



# Caring for Your New Home





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Your Spinell home has been built with modern materials and craftsmanship and designed with your family's comfort in mind. Your new home will require regular preventative maintenance on your part to preserve its beauty and value and to prevent costly repairs and replacements later. This preventative maintenance should begin the day you move into your Spinell home. Often a minor adjustment or repair done by you can save a more serious, time-consuming and sometimes costly repair.

Spinell Homes has prepared this helpful guide to help you maintain your home. In addition to valuable product information, you will find a few "Helpful Hints" that will guide you in doing preventative maintenance on your Spinell home.

It is possible that all the features and items discussed in this maintenance guide are not present in your home. Also, your home could have features and items that are not covered in this guide. Please consult a Spinell Homes representative for questions relating to items not included in this guide.

Please take the time to read the literature provided by the manufacturers of consumer products and other items in your home. Although much of the information may be familiar to you, it may be significantly different from homes you owned in the past. The information contained in that material may be repeated here.

### Helpful Tools

You will need a few basic tools and supplies to keep your home "like new." At the minimum, we suggest you have:

- Medium sized wrench
- Standard pliers
- Screwdrivers – small, medium, large and Phillips head
- Claw hammer
- Hand saw
- Assorted bolts, nails and screws
- Duct and electrical tape
- Razor and putty knife
- Quality interior and exterior paintable caulking
- Orange peel drywall texture
- Matching interior and exterior paint
- Different sized paint brushes
- Sandpaper – medium and fine grit
- 6-foot ladder
- Tape measure
- Flashlight
- Fire extinguisher
- First aid kit
- Felt pad for underneath furniture legs to protect flooring

Should a problem occur during your warranty coverage period, and cannot be solved by the maintenance information provided within this guide, contact Spinell Homes. Other courses of action may affect your coverage under the terms of the Spinell Homes Warranty and Standards Agreement.

### Appliances (Kitchen)

You're provided with instruction manuals for your new electrical and gas kitchen appliances. Look through them carefully. Fill out and mail any return postcards necessary to record warranties.

Should you require service on any of your new appliances, please contact the following company directly to arrange for an appointment.

Spenard Builders Supply  
4412 Lois Drive  
Anchorage, AK 99517  
(907) 261-9250

If you are unsure about who should resolve an appliance problem, the appliance company or the installer, contact Spinell Homes to help you determine responsibility.

**Helpful Hint:**

- Before calling for service, always check the electrical breakers to make sure they are reset for that electrical zone. For gas appliances, be sure that the gas is turned on at the valve.

**Asphalt Driveways**

The liquid asphalt in blacktop needs time to harden and cure, usually 6-12 months. During this time the driveway will remain soft and pliable. You may walk on your new driveway immediately. Try to keep automobile traffic off it at least 5-10 full days (longer in hotter temperatures). Even after the blacktop has cured, do not expect it to be as hard as concrete.

Your new blacktop will soften and harden as temperatures rise and fall. Watering down your driveway with a hose on hot days will cool and temporarily harden the blacktop. This may be helpful but is not mandatory. If soapsuds should appear do not be alarmed. This is caused by a reaction between the diesel fuel found in blacktop and a high chlorine content sometimes found in water.

Every effort is made to eliminate puddles in your driveway; some puddles however are inevitable. Small puddles may appear due to the natural drainage and slope of the lot.

Blacktop may be scarred when automobiles start out too fast, pull out too quickly, or are just driven too fast. Drive slowly on the blacktop to minimize scarring. To avoid grooves or sinkholes do not park in the same spot every time. Do not turn the steering wheel back and forth when your car is not running.

Depressions will be made in the blacktop from excessive weight. Avoid using jack stands or car ramps unless a piece of plywood is placed underneath them to distribute the weight. Keep heavy vehicles off your driveway. Use a piece of plywood under the tongue jack and tires of campers or trailers when storing (them) on asphalt.

Kickstands, lawn chairs and even high heels that exert weight on concentrated areas can create holes in your driveway. The asphalt is especially vulnerable in warmer months.

The edges are the weakest point on the driveway due to lack of side support. Edges will crack and crumble in time, avoid driving on the edges. You may wish to support the edges with topsoil.

The driveway may appear smoother in some areas due to the various sizes of stone, sand, liquid asphalt and other ingredients that cause a variety of textures. Areas that are raked and spread with hand tools will appear different than those spread by a machine.

Avoid spilling gasoline, oil, anti-freeze or any other automotive fluids on the driveway. These substances may compromise the liquid asphalt and cause a hole or soft spot. Any hole that is left by these spills should be filled with a cold patch. Small hairline cracks will develop over the winter due to the contraction and expansion of the ground and should be filled with crack filler. You can purchase these products from your local building supply store.

The blacktop is naturally porous therefore water can seep into and through the paving. To help slow deterioration you may wish to seal coat after the driveway has been paved. Be careful to allow time for the asphalt to cure, do not to seal it too soon. Sealer protects the blacktop with a coating that is impervious to harmful elements. Unprotected driveways remain porous, dry out, become rough and lose life rapidly. Follow the manufacturer's suggested use on when to seal the driveway and how often.



## **Cabinets and Vanities**

Your kitchen cabinets and bathroom vanities are factory finished and should be cared for much the same as fine wood furniture. Never clean them with harsh abrasives. You can enhance and preserve the rich wood grain finish by using a periodic application of paste wax.

Scratches, which may result from normal use, can usually be touched up with a wood oil finish, which can be purchased at most hardware stores. Cabinet and vanity hardware will loosen with repeated use, periodically tighten the hardware as needed.

For any warping problem, please contact Spinell Homes at the 11th month warranty period and we will inspect for warping.

## **Carpet**

The floors in the primary living areas of your Spinell home have been covered with professionally installed carpet, per your selection.

All carpet comes from the mill in standard 12-foot widths. Every effort has been made to limit the number of seams and locate them as unobtrusively as possible. However, seaming is unavoidable. Some grades, brands or colors of carpeting may show seams more readily than others may. This is not necessarily a reflection on the quality of carpet you have selected.

After the initial installation of the new carpet, you will notice excess yarn will appear on the carpet surface – this is normal. Do not be concerned, this will dissipate after repeated vacuuming.

### **Helpful Hints:**

- Have your carpet professionally cleaned (the frequency of cleaning depends on the type of yarn, color and traffic the room receives).
- You should consult a carpet supplier for information on specific types of stains before attempting any type of spot removal.
- Consult with the carpet manufacturer if you intend to shampoo using water (some manufacturers will advise against this procedure).

## **Caulk (Exterior and Interior)**

Caulk has been applied to your home around doors, windows, exterior vents, gas piping, etc. Interior caulk has been applied around tubs, sinks, tops, thresholds, etc. Even properly installed caulk will shrink and show surface cracks due to settlement, expansion and contraction.

Check the interior and exterior caulking around the house at least once per year and re-caulk as necessary. Select a high quality brand. Some are paintable and others are not.

It will be necessary for you to re-caulk the areas mentioned. This procedure is a normal occurrence and should not be considered a defect under the terms of your warranty.

## **Ceramic Floor and Wall Tile**

The ceramic tile used in various rooms of your new home provides a durable and decorative covering for floors and walls. Cracks in grouting of ceramic tile joints are common due to normal shrinkage conditions. Shade and/or color variation is inherent in all fired clay products and grout.

Ceramic tile floors are generally easy to maintain. To keep them looking like new, just wipe with a wet cloth and wet mop from time to time. Abrasive cleaners should not be used to clean tile surfaces because they can

cause surface scratching. The grout used between ceramic tiles can be cleaned using a brush and mild cleanser (also see "Grout" in this section).

Care should be taken to avoid damage to the tiles by securing shower rods too tightly on bath walls and/or dropping heavy objects on floor surfaces. Such occurrences can result in cracked and broken tiles. Stiletto or spike heels will damage slate and ceramic floors. Remove shoes to avoid this type of damage.

