

Smith Family HOMES



Homebuyer Guide

Welcome

Congratulations on your purchase of a new home from Smith Family Homes. We share your excitement about your new residence and look forward to working with you as we build your new home.

Smith Family Homes designed this Homeowner Guide to assist you during and after the purchase of your home. The information presented here will answer many questions and prepare you for each step of the new home experience, making this exciting time easier.

In addition to guiding you through the process of purchasing and building, this guide provides you with maintenance information and a description of our limited warranty program, component by component. We recommend that you take time to review this material thoroughly.

Please bring this guide to all scheduled meetings. As we progress, you will add items to it. When complete, your guide will provide a useful record of information about your new home.

If you need clarification or additional details about any topic discussed, please give us a call. We are delighted to welcome you as part of the Smith Family Homes family and are always ready to serve you.

Sincerely,
The Smith Family Homes Team

Introduction

These pages provide a brief overview of the steps in the new home process. The chapters that follow detail those steps and include checklists, agendas, and other materials designed to guide you through the various stages and explain our responsibilities as well as yours. *If at any time you have a question about any details, please contact us for assistance.*

What Happens Next?

Purchasing a new home is an exciting experience. The process is also complex, with many details to be decided and arranged. While Smith Family Home is building your new home, you participate by taking care of several important aspects of your purchase.

Building a new home is an investment of your money, your emotions, and your time. Many of the tasks involved will require your attention during regular business hours, Monday through Friday, usually between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

The chronological list that follows outlines the events that typically take place in the purchase of a new home and provides an overview of the events that will require your time and attention. Where time frames are specified, you need to observe them in order for us to deliver your home on schedule.

Smith Family Home hosts several planned meetings with each home buyer. Written agendas similar to the samples shown in this guide assist us in being thorough and efficient. These agendas also provide a convenient place to note items for follow up action. We suggest that you store your copy of each meeting agenda in the appropriate section of this guide for quick and easy reference.

Introduction

Chapter 1 - Purchasing Your Home

The purchase agreement and various addenda constitute the legal understanding regarding the purchase of your new home. Please read the purchase agreement and all attachments carefully.

Chapter 2 - Arranging for Your Loan

Once you have signed the purchase agreement, finalizing the details for financing is next. To assist you, we may provide you with a list of lenders appropriate for your specific financial situation. Chapter 2, Arranging for Your Loan, contains hints and information on the loan process

Chapter 3 - New Home Selections

New Home Selections, Chapter 3 of this guide, will assist you in the exciting process of personalizing your new home with your selections.

Chapter 4 - Construction of Your Home

Several tasks need to be completed prior to the start of construction. Some of these are our job (for instance, permitting, schedules, ordering materials) and some are yours (financing and selections). Near the beginning of construction, we will offer to meet with you at a Preconstruction Orientation to review plans and specifications one final time. We also invite you to a Pre-Drywall Orientation to view your new home as we complete the rough mechanical stage, just before or after insulation is installed. Please read Chapter 4, Construction of Your Home, for guidelines on safety and construction site protocols, and quality.

Chapter 5 - Homeowner Orientation

The homeowner orientation has two purposes. The first is to demonstrate the features of your new home and discuss applicable maintenance and warranty details. Equally important, we want to confirm that we have delivered your new home at the quality level described in our documents and shown in our model homes and with all your selections correctly installed. For detailed information, please review Chapter 5, Homeowner Orientation.

Chapter 6 - Closing on Your Home

Closing on Your Home, Chapter 6 of this guide describes the documents you will sign and other important details about the closing process. We have included reminders to assist you in preparing for closing and move-in.

Chapter 7 - Caring for Your Home

Many of your responsibilities as a homeowner and Smith Family Home's responsibilities under the terms of our limited warranty are discussed in Caring for Your Home, Chapter 7. Begin now to become familiar with the home maintenance you should provide and our warranty service commitment to you.

Your Feedback and Referrals

Our desire to maintain open communication with you extends through the buying process and after your move-in. In an effort to improve the product and service we provide, we welcome your comments on how we've performed. We survey our customers several times during and after the home buying and building experience. Our goal is to build the best home and the best customer relationship possible. Your feedback helps us reach that goal.

As time passes, if your housing needs change, we are ready at any time to build you another home. We also appreciate your referrals. Our office is always happy to provide you with information about where we are currently building and the products we offer.

Who's Who?

