished areas of your home, we fill and touch-up the original finish to correct visible, or exposed, nail heads that can easily be seen from a distance of 6 feet in normal lighting conditions. Such repairs may be visible under certain lighting conditions.

### ***Gaps***

We will correct gaps in excess of 1/8 inch that appear between a wall and baseboard, or gaps in excess of 1/8 inch between a baseboard and uniform hard surface floor. Gaps between baseboards and non-uniform hard surface floors (i.e. slate, ceramic tiles, etc.) are unavoidable and are excluded from this repair.

### ***Hammer Marks***

We will correct hammer marks visible from a distance of 6 feet in normal lighting conditions.

### ***Separation/Misalignment***

Hairline separations are acceptable between two pieces of the same material (i.e. a casing corner) or between two pieces of dissimilar material (i.e. casing and drywall).

We will correct separation, or misalignment, between pieces of the same material that exceeds 1/8 inch. Pieces should be flush and have no raw wood showing if the trim is painted. Separations that occur between two dissimilar materials that exceed 1/8 inch will be corrected. In most cases, the repair provided is caulking and touch-up with the original stain or paint.

### ***Splits***

Wood trim pieces that split to a width of 1/8 inch will be corrected, typically using filler. Such repairs will be visible under certain lighting conditions.



***Surface Roughness***

Wood surfaces that are touched or grasped, during *daily* use, should be *uniformly* smooth. Surfaces not touched every day shall appear smooth when viewed from a distance of 6 feet *under normal lighting* conditions and from a *normal* viewing position.

**EXTERIOR*****Cracks: One-Time Repair***

Once during the warranty period, we will caulk and apply touch-up paint to cracks in exterior trim components if they:

- Are visible from 20 feet in normal lighting conditions
- Result in trim becoming detached

Paint or stain touch-up will vary from the surrounding area.

***Raised Grain***

Expect raised grain to develop due to the effects of weather on natural wood. This is normal rather than a defect in the wood or paint; warranty coverage excludes this condition.

***Resins***

We will touch up exterior trim where resin bleeds through painted finish.

***Separations***

We will correct any separation at joints that exceeds 1/4 inch or that allows water to enter the home.

## Home Care Supplies List

You will find that caring for your home is much easier if you have necessary tools and supplies on hand. As you review the maintenance information in this Homeowner Guide and in the manufacturer materials, note the materials and tools you will need. Note sizes, colors, brands, sources, etc. to create a convenient inventory that will make shopping for home-care products easier. You may wish to make copies of this form before filling it out.

[illegible]

## Maintenance Schedule

As a homeowner, routine maintenance tasks are your responsibility. Establishing a maintenance schedule is the best way to manage your maintenance budget.

Begin care of your home with organized records, including information about all of its components and your furnishings. This information will make caring for your home easier. The records may be useful in completing tax returns, and they will be valuable when you sell your home. Another worthwhile step is to inventory all equipment, appliances, furnishings, and personal belongings. A photo album or jump drive containing pictures of each room is an excellent supplemental item.

Home maintenance includes regular and seasonal tasks. The following suggested maintenance schedule identifies some of the common maintenance tasks that you may need to perform on a monthly, semi-annual, and annual basis. Tailor the list to fit your own situation, adding or deleting items as required.

These suggested maintenance tasks and schedules should not replace the manufacturer's recommendations. We suggest the use of licensed contractors for any tasks you may feel unprepared to complete. Remember, safety first. What seems like a simple plumbing or electrical repair can cost you many times what you think you might save if you suffer an injury or do it incorrectly.

### Suggested Monthly Maintenance

- ☐ Smoke Detectors – Check operation by pushing test button. Check and replace battery if necessary.
- ☐ Check Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI) to insure proper protection.
- ☐ Clean garbage disposal blades by grinding ice cubes with hot water.
- ☐ Clean or replace filter in range hood.
- ☐ Check for evidence of leaks around toilets, under sinks and around dishwasher.
- ☐ Clean and freshen sink drains by flushing hot water and baking soda.
- ☐ Monitor and maintain floor coverings on an as-required basis. Regular vacuuming will reduce wear of carpets and other floor coverings. Repair tears and remove stains as soon as possible.

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

### Suggested Semi-Annual Maintenance

- ☐ Inspect roof for broken or missing shingles, identifying anything that might cause leaks or problems.
- ☐ Inspect and clean gutters and downspouts. If applicable, check and clean rain drain catch basin filter.
- ☐ Inspect outside of home and condition of siding, paint and wood trim.
- ☐ Inspect doors and windows for proper operation and weather-resistance. Clean tracks of windows and sliding glass doors before applying a clear silicone lubricant.
- ☐ Inspect main service panel, circuit breakers, and all GFCI outlets.
- ☐ Complete seasonal maintenance on heating and air conditioning by a licensed HVAC contractor.
- ☐ Inspect and replace caulking and grout around tubs, showers, and sinks as needed.
- ☐ Inspect and replace the furnace and HRV filter(s) as needed.
- ☐ Inspect attic and make sure air vents are unobstructed.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Suggested Annual Maintenance

- ☐ Examine caulking around windows, doors, and other applicable areas.
- ☐ Complete annual furnace and air conditioning maintenance by a licensed HVAC contractor.
- ☐ Schedule professional inspection of major appliances especially if fueled by natural gas.
- ☐ If applicable, check condition of septic tank and drain field. Consult with septic tank pumping service.
- ☐ Visually inspect your hot water heater for any signs of rust or deterioration.
- ☐ Schedule a backflow test on sprinkler system by a certified Backflow Tester. (If applicable.)