### **Concrete Foundations and Areas**

Concrete, by the very nature of the material will crack. To date, no known prevention has been found for this problem. The major reason for concrete cracking is settlement. Also, the expansion and contraction of concrete surfaces due to temperature changes during the year can cause cracking. Spinell Homes does provide contraction and expansion joints in the concrete in an effort to minimize and control the cracks. However, we have no control over factors such as severe frost, settlement and aggravation from the use of salt and/or other deicing chemicals. Even though you may not use these chemicals yourself, they do get tracked in from the public streets, causing surface problems on concrete.

Avoid the use of salt or deicing chemicals in the winter months. Use only plain sand for deicing. For further protection against the effects of those chemicals, apply a quality seal coat material to exterior concrete surfaces on an annual basis.

In the event a foundation crack allows the entry of water to the inside of your home, notify Spinell Homes immediately. We will notify you of the type of action to be taken to correct this situation.

In the future, if you decide to pour a patio at your home, ensure that the drainage water will not infiltrate the basement over the foundation or through the basement window wells.

Water seepage into your basement may become a problem as snow melts or during prolonged periods of rain. To prevent undue damage, we suggest the following:  
Do not leave valuable items on the floor of your basement or in your crawl space.  
Make sure to check your sump pump regularly to ensure proper operation and that the sump pit is clean and free of bacteria (add 2 oz. Clorox Bleach periodically).  
Remove snow from all window wells.

Make sure escape windows and all window drains are unobstructed.  
As snow melts, make sure that all downspouts are directed away from the foundation.

It may take some time for concrete to cure (dry out). During this period, it is not unusual to see dark spots appear in the concrete surface (especially during very humid weather).

A concrete sealer (available at any home care store) will make an unpainted concrete floor easier to keep clean. Follow the manufacturer's direction for cleaning after the sealer has been applied.

### **Countertops (Laminate)**

The laminated countertops used in your home are made of top quality plastic laminate materials. Because these products are a sheet of very hard plastic laminated to a wooden base, you must be careful not to disturb the bond between the wood and the plastic. For this reason, always be sure to use a hot pad (trivets or asbestos lined hot pads) for anything that is likely to exceed 250 degrees in temperature. Anything coming directly off a burner or from the oven will be much too hot to place directly on the plastic surface. Also, please remember that laminate tops are not scratch proof.

Here are some of the maintenance procedures for maintaining the beauty – and prolonging

the life – of your laminate countertops:

- Most spots, glass rings, etc. will usually wipe clean with a damp cloth and mild soap. For more stubborn stains, we recommend a spray cleaner. Be careful of the inks used in marking grocery products, especially meat and produce. They are often indelible and can be extremely difficult to remove. Newspaper ink can also produce an indelible stain. When you clean your countertops, do not use any type of abrasive cleaners.
- Never cut items directly on the countertop. Countertops will scratch and knife marks can become unsightly hiding places for dirt and bacteria.
- Countertops are not constructed for sitting. Excessive weight can cause warping; drawer malfunction and even cause the top to pull away from the wall.
- To prevent leaks, be certain to monitor the condition of all caulking at countertops and redo if separation or shrinkage occurs.
- Keep your countertops clear of excessive or standing water.

## **Countertops (Granite)**

The most important facet of understanding your granite countertops is that it is a porous material. Any natural stone has characteristics and must be understood to ensure the beauty of the stone. Porous simply means it can be penetrated by water, oils, grease and chemicals. Use a nontoxic sealer to resist all types of stains. This must be resealed annually. Most hardware stores carry stone sealers. You simply wipe with a soft cloth, let it soak in for 15 minutes, wipe off excess and then you are done. It is important to clean all spills and keep unwrapped foods from being on the tops for extended periods of time as oils and minerals can eventually work through the sealer and can stain your top. Under normal conditions this is never a problem. An example would be to leave on vacation with a grease spot on the granite surface. Scratches on countertops are always a concern for homeowners and under normal use granite resists scratches better than any other surface on the market. Obviously, if someone intended to scratch the surface it can be done but with normal cutting and food preparation your granite tops will last a lifetime.

## **Regular Maintenance & Cleaning**

If your granite darkens when it is wet, do not be alarmed. It will return to its original color when the water evaporates. The safest way to clean your granite tops is to use products designed specifically for stone. Cleaners and disinfectants of this type are neutral on the acid scale, so they pose no risk of hurting the polish. Dish soap and water will work to clean your tops, as will spray cleaners such as Windex. Avoid anything that contains bleach or any wipe or cleaners that have grit in them. If you want to avoid water streaking while cleaning you must wipe your tops until they are completely dry. If lime build up occurs around your faucet do not use lime removal products. Gently scraping the lime off with a straight razor is the best solution.

## **Helpful Hints:**

- Avoiding scratches: Granite is a quartz based material and can therefore be scratched by quartz or anything harder. Knives will not scratch granite, although cutting on your countertops is not recommended as your knives will dull very quickly. Diamonds will scratch granite. Removing diamond rings before cooking is recommended. Certain stoneware dishes contain rough silica and pose a risk of scratching. Some pizza-stones will scratch granite if they are spun around while cutting the pizza. If you use a marble cutting board make sure the rubber or plastic feet remain secure. If the marble ends up rubbing on granite this does pose a scratching risk.
- Avoiding Chips: Chips in granite are not a common occurrence. When they do happen, chips are most often caused by banging something into the edge of the countertop. Heavy pots/pans and the bottoms of large bottles do most of the damage. Take care when you handle them around your granite. If a chip does occur and you find the piece that chipped out, save it. Most of the time it can be epoxied back into place.



- Sealing Granite is simple: The clear sealers are applied with a cotton rag and simply rubbed into the surface. Often it only needs to be done once a year. Sealing granite is by no means a hardship and it takes just a few moments of your time. It is a very small price to pay for the beauty and durability you get with a granite top.
- Do clean the surface with mild detergent, stone soap or specialty cleaner and a soft clean cloth.
- Do rinse surfaces thoroughly after cleaning them dry with a soft clean cloth.
- Do blot up spills with a paper towel immediately.
- Don't use vinegar, lemon or other cleaners such as bathroom, grout or tile, and tub cleaners. Cleaners that contain abrasives.

### **Crawl Spaces**

Slight dampness may be experienced in the crawl space. Landscaping that is correctly installed will prevent excessive amounts of water from entering the crawl space. Report any large amounts of unexplained standing water to Spinell Homes.

Crawl space ventilation fans should be left running at all times to ventilate your home properly.

### **Decks, Stoops, Porches**

Your new Spinell home may feature Trex decks, stoops on walk surfaces only. Do not install heavy equipment or nail anything to your deck. Any hole caused by installation could allow water to enter your home and cause damage. Any damage would be your responsibility.

### **Doors**

Most door problems can be handled with minimum maintenance procedures. Sticking caused by shrinkage and swelling (especially during summer humidity) is the most common problem with doors, and it is a common characteristic in new homes.

Interior doors, by-pass and bi-folds often stick or warp due to various weather conditions. Interior panel doors may show raw wood if panels shrink more than the frame. Exterior doors will warp to some degree due to a temperature differential between inside and outside surfaces. Winter conditions may change the moisture content of wood doors, causing temporary warping. These conditions are normal.

### **Helpful Hints:**

- To maintain a good seal, you will need to periodically adjust the weather stripping on your exterior doors. You can do this easily by running a screwdriver firmly up and down the groove in the weather stripping.
- A well-sealed door should be somewhat hard to open and close. A slight air crack is normal. Sometimes a hard wind may cause howling. Adjusting as mentioned above will solve the problem, unless winds are very strong.
- Whenever you paint the house or trim, also paint (or stain) the exterior doors. Natural finish doors require more frequent re-coating.
- Many exterior doors are equipped with adjustable thresholds. These are easily adjusted as the seasons and humidity change.
- If bi-fold or sliding doors stick, check the track and remove any dirt or grit. Occasional application of silicone spray will enable doors to slide easily and prolong their life.