Two-way communication is vital to a mutually satisfactory relationship. Understanding what is happening and knowing whom to contact can smooth the home-buying process. We believe that our responsibilities include establishing clear lines of communication. To that end, we have company-wide practices regarding phone and email communications which we would like to share with you:

- We strive to respond to voice mail, text, and email communications within one business day. If a question requires input from experts outside of our company (such as a trade contractor or supplier) we will let you know the expected time frame for a final answer. Our goal is to contact you on time even if it is to say we still need more time.
- You are most likely to reach our company personnel quickly by communicating during normal business hours. Outside of these hours, please allow more time for a response.
- If you have not received an answer or at least an acknowledgment from the staff member you contacted within one business day please alert us to this situation; we realize technology is imperfect and messages can be missed.
- We understand that you are anxious to get answers to your questions. However, contacting multiple staff members or even the same staff member multiple times in a short period is unlikely to produce answers any quicker and in fact may have the opposite effect. Duplicated efforts are often inefficient and can result in adding to confusion.
- If you have contacted someone whose expertise or authority does not extend to your question, he or she will direct your query to the correct individual or department and let you know that this has occurred. We are all here to help you, even if that means simply communicating internally on your behalf.

The professionals within our company that you may be communicating with throughout the design, build, and ownership periods are as follows:

- Customer Experience Agent
- Interior Designer/Decorator
- Project Manager
- Warranty Manager



Chapter I

Purchasing Your Home

You will use several standard forms when you buy your new home. These include the purchase agreement and several exhibits. The purchase agreement becomes binding only when all parties have signed all forms and attachments. If you are new to the United States, Smith Family Home welcomes you and understands that you may be unfamiliar with our business procedures and traditions. We will gladly discuss any questions you may have about the U.S. business practices we will be following.

Chapter I - Purchasing Your Home

Purchase Agreement

The purchase agreement is the legal document that represents your decision to purchase a home. It describes your home (both a legal description and the street address), financing information, homeowner association information, if applicable, and additional legal provisions. We recommend that you read these documents carefully. In particular, please take note of the topics listed on our Sales Agreement Agenda which we will discuss with you prior to signing the purchase agreement.

Purchase Agreement - *Meeting Details*

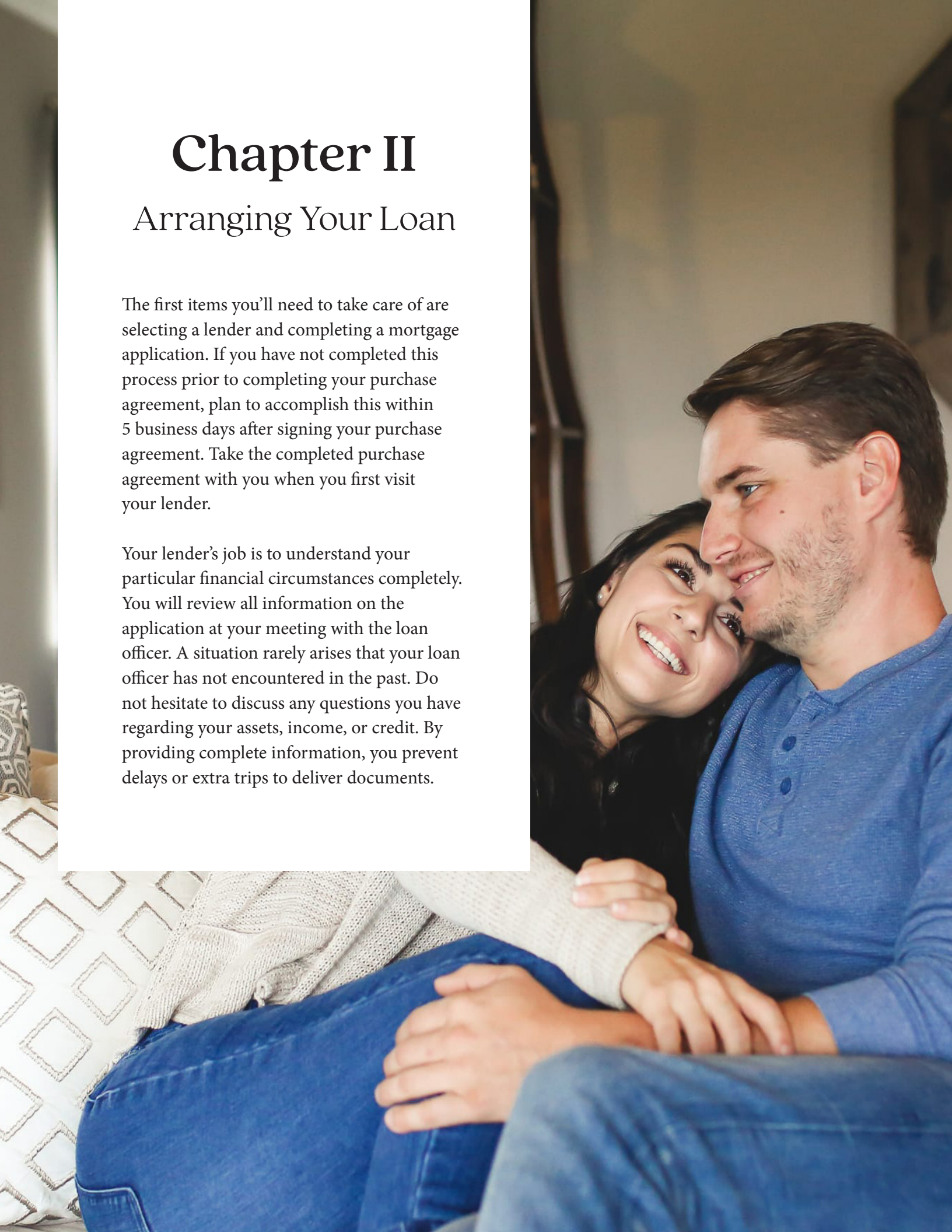
| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Appointment Set by | Customer Experience Agent |
| When | Tuesday through Saturday, between 10:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. |
| Where | Smith Family Homes Main Office or Virtual |
| Attendees | Purchasers New Home Sales Consultant When applicable, a real estate agent is welcome but not required to attend |
| Length | 60-90 minutes, depending on your questions |