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## **Additional Warranty Coverage**

### **Ten-Year Structural Warranty (2-10 Homebuyer's Warranty)**

This coverage is a third party insurance backed warranty that comes with your home and includes ten years of protection against defects that result in damage due to the failure of a load bearing component. Load bearing components include footings, foundation walls, grade beams, load-bearing walls, beams, headers, floor systems, and roof trusses.

#### ***Excluded Components***

Items that are not load bearing components, and are therefore excluded from this ten year structural warranty, include, but are not limited to: driveways, decks, basement and garage floors, patios, sidewalks, retaining walls, and all other (non-load bearing) concrete work.

#### ***Complete Details***

For more details on structural coverage, contact the warranty office.

### **Manufacturer Warranties**

Please take time to read the literature (warranties and use and care guides) provided by the manufacturers of consumer products and other items in your home. The information contained in that material is not included in this homeowner guide. Although much of the information may be familiar to you, some points may differ significantly from homes you have owned in the past.

Some manufacturer's warranties may extend beyond the first year and it is in your best interest to know about such coverage. Remember to mail in any registration cards you receive with manufacturer materials. Being in the manufacturer's system assures that in the event of a recall the company can contact you and arrange to provide the needed correction.

We make every effort to keep the information in this homeowner guide current. However, if any detail in our discussion conflicts with the manufacturer's recommendations, please follow the manufacturer's recommendations.

### **Appliance Warranty Service**

The manufacturers of kitchen appliances have asked to work directly with you if any repairs are needed for their products. They may be able to resolve the issue by talking with you by phone and if they cannot, they prefer to set an appointment directly with you.

Customer service phone numbers are listed in the use and care materials for each appliance. Be prepared to provide the model and serial number of the item and the closing date on your home. A form is included in this homeowner guide so you can record these details in one convenient location for future reference.

Appliance warranties are generally for one year but can be longer. Refer to the literature provided by the manufacturer for complete information.

## Appliance Service Log

This sheet is for your convenience. For warranty service on an appliance, contact the appropriate manufacturer directly at the service number provided in the appliance literature. They will ask you for the model and serial number (usually located on a small metal plate or seal attached to the appliance in an inconspicuous location), and the date of purchase (your closing date): \_\_\_\_\_

<i>Appliance</i>	<i>Manufacturer</i>	<i>Model #</i>	<i>Serial #</i>	<i>Service Phone #</i>
<b>Air Conditioner</b>				
<b>Compacter</b>				
<b>Cooktop</b>				
<b>Dishwasher</b>				
<b>Disposal</b>				
<b>Dryer</b>				
<b>Furnace</b>				
<b>Heat Pump</b>				
<b>Humidifier</b>				
<b>Microwave</b>				
<b>Oven</b>				
<b>Range</b>				
<b>Range Hood</b>				
<b>Refrigerator</b>				
<b>Washer</b>				

## Disclaimer

The information contained in this New Tradition Homes, Inc. Homeowner Guide ("Guide") is for general information purposes only. New Tradition Homes, Inc. assumes no responsibility for errors or omissions in the content in this Guide. Best efforts were made in the preparation of this Guide to provide accurate information as of the date of publishing. Under no circumstances does New Tradition Homes, Inc. warrant or certify the information in this Guide to be free of errors or omissions of any kind.

New Tradition Homes, Inc. does not assume any liability for the use of the information and procedures described in this Guide. In no event shall New Tradition Homes, Inc. be liable for any special, direct, indirect, consequential, or incidental damages or any damages whatsoever, whether in an action of contract, negligence or other tort, arising out of or in connection with the use of this Guide or the contents and information in this Guide. New Tradition Homes, Inc. reserves the right to make additions, deletions, or modifications to the contents of this Guide at any time without prior notice. No representation, express or implied, is made regarding the accuracy, adequacy, completeness, reliability, or usefulness of any information in this Guide. All warranties of any kind, express or implied, including, but not limited to, any IMPLIED WARRANTY OF MERCHANTABILITY, HABITABILITY, OR FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE are disclaimed.

This Guide may contain links to external websites that are not provided or maintained by or in any way affiliated with New Tradition Homes, Inc. New Tradition Homes, Inc. does not guarantee the accuracy, relevance, timeliness, or completeness of any information on these external websites.

This Guide offers general information on the purchase, construction, and ownership of your new home and is designed for educational purposes only. You should not rely on this information as a substitute for, nor does it replace, professional legal, accounting, or tax advice.

Last updated: February 26, 2020

All Rights Reserved

© 2018

New Tradition Homes, Inc.