## Drains

Each plumbing fixture in your home has a J-shaped pipe designed to provide a water barrier between your home and the odor of sewer gas. The trap holds water, which keeps airborne bacteria and the odor of sewer gas from entering your home.

If you seldom use a fixture, turn it on at regular intervals to replace evaporating water and keep the barrier intact. Because of their shape, traps are the points where drains are most likely to become clogged.

### Bathtub, Sink and Shower Drains

If a drain in these fixtures becomes clogged, first use a plunger. Be sure the rubber cup covers the drain opening and that the water comes up well over the cup edge. Working the plunger up and down rhythmically 10 or 20 times in succession will build up pressure in the pipe and be more effective than sporadic separate plunges. Be sure to plug the overflow outlet, if there is one, with a piece of old cloth, and close the other drain when working on a double sink.

If the plunger does not solve the problem, use a plumber's snake (these can be rented or purchased at a hardware, rental yard or home care store). Always turn the handle of the snake in the same direction when removing it as you did when inserting it. This will prevent matter attached to the snake from coming loose before the snake is removed.

### Helpful Hints:

- If a plunger or snake can partially open a drain, often hot water (no hotter than 140 degrees for plastic pipe) will finish the job. If not, open the trap, putting a bucket or pan under it to catch the water. A piece of wire may help dislodge the blockage. The snake can also be run at this point.
- Although it is sold commercially as a drain cleaner, never use caustic soda to open a drain. It will combine with the grease from soap or food wastes to form an insoluble compound.
- Potash lye or caustic potash may help finish opening a drain, but never use them on a completely stopped up drain. They may take as long as overnight to work, and if you have opened the trap, the chemicals would be a hazard.
- To avoid stopped up drains, never pour grease into a drain or toilet. Ordinary washing soda (not baking soda) added to a drain on a regular basis will help keep it clear of grease from soap and cooking utensils. Run hot water through the drain, turn off the water, add 3 tablespoons of washing soda and follow it with just enough hot water to wash it down the drain opening. Let it set for 15 minutes and run more hot water.

CAUTION: Because potash lye and caustic potash are highly corrosive, always pour them slowly into the drain to keep them from splattering. Never pour water into the chemicals. Wear old clothes, rubber gloves and goggles or safety glasses. Never use a plunger after chemicals have been added to a drain, as the water may splash and cause an injury or damage nearby surfaces. Always follow label directions.

## Drywall (Walls and Ceilings)

The interior walls of your home have been constructed of gypsum wallboard (drywall). Slight imperfections such as shrinkage, settlement cracks, a slight lifting of baseboards, nail pops and/or seam lines do appear during the drying and settling process of your home. This is a normal condition of the drywall construction.

Also, please note that "critical lighting," which is artificial or natural lighting that strikes the glossy drywall surface at an oblique angle, will accentuate even the slightest surface variations. Often additional patching, painting or other applications cannot improve this condition.

No attempt should be made to repair these occurrences in the drywall until your home has gone through the drying and settling period. This is usually after 11 months.



Spinell Homes will, one-time during the one-year warranty period, repair drywall cracks. It is to your benefit to wait until your 11th month inspection to note these cracks for repair. Spinell will re-paint those repairs with the original paint color. We cannot guarantee the color will match.

## **Electrical**

Your electrical system was created from approved components, installed to rigid specifications and inspected by the local building department.

The wiring of your new home meets the code requirements and safety standards for the normal use of electrical appliances. Ordinarily, small appliances, which require your personal attendance for their operations, may be plugged into any electrical receptacle without fear of overloading a circuit. However, the use of larger appliances, or the use of too many appliances on the same circuit, may cause an overload of the circuit and trip a breaker.

The wiring and equipment in your home are protected by circuit breakers. They are the safety valves of your home's electrical system. The circuit breaker panel may be located on an outside wall of your home near the electric meter, usually in the utility room or in the garage.

### **Master Circuit Breaker**

Your home has a main breaker that is located at the meter base and a circuit breaker panel for the circuits in your home. The main breaker is generally located outside at the rear or side elevation of the house in the meter base. When the master circuit breaker is tripped, the electricity to the entire home is shut off.

### **Electrical Outlets**

Three-holed grounded receptacles are standard in your home. The receptacle will accept normal, two prong, plugs. Please note that wall switches may control some outlets.

### **Ground Fault Interrupter (GFI) Electrical Outlets**

These are special circuit breakers that are designed to break the flow of electricity in the event of a short circuit and prevent dangerous electrical shock. These electrical safety devices are installed in bathrooms and other selected areas. They may be tripped by an electrical short – as well as moisture – and should be checked during an electrical failure.

### **GFI Troubleshooting**

If any receptacle on a GFI circuit collects any moisture, as it may after a rain or during a period of high humidity, the receptacle may "trip" and automatically shut off all power. If this happens, the power will remain off until the receptacle dries and is reset by you. The receptacle cannot be reset until it dries.

### **Circuit Breakers**

First switching the breaker to FULL OFF and then back to FULL ON may reset circuit breakers. It is uncommon for circuit breakers to trip.

### **Arc Circuit Breakers**

Arc Circuit Breakers are installed in the main electrical panel to control bedroom circuits. They are very sensitive and will trip if they sense any short (or "arc") caused by a faulty small appliance or fixture.



## Transfer Switch

Your transfer switch is designed for switching from utility power to generator power. Installed is a 100-amp transfer switch. Installation of a cord can be done to match your generator. Caution should be used on the amount of current produced by the generator.

A manual load shed can be done by turning breakers that are not needed to the OFF position.

Approximate loads for lighting and appliances can be given to you upon request.

When a power outage occurs:

- Start the generator
- Turn the transfer switch to the "OFF" (center) position
- Plug in the cord from the generator to the transfer switch
- Turn off all light switches and appliances
- Place the transfer switch to the generator (down) position
- Your power source is now ready to use

If you notice any problems while using your generator, turn it off and call an electrician.

## Power Failures

In the event of a loss of electrical power in your home, follow these steps:

- Step 1: If the power loss is in just one area of your home, chances are an individual circuit breaker has turned off. Unplug any appliances in the area that are without power and turn other appliances off as well. Check the circuit breaker and, if necessary, reset it. Plug your appliances back in. If the circuit breaker fails repeatedly, you have either a short circuit in one of your appliances or a short circuit in the electrical system in your home. DO NOT ATTEMPT FURTHER REPAIR. Call a licensed electrician or Spinell Homes if your home is still covered under the one-year warranty.
- Step 2: If electrical power is lost throughout your home, first check to see if your neighbors are without power. If the outage is neighborhood wide, contact the electric company. If just your home's power is out, check the master circuit breaker. If the master circuit breaker is tripped, reset it. To reset, turn all breakers off, turn the master breaker on, and then turn the other breakers on one by one.
- Step 3: If the master circuit breaker trips repeatedly, refer the problem to a licensed electrician.

## Electrical Troubleshooting

If electrical outlets won't work, make certain the circuit breaker has not been tripped. If so, reset it. If not, make sure the outlet is not one controlled by a wall switch that is in the OFF position.

If individual ceiling lights or lamps do not come on, check the bulb in another fixture. If the bulb is good, check the circuit breaker to see if it is tripped and reset if necessary. Also, check for wall switches that may be turned OFF.

If an outlet sparks when plugged into, be certain the appliance is OFF before plugging in. If it still sparks, try another outlet. If you get sparks from a second outlet, the problem is usually the appliance cord. If you do not get sparks, have the receptacle inspected. Please note that sparks from wall switches should be checked by an electrician.