Chapter II

Arranging Your Loan

The first items you'll need to take care of are selecting a lender and completing a mortgage application. If you have not completed this process prior to completing your purchase agreement, plan to accomplish this within 5 business days after signing your purchase agreement. Take the completed purchase agreement with you when you first visit your lender.

Your lender's job is to understand your particular financial circumstances completely. You will review all information on the application at your meeting with the loan officer. A situation rarely arises that your loan officer has not encountered in the past. Do not hesitate to discuss any questions you have regarding your assets, income, or credit. By providing complete information, you prevent delays or extra trips to deliver documents.



Chapter II - Arranging Your Loan

Preparation

The amount of documentation and information required for a mortgage application can seem overwhelming. You can facilitate the application process by collecting as much of the needed information as you can before your appointment.

The checklist that follows is a general guide and will get you off to a good start. Some of the items listed may not apply to your circumstances and your lender may request additional items unique to your situation.

Credit Report: Please note that you may be asked to pay for a credit report and an appraisal upon signing the mortgage application. Your loan officer will advise you of the total when you set the appointment.

Property Information: The purchase agreement will include the legal description of the property and the price.

Personal Information:

- ☐ Social Security number and driver's license for each borrower
- ☐ Home addresses for the last two years
- ☐ Divorce decree and separation agreements, if applicable
- ☐ Trust agreement, if applicable

Income:

- ☐ Most recent pay stubs
- ☐ W-2s for last two years
- ☐ Personal tax returns from last two years
- ☐ Documentation on any supplemental income such as bonuses or commissions
- ☐ Names, addresses, and phone numbers of all employers for last two years
- ☐ If you are self-employed or earn income from commissioned sales, copies of last two years of tax returns with all schedules and year-to-date profit and loss for current year, signed by an accountant
- ☐ Documentation of alimony or child support, if this income is considered for the loan

Real Estate Owned:

- ☐ Names, addresses, phone numbers, and account numbers of all mortgage lenders for the last seven years
- ☐ Copies of leases and two years of tax returns for any rental property
- ☐ Market value estimate

Liquid Assets :

- ☐ Complete names, addresses, phone numbers, and account numbers for all bank, credit union, 401K, and investment accounts
- ☐ Copies of the last three month's statements for all bank accounts
- ☐ Copies of any notes receivable
- ☐ Value of other assets such as auto, household goods, and collectibles
- ☐ Cash value of life insurance policies
- ☐ Vested interest in retirement funds or IRAs

Liabilities:

- ☐ Names, account numbers, balances, and current monthly payment amounts for all revolving charge cards
- ☐ Names, addresses, phone numbers, and account numbers for all installment debt and approximate balances and monthly payments for such items as mortgages, home equity loans, and auto loans
- ☐ Alimony or child support payments
- ☐ Names, addresses, phone numbers, and account numbers of accounts recently paid off, if used to establish credit

Loan Application Paperwork

Once you have given all preliminary information to your loan officer, your lender sends verification forms to your employers, banks, and current mortgage company or landlord, and also orders the credit report and appraisal. You sign a release to authorize these steps. Your lender will provide you with a Good Faith Estimate and a Truth-in-Lending Disclosure.

Good Faith Estimate

The Good Faith Estimate lists the estimated costs you will incur at closing. Some of the numbers listed on this form are prorations, subject to change based on the actual date of the closing. Others are set fees that should remain the same.

Truth-in-Lending Disclosure

The Truth-in-Lending Disclosure shows the total cost to you, over the term of the loan, for your specific financing. The calculation is based on the assumption that you own the home and make regular payments throughout the term of the loan.

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Verification of Employment

The lender sends Verification of Employment (VOE) forms to all employers for the last two years. The employers complete, sign, and return the forms to the lender. The forms show the dates of employment, the amount of money you earned last year, and how much you have earned so far this year. The VOE also documents bonuses and overtime you earned.

Verification of Deposit

Verification of Deposit (VOD) forms go to each banking institution listed on your application. The institutions indicate the date you opened each account, average balances for the last three months, and the amount of money you have in each account on the day they complete the form. Any loans or overdraft accounts you have with the bank will also be shown.

Verification of Mortgage/Rent Payment

Mortgage companies and landlords complete Verification of Mortgage (VOM) forms. These show the lender how much you owe, the amount of your monthly payment, and whether you make your payments by the due date.

Credit Report

Your credit report shows the amounts of monies you owe to each of your creditors, minimum monthly payments, and your payment history. The appraisal confirms the value of the home you are purchasing for you and your lender.

Chapter II - Arranging Your Loan

Interest Rate Lock

The only thing anyone knows for certain about interest rates is that they will change. Do not rely on anyone's predictions regarding rates. Locking your rate prematurely can result in extra expense if your new home is not complete in time to close within the lock period. We are happy to update you throughout the process of construction on the target delivery date. *Until we reach a point in construction where factors outside our control can no longer affect the delivery date – typically 30 days prior to closing, the decision to lock your loan is at best a gamble.*

Loan Closing

Between the date your loan is approved and the date of your closing, remember that any significant changes in your financial circumstances could impact your loan approval. If your closing occurs more than 30 days after the lender issues your loan approval, *the lender may order an additional credit report just prior to the closing date.*

Therefore, changes in your financial circumstances, for example, purchasing a new car or significant increases in your charge card balances will appear as a new liability on your updated credit report. Such changes may cause your lender to reconsider your approval. Holding off on such purchases until after closing is best.



Chapter III

New Home Selections

Part of the fun of buying a new home is selecting features, finish materials, and colors. You will make all of these selections at our design center located at our corporate office, Location and contact information is included in this chapter.

Plans and Specifications

Take as much time as you need to visit the model homes alone and with your sales counselor to become familiar with all of our included features. In addition, notice the variety of selected features displayed in each model for your consideration. Because we realize it can be difficult to make choices from a printed list, we have made our models “living catalogs” so that you can see many of the actual items.

If you visited one of our other communities to see an example of a floor plan not shown as a model in the community where your new home will be built, take special care to study the specifications as they often vary from community to community. Your sales counselor will assist you.

Included Features

Each home includes a substantial number of appealing features and materials as listed on the standard features sheet for the community where you are purchasing. Please review this information carefully to prevent any misunderstandings about which features are included in the base price of your new home. To delete an included feature, document that decision on your selection sheets. If you have any questions, your sales counselor will be able to assist you.

Selected Features

Based on feedback from our customers, Smith Family Home has assembled a collection of the most popular choices that are available for the home plans in your new community. This list and the current pricing of these items are available from your sales counselor or our interior designer. Pricing and the available selections are updated regularly based on feedback from our customers; the list applicable on the date you sign your purchase agreement will apply to your home.