If a wall switch or receptacle is hot to the touch, immediately trip the circuit breaker serving that fixture and contact an electrician.

### **Helpful Hint:**

- Spinell Homes highly recommends that you consult a licensed electrician to make any changes or additions to your electrical system. A permit may be required.

CAUTION: Respect your electrical system. Do not insert metal objects into wall outlets. Use child safety covers (available at grocery and hardware stores) for outlets that are accessible to small children.

### **Exterior Lights**

The exterior lights on your home can have antique brass, polished brass or painted finishes.

### **Helpful Hint:**

- Replace the light bulbs with the same wattage bulb as those that were originally installed in the fixture.
- Protect the brass finish with a wax or protectant product to avoid corrosion and discoloration.
- Replacement globes can be purchased at home centers, lighting and hardware stores.
- Brass fixtures will tarnish in time and are not warranted by Spinell Homes.

### **Exterior Siding**

The exterior siding which protects your home from elements can be comprised of Texture 1-11 (T-1-11), Oriented Strand Board (OSB) and Lap Siding, in any combination.

### **Helpful Hint:**

- Avoid sprinklers that splash water on the siding or the exterior product.
- Water from roofs and gutters should be diverted away from siding or exterior product.
- Avoid direct contact of shrubs, trees and plants to the home.
- When landscaping, maintain a minimum of 4-inch ground-to-siding clearance around the home.
- Keep the painted surface free of mold, mildew and algae.
- Repaint the exterior product before the paint fails.

### **Fencing**

If you elect to add a fence to your property, employ a professional fencing contractor. In this regard, it is your responsibility to locate the property lines and have the fencing installed according to local building codes and your Conditions, Covenants and Restrictions or your Homeowner's Association. Before fencing is installed, refer any questions to local building authorities and your Homeowner's Association for approval. Check with your Homeowner's Association before changing the fencing in any way.

The fencing around your home must be of the type and in the location mandated by local ordinances and/or approved landscaping plans. It will need regular maintenance. Do not allow sprinklers to spray fences and other exterior surfaces.

Fencing made of wood, usually cedar posts, is an attractive and popular choice. The natural finish of wood fencing can be preserved by regular applications of a deck or wood sealer. If your wood fence is painted, re-paint as necessary.

Wrought iron fencing is subject to rusting if it is not maintained properly. Use touch up paint on nicks and scratches every couple of months or as needed. Areas with obvious rust should be sanded and repainted with water-resistant primer and paint immediately. Repaint every one or two years. The frequency of maintenance depends on the exposure to sunlight and dampness.

Do not let water stand around fence posts.





## Fiberglass Tubs and Shower Bases

If fiberglass tubs and shower bases are installed in your Spinell home here are some ways to keep them looking like new.

### Helpful Hints:

- Avoid using abrasive cleaners that will scratch the surface.
- For normal cleaning, use warm water and liquid detergent, such as Dow, Lysol or Mr. Clean bathroom cleaners, with sponge, nylon, polyethylene or cotton cleaning pads. Do not use abrasive cleaners, scouring pads, steel wool or scrapers.
- For an extra sparkle – against mild grime, smear the entire surface area with a water paste using baking soda, such as Arm & Hammer. Allow effervescing for a few hours and rinse with warm water.
- For stubborn stains, use a non-abrasive cleaner, such as Spic & Span. Sponge the area with the cleaner, allow it to stand for an hour and rinse with warm water.
- For extra deep stains, use hydrogen peroxide bleach from your local drug store, soaked onto white cotton rags and applied to the deep dark stains throughout. Note: Wear rubber gloves and avoid contact with eyes, skin, clothing, rugs and furnishings.
- Avoid dropping objects on fiberglass surfaces or striking the surfaces with sharp objects; chipping or cracking could result.
- For heavy soap deposits, use a regular solution from your local drug store, and apply with sponge until soap disappears. Afterward, rinse thoroughly with warm water.
- For scratches and dull areas, rub vigorously with automotive rubbing compound and a white cotton rag. Then buff vigorously with a carnauba based wax. If done twice per year, this will maintain a lustrous finish after cleaning as above.

## Fireplaces

### Wood Burning

You may have a wood-burning fireplace installed in your home. Some wood burning fireplaces are for ambiance, and warmth, others are designed to be a supplemental or backup source of heat for your home. Before you start your first fire, be sure to carefully read the care and operations manual provided by the installer. Failure to follow these suggestions may result in hazardous operation or fireplace malfunction, creating a serious potential for personal injury and/or property damage.

### Helpful Hints

- Use solid wood only for fuel. It is best to use dry and well-seasoned hardwood. DO NOT use treated wood, artificial wax base logs, charcoal, coal, trash, driftwood or woods that have been dipped in tar, pitch, creosote, etc. Wood products made with synthetic binders, such as plywood, produce abnormally high temperatures and sputtering, smoking fires.
- NEVER use gasoline, gasoline type lantern fuel, kerosene, charcoal lighter fluid or similar liquids to start or “freshen up” a fire in this fireplace. Keep all flammable liquids a safe distance from the fireplace.
- Keep the chimney damper open while any fire or smoldering embers are present. Keep the protective mesh screens closed when enjoying a fire to keep sparks and embers inside the firebox.
- Do not allow combustible furniture or decorative pillows within 36 inches of the fireplace.
- Never leave your fireplace unattended while it’s burning.

- Be careful when adding wood to an existing fire. Use fireplace tools for safe handling.
- Remember heavy logs may cause damage to the bottom refractory.
- NEVER modify your fireplace in any way.
- If your fireplace is equipped with a gas line, decorative gas log sets may be purchased and should be installed by a licensed professional in accordance with local codes.
- Always ensure that an adequate supply of replacement combustion air from the outside of the house is accessible to the fire to support normal combustion. Fireplaces consume large volumes of air during the normal combustion process.
- YOUR FIREPLACE IS NOT INTENDED TO HEAT YOUR ENTIRE HOME.
- Periodically have a qualified technician clean the chimney.

### **Direct Vent Decorative Gas Appliances**

Direct vent or gas fireplaces offer a safe, environmentally conscious alternative to a wood-burning fireplace. Gas fireplaces provide an ideal situation for homeowners with health issues, environmentalists or those who simply desire "less mess." A gas fireplace does however require some additional care and maintenance. Please be aware that direct vent gas fireplace have a curing/burn off period where odors and smoke will emit for several hours and in some cases a day or two. This curing process needs to be done with the optional blower (if installed) turned off during this time. After a few weeks of operation, the inside of the glass should be cleaned, as the curing process is a bit corrosive to the glass. Please review the user guide. Along with the suggestions above we wish to include these

### **Helpful Hints**

- No smoke or soot should be present after the curing/burn off period, a qualified professional technician should perform all adjustments.
- Do not use abrasive cleaners on the glass panels, and never attempt to clean the glass when hot.
- Use caution around the glass panel, the appliance utilizes ceramic glass which may shatter unexpectedly if struck by an object.
- High surface temperatures are present. Use caution to avoid burns or clothing ignition.
- The appliance and venting system should be inspected annually by a qualified service technician.
- Turn off gas and electrical power before servicing the appliance.
- If you smell gas immediately:
  - Extinguish any open flame.
  - Open windows.
  - Do not light any appliances.
  - Do not touch any electrical switches.
  - Do not use any phone in your building.
  - Immediately call your gas supplier from a neighbor's phone.
  - If you can't reach the gas company, call the fire department.



For maximum enjoyment of your fireplace, be sure to carefully read all information and operating instructions provided with the appliances.

## Garbage Disposal

This product is designed to dispose of normal household food waste. Inserting materials other than food waste into the disposal can cause personal injury and/or property damage. To reduce the risk of injury, do not use the sink containing the disposal for purposes other than food preparation (such as baby bathing or washing hair).

Most disposals have a reset button that works in much the same way as a circuit breaker. Should the disposal become overloaded with a substance it cannot grind, it will shut itself off. If this happens, turn the switch to OFF, remove the substance obstructing the disposal's operation, wait about three minutes, push the reset button (see your instruction manual for the location of the reset button), and turn the switch ON.

If the disposal still does not start, turn it off again and check to see if you have tripped a circuit breaker. If the circuit breaker has not interrupted the flow of current, trip the circuit breaker then turn the rotating plate in the disposal until it turns freely. Restore the current, push the reset button again and turn the disposal on.

Some disposals come with a special wrench that can be inserted in a hole in the bottom of the disposal (under the sink). Others have a two-pronged wrench that fits in the top of the circulating plate. Turning the wrench a couple of times will usually loosen the material enough so that the disposal will turn. Make sure the disposal switch is in the off position, or the unit is unplugged, before using the wrench.

### Helpful Hints:

- When grinding greasy substances, use plenty of cold water. Always use cold water when the disposal is on. Should the drain become clogged, do not put chemicals down the disposal.
- Avoid putting large amounts of fibrous material (banana peels, potato skins, celery waste or cornhusks, etc.) down your disposal.
- Do not put the following into the disposal: paints, solvents, household cleaners/chemicals or automotive fluids.
- Replace anti-splash baffle when worn to help prevent entry or ejection of material and splashing water.
- Do grind hard material such as small bones and fruit pits to clean inside the grind chamber.
- Don't turn off water or disposal until grinding is completed and only the sound of the motor and water running can be heard.
- Over time, food particles may accumulate in the grind chamber and baffle. An odor from the disposal is usually a sign of grease and food build up. This buildup can be caused by insufficient water flow during and after disposal use. To clean the disposal:
  - Turn off disposal and disconnect power supply.
  - Reach through the sink opening and clean underside of splash baffle and inside upper lip of grind chamber with scouring pad.
  - Place stopper in the sink opening and fill the sink halfway with warm water.
  - Mix ¼ cup baking soda with water. Turn disposal on and remove stopper from the sink at the same time to wash away loose particles.

CAUTION: BE ABSOLUTELY SURE THE CIRCUIT BREAKER IS OFF before inserting your hand to remove material when the disposal is stalled. Also, be absolutely sure it is off before using the wrench or a broomstick. SERIOUS INJURY MAY OCCUR. Supervise operation in the presence of children.



## Grout

Grout is the porous material you will find between your ceramic floor tiles, fireplace tiles, countertops or around tubs and showers in your Spinell home.

The grout should be inspected periodically for cracks and holes. If either is present, the area should be re-grouted or caulked. If it is not, water could cause the tiles to loosen.

Minor separation and looseness of ceramic tile grout where it is joined with other materials is inevitable. This is caused by the normal expansion and contraction of these materials. Repairs are a function of normal home maintenance.

Routine scrubbing of the grout with a 50% white vinegar and water solution will keep it clean and fresh. Strong cleaners such as Lysol can stain the grout.

## Gutter and Downspout System

The gutter and downspout system on your new home is made of aluminum with a baked on enamel finish, finished per your selection.

Gutters and downspouts should be kept free of tree limbs, leaves, balls and other obstructions that may stop the system from functioning properly and which may, in time, cause leaks.

You should make sure that all downspouts are directed away from the building to eliminate pooling at the foundation, possibly causing a leak to the foundation. Do not fix the tipout portion of the downspout in the upright position because you may inadvertently cause water to accumulate next to your foundation.

The ground at the downspout location should be landscaped, allowing water to flow away from the foundation.

Also, it is not recommended that downspouts be connected to underground drains. Blockage or breakage may occur, causing water to be discharged in the area of the foundation.

Should you have drainage pipes connected to your downspouts, be sure the pipes are unobstructed and can carry water to existing swales. Any damage to your foundation as a result of buried drainage pipes is not covered under warranty.

## Hardware

Quality hardware has been used throughout your home. Lock trim is factory treated with a clear protective coating applied to provide both durability and beauty. Optional brass hardware will gradually tarnish and take on an antique appearance.

### Helpful Hints:

- Initial care requires periodic cleaning with mild non-abrasive soap and light buffing with a soft cloth.
- If peeling, spotting or discoloration occurs, you can restore the beauty by completely removing the remaining coating and hand polishing with a suitable brass polish.
- Applying a light coat of wax and buffing with a soft cloth will renew and maintain the luster of the brass surface.
- Normal usage may loosen screws secured to the door; periodic checking and tightening is a normal part of homeowner maintenance.

## Hardwood Floors

You may have selected a prefinished parquet, strip or plank hardwood floor. Some characteristics of these products are:

- Streaks, spots and color variations
- An occasional unfilled pinworm hole
- Knots

If you selected unfinished or job-finished strip oak or parquet, there may be shade variations from piece to piece, as each piece will accept stain differently. The graining of wood will differ from piece to piece, and filled knot or wormholes may appear. These are characteristics that are prevalent in natural wood.

### Helpful Hints:

- Clean your hardwood floors frequently. Sweep the floors and mop with a soft, dry mop or cloth. Do not use water or water-based cleaners.
- Do not permit water to stand on hardwood floors.
- Do not flood hardwood floors with water. This will cause stains, warping and the destruction of the flooring. Do not permit water or other liquids to stand on hardwood flooring. Wipe up spills immediately. Do not use water-based detergents, bleach or one-step floor cleaners on hardwood floors.
- Do not drag heavy appliances or furniture across hardwood flooring. Permanent scratches in the finish may result. High-heeled shoes can dent hardwood flooring.
- Waxing and buffing hardwood floors should be done according to manufacturer's instructions for materials and procedures. Consider having this done by a professional.
- Burns from cigarettes can be difficult or impossible to remove from your hardwood floors. Small burns can be removed by sanding lightly and staining with a commercial wood stain. Apply wax after the wood stain dries. Large burns should be referred to a flooring professional.

## Heating

To ensure that your furnace keeps you nice and warm, you'll want to adhere to manufacturers' suggested procedures. Change the filter every month for the first year the furnace is in use. The cost of replacing the disposable filter is minimal. Filters can be purchased at the local hardware store.

After the first year, monitor your furnace closely and change the filter as needed. Keep the burner area free of any dirt and dust. Following these simple maintenance procedures will help keep your furnace in proper working order for many years to come.

## Keys and Locks

Most exterior hardware comes finished with a sealant. Oftentimes this sealant can wear and tarnishing will occur. To minimize this condition, a regular cleaning and clear lacquer application will prolong the look of the hardware.

Passage door hardware in any home can work loose through use. Keep a careful watch to avoid excessive play in the door knob escutcheon plate. In the event a door knob or privacy lock should become inoperative, it is usually because looseness has allowed the interior mechanism to slip out of place. Removal and re-installation of the fixture (a simple process) will usually correct the problem. Doors with key-type hardware are more complicated and usually require the services of a locksmith.

### **Helpful Hint:**

- Periodic application of powdered graphite or silicone spray to keyholes and lock mechanisms can help keep them operating smoothly.

### **Landscaping**

If required, Spinell Homes will install landscaping in the “buffer zone” of the lot, per the requirements of the recorded plat. It is the homeowner’s responsibility to water, fertilize and maintain the landscaping so that the yard will grow in properly.

Per approved Covenants, Conditions, and Restrictions, you may have a responsibility to install landscaping on your lot. The installation of such landscaping may have a governing time frame for installation. The requirements for landscaping may be outlined within the provisions of the Covenants, Conditions, and Restrictions, approved for your community.

Review the recorded plat before removing any natural vegetation from your lot. It is not uncommon for natural vegetation to be viewed as an intricate part of the landscaping for your home.