Customer Features

The possibilities for your new home far exceed the popular ideas we suggest on our available selections list. While we understand there may be items that you would like us to build into your new home that we do not offer at the time you purchased, Smith Family Home does not offer custom changes to our homes. This is a decision we made in order to improve our overall efficiency, value offered, and accuracy of our delivered product. In most cases, these items can still be added after move-in by hiring reputable contractors.

Think, dream, imagine, look—we will assist you in any way that we can to make these decisions as early as possible. Please keep in mind that your new neighbors have this same opportunity and may request still other features. We make no claim that we mention or offer every possible idea. Requests for customer features are documented in detail on a change request as described later in this chapter.

Selection Process & Paperwork

Smith Family Home provides you with selection sheets that list the choices you need to make. Upon request, you will be allowed to visit our design center unaccompanied prior to your actual design appointment, for a preview of the selections and colors we have to offer. This is not a required visit. Your official design meeting will be scheduled directly with our design consultant, at which time you will finalize all choices for your new home. This meeting should occur within 14 days of signing your purchase agreement. A delay of this meeting could result in a delay of the ultimate delivery of your new home.

Informed Choices

We recommend that you review the maintenance tasks and warranty guidelines in Chapter 7, *Caring for Your Home*, prior to finalizing your selection decisions.

Be Thorough

Our selection sheets are very detailed. Costly errors arise from assumptions and incomplete selection sheets. After completing this meeting, double-check all color numbers and names then sign and date each page with our design consultant.

Colors

You are welcome to bring cushions or swatches to the design center to coordinate colors. View color samples in both natural and artificial light to get an accurate impression of the color. Variations between samples and actual material installed can occur. This is because of the manufacturer's coloring process (dye lots) and the fact that over time, sunlight and other environmental factors affect the samples. Some colors will appear different when seen in a large area as opposed to the sample.

Exterior Choices

Your homeowner association and selections your future neighbors have made may limit your choices for exterior finish materials or colors. The sooner you make your selections, the more choices you have. Viewing existing homes is one way to select exterior colors. Selections often look different on a full-size home.

Availability

If a selection you make turns out to be unavailable when it comes time to order it for installation, we will contact you and request that you make a different selection within 5 business days. Because so many choices are offered, Smith Family Home is unable to predict when a particular manufacturer or supplier may discontinue any particular item. We regret any inconvenience this causes. Similarly, materials readily available when your home is built may not be available in years to come if replacements are needed.

Record of Selections

Please retain your selection sheets for future reference. They are useful for matching paint colors, tile grout, and replacement items in your home.

Preparation

At times the short time frame combined with the number of choices involved in this process can seem overwhelming. In preparing to make selections for your new home, the following suggestions may increase enjoyment and decrease frustration.

Preferences

Begin by identifying the details that change a house into a home for your family. Appropriate selections for your new home are those that rekindle the best memories at the same time that they provide a setting for new ones.

- Some buyers set up a notebook of photos, magazine illustrations, swatches, and samples.
- A collectibles box may work for you. Fill it with small objects, photographs, and fabric or paint samples to which you are drawn.
- Another approach is to walk your current home, room by room, clipboard in hand. List furnishings, art work, collections, and other items (area rugs? an antique mirror?) that will move to the new home with you. Make note of colors and styles for later reference. You may want to measure some pieces as well.
- Visit our show homes—they offer a living catalog of potential ideas coordinated by professionals. Watch for color combinations, selections, and ideas that appeal to you.

Using any (or all!) of these methods, you will soon have a substantial collection that reflects your preferences. These tools help you discover your current personal style; preferences will emerge that will bring the number of choices down to a manageable size. These preferences can change over time—let yourself be surprised to find you are now drawn to different colors or styles than for former homes. Next, turn to considering your lifestyle.

Chapter III - New Home Selections

Lifestyle

As you make choices for your new home, consider your present and future lifestyle. Take into account your family's daily activities—as a group and as individuals. Ask yourself what changes you expect in the next 5 to 10 years. Room by room, consider traffic, activities, and your family members' opinions. For example—

- Do you need/want a home office? How about a place for youngsters to do homework?
- What hobbies or other activities do you want to accommodate?
- How do you celebrate holidays?
- Do you entertain in a formal or informal style?
- Do any family members have special needs?
- Do you frequently have overnight guests?

With these details in mind, ask yourself what atmosphere you want to achieve—room by room. The room's purpose and architecture may influence your answer.