If funds have been held in escrow for landscaping at closing, these funds will not be released until the landscaping has been completed.

### **Lift Stations**

Lift stations are installed when your septic system drainfield is higher than your tank; or on a city system if any part of your home sits below the grade of the sewer line.

If you experience any sewage problems please contact A + Home Services, Inc. or Denali Sewer & Drain.

### **Lighting Fixtures**

The lighting fixtures in your home are designed for standard wattage bulbs. To avoid excessive heat and potential damage, you should not exceed 60-watt bulbs in most enclosed fixtures. Always follow the manufacturer’s wattage rating inside the fixture.

### **Marble**

The cultured marble in your home is designed to be both durable and beautiful for years to come.

Remember marble is porous and readily absorbs liquids which means it can stain. Keep your marble (floors) dry and immediately wipe away any water or mud, etc. In order to prevent staining or dirt buildup. Clean regularly with warm water and a clear, non-abrasive, non-acidic soap. If your floor becomes dull, buff it with marbling rouge (available at your home care center store). Any alcohol will remove the polish from most marble surfaces.

Use only a mild liquid cleaning agent to clean marble vanity tops or tubs. Do not use abrasive cleaners on any marble surface. Abrasive cleaners may scratch and dull the surface.

### **Overhead Garage Doors**

The overhead garage door on your new home is mounted with rollers and tension springs for easy operation. Garage doors do not seal against the elements in the same manner as other exterior doors, and may even show some light at the edges. It is not uncommon for water, snow and other small debris to enter at the edges. This is not considered a defective installation.





The door hardware does require periodic maintenance. You should oil the locking mechanism, pulley and rollers at least twice per year with a light oil or silicone spray. Due to the constant use of the garage doors, it is not uncommon for hardware to loosen over time. It is our recommendation that a periodic check and tightening of garage door hardware will greatly lengthen the life of your garage door. Do not attempt to adjust the spring tension above your garage door. This may cause serious injury.

### **Helpful Hints:**

- When locking the door, you should step down on the lock plate to line up the locking mechanism to avoid damage to the lock.
- You may want to add a weather strip to seal edges tighter against the elements (most hardware stores carry this product).
- If you add a garage door opener, make the proper adjustment for tension and pressure.
- If you add a garage door opener, consider having it installed by the same contractor who installed your garage door. If you select another contractor, it may affect the garage door's warranty.

### **Painting (Interior)**

Your walls and ceiling have been painted with a quality interior latex paint. The standard paint color is "Parisian Taupe" Behr Brand Paint. "Parisian Taupe" Behr Brand Paint on the walls and ceilings, "Standard White" Rodda Paint on the trim. \*Note paint brand colors to be matched to the contractor's current supplier.

Touch up paint for your interior walls and ceilings was provided to you at the DOA. This paint should be used only on these surfaces – not on woodwork or doors, unless otherwise noted.

Also, if you elect to wallpaper after your first year, you must prepare all painted surfaces for wallpapering with an appropriate sizing material. This product can be purchased at any wallpaper, paint or hardware stores. Follow instructions on the container.

Failure to prepare your walls could result in the wallpaper not adhering to the surface – or the paper pulling the paint or the drywall surface material off the wall.

### **Painting (Exterior)**

High quality oil-based paint, per your selection has been used on the exterior surfaces of your Spinell home.

Depending on climate exposure, some paints will fade – particularly dark colors, more than others will fade.

Please be aware that all oil-based paint is subject to yellowing. The action of the sun usually minimizes yellowing on exterior surfaces. Yellowing is caused by the natural drying and aging of the paint and by exposure to certain chemicals. White and light colors are more subject to yellowing than darker colors. Yellowing of oil-based paints is unavoidable in some areas. Because yellowing tends to take place over time and relatively evenly on given surfaces, it may not be noticeable until you use touch-up paint. Your paint store can assist you in selecting a touch-up paint that will be a close match for your yellowed paint.

### **Plumbing System and Fixtures**

A licensed plumbing contractor has installed the plumbing system and fixtures in your new home. Each phase of construction has been inspected by Spinell representatives and has met all applicable requirements and plumbing standards in this area. Including the requirements for water-saving features on residential plumbing fixtures.

Your plumbing should serve you well for many years if properly cared for. To avoid major costly repairs, promptly take care of minor problems as soon as they occur.

## **Faucets/Fixtures**

The plumbing system and fixtures in your Spinell home may be covered with polished brass, chromium or a combination of the two. The finishes are not covered by the Spinell Homes Warranty and Standards Agreement but may be covered by the manufacturer's warranty. These surfaces are resistant to water corrosion. However, the brass and chromium plating materials used are relatively soft, which means abrasive cleaners, scouring pads and tools can easily scratch them.

### **Helpful Hints:**

- Clean your plumbing fixtures with warm soapy water and a soft cloth or sponge.
- Rinse with clear water and wipe dry to prevent spotting and soap buildup.
- If water is permitted to accumulate and stand at the base of your fixtures, corrosion and tarnishing can result, always wipe the area dry.
- Avoid excessive force when you turn your faucets on and off. The seals in the faucets can be damaged in a short time. Because they have moving parts, faucets are more likely than plumbing with no moving parts to require repair from time to time.

## **Aerators**

To maintain your faucets, you will need to clean the aerators by soaking them in undiluted vinegar every three to four months. This attachment to the faucets allows air to the water to reduce splashing and use less water.

## **Faucet leaks**

If a faucet leaks, usually you can fix it by replacing the washer. Be sure to turn off the water at the shut-off valve before repairing a faucet.

## **Exterior Faucets**

Be sure to remove any garden hoses from the exterior sillcocks and turn the faucet off prior to temperatures falling below 32 degrees. Failure to do so will cause damage to the frost-proof type sillcock, as the frozen water will be forced back into the faucet as it expands.

## **Leaking Pipes**

The copper and PVC pipes installed in your home should last the lifetime of the house. If your washing machine, dishwasher or other water using appliances seem to be leaking, check the trap to see that the drain is not clogged.

## **Preventing Frozen Water Pipes**

These procedures are especially important if you should be going out of town during cold weather:

- Never turn the thermostat below 60 degrees.
- Ask a friend or neighbor to check your home at least once per day to make certain the furnace is working properly.
- Never leave your garage door open for extended periods of time in cold weather.

### **To Drain Water Lines**

- Step 1: Turn sink, vanity faucets and shower heads on to about half flow (both hot and cold water).
- Step 2: Shut off the main water valve.



- Step 3: Leave all faucets on so that the lines are relieved of pressure, then flush all toilets.

## **Turning the Water Back On**

- Step 1: Turn the water on at the main water valve. Allow water to run through faucets and shower heads for a couple of minutes to get the air out of the lines. Shut off all faucets. Toilets should fill up.
- Step 2: If you have a toilet, faucet or showerhead that does not have water coming through, you could have a frozen line. A plumber should be called as soon as possible. If left unattended, broken pipes could result.

In extremely cold conditions, vents can condense and the moisture can freeze on the inside of the pipe. If the temperatures stay low for a long time, the ice can eventually reach all the way across the pipe and seal the vent. This condition can cause the traps to siphon and let odors into the house through the drain lines. If a trap loses its water seal simply run water down the drain for a few seconds. Warmer temperatures melt the frost and eliminate this condition.

## **Resilient Floor Covering/Vinyl Flooring**

The resilient floor covering used in your new home is a no-wax flooring. You may experience conditions with your new floors, such as raised nail heads, tiles lifting or seams separating. Movement of the floor joists due to shrinkage and deflection causes raised nail heads. Separation at the seams is caused by shrinkage, and the lifting of a tile is sometimes caused by failure of the adhesive material in a particular area.

### **Helpful Hints:**

- Asphalt compounds tracked from drives can permanently stain resilient flooring.
- Mats placed at doors will minimize this.
- Some rubber-backed mats can cause floors to discolor in time.
- Resilient flooring includes linoleum, asphalt, vinyl and rubber. Care for them daily by removing loose dirt with a broom, dust mop or vacuum. Wipe up spills immediately. If a spot dries, use a damp sponge, cloth or mop. Occasionally damp mop the floors between cleanings. When floors are dull and cannot be refurbished by mopping, clean them thoroughly with a good detergent.
- Use floor protectors on legs of furniture to minimize scratches and indentations.
- High heels (especially stiletto) will damage all resilient and sheet vinyl floors. Avoid this damage by removing shoes.
- Vinyl floors are particularly subject to damage resulting from the installation and removal of appliances. It is recommended that you employ professionals when you encounter such tasks. If you choose to move appliances yourself, consider purchasing a 1/8 inch x 4x8 sheet of Masonite and utilizing it as a moving aid.

## **Roofs**

Limit walking on your roof. The weight and movement will have a tendency to loosen and break the integrity of the roofing material that can in turn result in leakage. Never attempt to walk on the roof of your home when shingles are wet because they are extremely slippery.

After severe weather storms, a visual inspection of the roof for damages is called for. Notify your homeowners insurance company if damage is noted.

When a leak is noticed try to detect the exact location; this will greatly simplify locating the areas that need repaired when the roof is dry.

Ice build up may develop in the eaves during extended periods of cold and snow. Damage that occurs as a result of this is normally covered by your homeowners insurance, as it is an unavoidable act of nature. It may be helpful to shovel your roof to help alleviate ice build up and leaking above the ice shield under your shingles.

## **Roof Trusses**

Roof truss uplift is a common problem that occurs as temperatures drop. Uplift is caused by the expansion of the top cord of your roof truss. In a heavily insulated attic, the bottom chord of the truss is completely covered with insulation. This keeps the bottom chord warm, causing it to dry out and shorten in length. The top chord of the truss however, is surrounded by colder attic air; it will not dry out and shrink. It may even absorb moisture and get longer. This shrinking on the bottom and expanding on the top causes the truss to bow upward.

Although preventative measures are taken to minimize damage, evidence of this uplift will appear in the form of hairline cracks in the drywall, usually where the wall meets the ceiling. Where gaps are small, they will probably disappear during the summer and not reappear. Spinell Homes will, one-time during the one-year warranty period, repair drywall cracks.

## **Septic Systems**

Depending on your individual septic design there may be different requirements for the maintenance of septic systems.

Standard gravity-feed septic systems should be pumped yearly.

If your home has a bottomless sand filter you must check for 3 pounds of pressure on the air compressor line. This must be done on a daily basis.

### **Helpful hints:**

- Do pump regularly to avoid system failure.
- Do space your showers, laundry loads and dishwasher usage. Run full machine loads.
- Do keep standpipes properly capped. Mark their locations if cut low or flush with the ground.
- Do fix leaking faucets and toilets and use water-saving devices.
- Don't pour grease down your drains. Wipe out pans and skillets with paper towels before washing.
- Don't put anything other than toilet paper or wastewater down your toilets or drains.
- Don't use chemical drain cleaners, chlorine bleach or automatic toilet bowl cleaners, they destroy the natural bacterial action of the septic system.
- Don't plant anything other than grass over your drainfield; avoid compacting the leachfield by keeping foot and vehicle traffic to a minimum.
- Don't use your garbage disposal. If you must use it, pump yearly.
- Don't ignore the warning signs that your septic may be failing.



- If you experience any problems with your septic system such as slow drains, poorly flushing toilets or sewage coming out of the standpipes, please contact A + Home Services, Inc., an authorized factory repair center for Anchorage Tank.

## **Shower Enclosures**

To clean shower enclosures, liquid Comet or its equivalent will do a good job. It is also recommended that a squeegee be used on the glass after every shower. For deposits of hard water minerals, use a commercial glass cleaner containing ammonia or 1 tablespoon of household ammonia in a quart of water.

CAUTION: Be sure to read the caution note on the label before using ammonia. Never use steel wool or scouring pads on the metal portion of shower enclosures. It will remove the protective finish applied by the manufacturer and cause unsightly scratches.

## **Smoke Detectors/Carbon Dioxide**

Your Spinell home has a smoke detector in every bedroom and a smoke/carbon dioxide detector is centrally located on each floor. Your smoke/carbon dioxide detectors are all interconnected, so if one detector alarm sounds – all alarms will sound. Smoke from kitchen cooking as well as water vapor from bathroom showers can set off the smoke detectors in your home. This is normal.

Your smoke/carbon dioxide detectors are all wired into the home's electrical system. In addition, your smoke detectors are equipped with a battery back-up system. So if the electrical power fails for any reason, your smoke/carbon dioxide detectors will still operate properly.

It's recommended that you test your smoke detectors once a month to make sure they're operating properly, and to vacuum lint and dust out of and off the covers. If you ever find that your smoke detectors are not working properly, take remedial steps immediately. Please call Spinell Homes if you have questions regarding your smoke detectors.

The batteries in your smoke/carbon dioxide detectors should be replaced every year. Choose a replacement date that will be easy to remember – like New Year's Day.

## **Sump Pumps**

If a substantial amount of water accumulates in the crawl space, a home may require a sump pump. Generally a sump pump is required, when water stands in the crawl space at a depth which covers the footings. If your home is equipped with a sump pump, familiarize yourself with the manufacturer's suggested uses.

Always disconnect the pump and controls from the power source before handling or making any adjustments. Always wear rubber boots when there is water on the floor and you must unplug the pump.

Be sure that the pump is connected only to a proper GFI outlet. Beware of the risk of electrical shock.

For proper automatic operation, make sure the pump power cord is plugged in according to manufactures' suggestions.

## **Helpful Hints:**

If the pump does not run or just hums:

- The water level in the sump may be too low to activate automatic float or diaphragm switch.
- The pump and/or switch cord plug may not be making contact in the receptacle.
- If the pump is using the series (piggyback) cord plug, the two plugs may not be plugged tightly together.
- The float may be stuck. Be sure the float operates freely in the basin.



- The motor winding may be open, if that is the case, take the unit to an authorized service center.

If the pump runs but does not deliver water:

- Check valve may be clogged.
- Pump may be air locked. Start and stop several times by plugging and unplugging cord. Check vent hole in pump case for plugging.
- Pump head may be too high. Pump cannot deliver water over 25-foot vertical lift. Horizontal distance does not affect pumping, except for friction loss through the pipe.
- Inlet in pump base may be clogged. Remove pump and clean out.
- Impeller or volute openings may be plugged or partially plugged. Remove pump and clean out.

Pump runs and pumps out sump but does not stop:

- Float is stuck up in position. Be sure float is not hung up and operates freely in basin.
- Switch contacts may be stuck, replace switch. Pump runs but delivers only small amount of water:
- Pump may be air locked. Start and stop several times by plugging and unplugging cord. Check vent hole in pump case for plugging.
- Pump head may be too high. Pump cannot deliver water over 25-foot vertical lift. Horizontal distance does not affect pumping, except loss due to friction through the discharge pipe.
- Inlet in pump base may be clogged. Remove pump and clean out openings.
- Impeller or volute openings may be plugged or partially plugged. Remove pump and clean out.
- Pump impeller may be partially clogged causing motor to run slow, resulting in motor overload. Clear impeller.

Fuse blows or circuit breaker trips when pump starts:

- Inlet in pump base may be clogged. Remove pump and clean out openings.
- Impeller or volute openings may be plugged or partially plugged.
- Pump impeller may be partially clogged causing the motor to run slow, resulting in motor overload. Clear impeller.
- Fuse size or circuit breaker is too small.
- Defective motor stator: return to an authorized service center for verification.

Motor runs for short time then stops. Starts again after a short period:

- Indicates tripping overload caused by above symptoms.

In applications where the pump may sit idle for months at a time, it is recommended that the pump be cycled every few months to ensure the pumping system is working properly when needed.

Always disconnect the pump from the power source before handling or making any adjustments. To protect the integrity of the manufacturers' warranty, service should only be



performed by an authorized service center. Clean pump yearly to maintain the system properly failing to do so may cause the system to fail at a faster rate.

### **Telephone Wiring**

An electrical professional installs telephone lines throughout your house. If you encounter static on your telephone lines, the most likely cause is the exterior underground provided by the local telephone company.

If you encounter difficulties, proceed as follows:

- Step 1: Unplug all phones and test each phone (line) individually.
- Step 2: Call your phone company and request troubleshooting assistance. They will respond to your request and either remedy the problem or indicate that your interior installation may be the cause of difficulty.
- Step 3: If there is an indication that the trouble is of interior origin, call Spinell Homes for assistance.

Only one phone line will be operational when you take occupancy of your home. To activate a second or third (fax) line, you will have to pay a service fee to your phone company.

### **Television Cable (Cable TV)**

The utility provider provides cable. Please contact them directly if your service is faulty or requires repair.

### **Toilets**

National plumbing codes require water-saver toilets. Water-saver toilets do not have the same flushing capacity that you may be accustomed to, due to their design to use less water. Never flush hair, grease, lint, diapers, rubbish, etc. down the toilet drain. These wastes will clog drains and sewer lines.

### **Toilet Cleaning**

Many commercial products are available for toilet cleaning. Use them as directed, do not mix them or use them with household bleach or any other cleaning products. Never use toilet-cleaning products to clean anything but your toilets.

### **Toilet Leaks**

If the water chamber seems to be leaking, the dripping may be coming from condensation on the outside of the toilet tank. If this is a problem, you may want to use a cloth tank cover. If water leaks into the bowl through the overflow pipe, try bending the rod that holds the float so that the float is closer to the bottom of the tank. Flush the toilet, and if it still leaks, you will probably need to have the inlet valve washer replaced.

If the water trickles into the bowl but is not coming through the overflow pipe, it is coming through the flush ball valve. The rods between the ball valve and the flushing handle may need aligning so that the ball drops straight down after the handle has been pushed. Water will leak through into the bowl if the ball valve is worn or if there is dirt or rust in the ball or ball seat. If the latter, remove dirt and rust. If the ball is worn, turn off the water, unscrew the ball and replace it with a new one.

### **Stopped-Up Toilet**

If a toilet becomes clogged, first use a plunger. Be sure the rubber cup covers the opening and that the water comes up well over the cup edge. Working the plunger up and down rhythmically 10 or 20 times in succession will build up pressure in the pipe and be more



effective than sporadic separate plunges.

If the plunger is unsuccessful, use a coil spring auger (can be rented or purchased at a home care store or rental yard). Insert the auger so that the point goes up into the trap. Turning the auger's handle will break up the blockage or catch it so it can be removed.

Spinell Homes and our plumbing trade contractor cannot be held responsible for stopped-up toilets.

## **Water Heater**

Your water heater is covered by a warranty from its manufacturer. Please read the operating instructions that the manufacturer provides. In the event of a leak in your water heater, close the shut off valve at the top of the water heater and turn off the pilot light. Call the manufacturer listed on the front of the water heater to request service.

All hot water heaters, whether gas or electric, have a control mechanism to govern water temperature. For electric heaters the dial setting should be set at about 145 degrees. Set the gas heater on NORMAL. Do not store anything near the heater that will block airflow and create a fire hazard.

Your water heater should be drained and flushed according to the manufacturer's suggestions. This simple procedure will remove accumulated silt and debris so that the water heater is efficient and has a long life.

CAUTION: Excessively hot water can be dangerous. First-degree burns may occur after only three seconds of contact with water at 140 degrees Fahrenheit. Monitor the temperature of the hot water in your home and make adjustments if necessary. The water temperature can be adjusted on the control panel of your water heater. Adjust the temperature so that comfortably warm water is delivered. This will avoid scalding and reduce energy costs.

## **Wells**

If you have a well, there will be buried wires from your home to the well site to power the water pump. These wires are buried approximately 2 feet below the grade. It is important to be careful not to disturb these wires. Be cautious when planting trees or shrubs, installing fencing, etc.

The gallons per minute requirement for wells does not take into consideration the amount of water that is needed to water a large lawn. Depending on your well's capacity you may not have enough water to supply the needs of your home while watering landscaping.

## **Whirlpool Tubs**

Your whirlpool tub has been designed to give you years of satisfying relief from aches and the cares of the day. When the whirlpool system is activated, water is drawn from the tub through the suction line to the pump, where it is pressurized and discharged back into the tub. Induction of air into the water stream creates the turbulence and is controlled by the air control knob on the side of the tub.

### **Helpful Hints:**

- Never operate the pump without sufficient water.
- Consult a physician before using your whirlpool tub if you are pregnant, suffer from heart disease, have high blood pressure or diabetes.
- Excessive long hair may catch in the water returns.
- Avoid use of bath oils and bubble bath powders and liquids—they can make your whirlpool tub difficult to clean and maintain.
- The timer was placed out of reach by design, to prevent injury.
- Draw your bath at least 1 inch above the jets and do not exceed 104 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Clean and disinfect the system every one to two months, depending on usage. Fill tub to operating

level with lukewarm water; add one cup of liquid chlorine bleach. Turn the system on for 10 – 15 minutes, drain and wipe away.

Never use abrasive cleaners on your whirlpool tub; use auto wax to help seal and preserve the tub surface.

### **Windows and Sliding Glass Doors**

The windows and sliding glass doors used by Spinell Homes are selected due to our high efficiency standards. Windows, of course, are a source of heat loss and you may feel cold radiating from a properly installed window.

Due to the fact that you live in a modern, energy-efficient home, you may experience ice buildup on windows when there is a combination of low temperatures and high humidity. This is a common occurrence, and does not necessarily indicate a defect in the window or its installation. If you are experiencing an extreme ice buildup on your windows, you should definitely investigate the humidity level in your home. Water damage due to over humidification is excluded from your one-year warranty coverage. Raise blinds off window sills for proper ventilation to help prevent this from happening.

If you find that you have an actual draft from a door or window, please contact Spinell Homes and we will investigate the problem and take corrective action if required. Please note that some drafts are inevitable.

During wind-driven rainstorms it is highly possible for moisture to penetrate the window seal and enter your home. Water damage due to wind-driven rain is excluded from your one-year warranty coverage.

#### **Helpful Hints:**

- Keep all windowsill channels and sliding glass door tracks free of dirt and particles for proper seal and operation. Use your vacuum's crevice attachment to remove any dirt in your sills. In the event you feel a draft from your sliding glass door or window(s) make sure to check the track for buildup of dirt prior to requested warranty service.
- To ensure proper drainage, you should also periodically check the weep holes in the windows and doors to see that they are free of dirt.

CAUTION: You will damage the finish or sealed glass unit if you use solvents, petroleum products or caustic chemicals, such as acetone, or paint thinner, to clean window or door frames. This damage is not covered by your warranty.

### **Wood Trim (Interior)**

Like other organic materials, wood is affected by heat, cold and extreme humidity, and therefore may contract or expand with weather changes. As a result, minor shrinkage and swelling is unavoidable.

The primary areas that may be affected include doors, baseboards, wood floors, handrails, fireplace mantles, paneling and shelving. Slight cracks around doorways, arches, windows, joints in door casings and nail pops around baseboards may appear.

Although it is impossible to completely alleviate the problem, keeping the house at an even temperature is an excellent precautionary measure.

When cleaning any wood trim, make sure to use only a clean dry dust cloth. Use of water or chemical cleaners may affect some finishes.