- Will the space be used for long hours or brief periods of time?
- Who will use the space most often and at what time of day?
- What is the focal point (one element that draws your attention when you enter) of the room or space? Perhaps a staircase, fireplace, built-ins, or the view? Once you identify the focal point, you can sometimes easily decide on how the rest of the space should look.

Chapter III - New Home Selections

Color

Color is an extremely versatile tool that will set the tone for each room. Color choice is largely an emotional decision. Considering the preferences of all family members, select a few colors you like—colors that make you feel happy. Include both warm and cool colors. Exceptions are possible, but generally keep these guidelines in mind.

- Warm colors (red, orange, and so on) work well in spaces where high energy activities take place. Warm colors appear to advance (for instance, a red or yellow wall seems closer).
- Cool colors (blue or green, for example) work well in quiet areas where a calmer mood is appropriate, such as the bedrooms. Cool colors and neutrals appear to recede. Consequently they can be used to open up a smaller space.
- Sharp color contrasts or bold colors are fun in rooms used occasionally. They can become tiresome in areas used a great deal.
- Paint is likely to look darker on walls with windows. The light from the window will shine on opposite or adjacent walls making them appear lighter and creating a shadow on the wall with the window.
- Light colors typically make a space seem larger while dark colors create a cozy atmosphere.
- Color samples (whether carpet swatch, paint chip, brick, siding, and so on) often appear lighter once the same color or material is applied or installed over a larger area.

Using any (or all!) of these methods, you will soon have a substantial collection that reflects your preferences. These tools help you discover your current personal style; preferences will emerge that will bring the number of choices down to a manageable size. These preferences can change over time—let yourself be surprised to find you are now drawn to different colors or styles than for former homes. Next, turn to considering your lifestyle.

Chapter III - New Home Selections

Light

Room by room, assess natural light. How many windows are there, where are they, and with what orientation? How will this natural light impact the space? Take seasons and the time of day that the room will be used into consideration.

Natural light is unique in that it changes over the course of the day as well as from season to season. A northern exposure will be filled with a bluer, cooler light. This will weaken warm colors and intensify cool ones. Conversely, a south facing room will have a warmer, more yellow light that will weaken cool colors and intensify warm ones.

Next consider the impact of artificial lights. Where appropriate, incorporate several options for lighting in each room. This will provide you with greater flexibility in the use of the space. Consider the basic types of lighting.

- Ambient lighting is general lighting that fills an entire room.
- Task lighting is functional and typically focuses on a specific area for a particular job. Its use should be optional (for instance, a desk lamp). If you are planning light fixtures or lamps for work, study, or hobbies, they will usually serve you best if the light comes over your left shoulder.
- Accent lighting draws attention to special items such as a collection, architectural feature, or perhaps a work of art. As with task lighting, use of accent lighting is generally optional.
- Decorative lighting such as wall sconces or candelabras can be design elements for their own sake in addition to providing light to the space.

Plan the ambient lighting you want first. Next plan task lighting. Accent and decorative lighting can be planned last.

Light Bulbs

Next, consider bulbs. The choice among incandescent, fluorescent, compact fluorescent, or LED is a matter of energy use, how much light is required, and the *color temperature* you want for that area of your home.

In a practical sense, color temperature is the effect of different types of light on the appearance of materials, potentially swaying them from their true color. For instance, in a store under fluorescent lights a sofa might appear to be a bright green color. Later, in your home under incandescent light, the same sofa is likely to appear sage. Blue carpet may appear blue in daylight and gray under artificial light at night.

With an understanding of color temperature, bulb selection becomes another tool for managing your decor. Keeping this in mind will help you achieve the affects you want with colors you install. For example, for a warmer more traditional feel, you might select incandescent light. For a modern, cool look lights with a higher color temperature will go a long way.

Because of the startup energy they use, compact fluorescent lights save the most energy in areas where they are turned on and used for long periods of time. In locations where lights are turned on just briefly and then turned off again, traditional bulbs actually use less energy overall.

Chapter III - New Home Selections

Light Fixtures

Light fixtures offer something for every taste, purpose, and budget. Replacing a lamp or light bulb can change the tone of a room quickly and relatively economically. If the room's purpose changes or if you simply want a change of pace, you can simply change the fixtures or bulbs.

- For a sophisticated look, combine types of fixtures rather than using matched pairs such as two identical table lamps at each end of a sofa.
- In planning light fixtures, keep in mind the changing contribution of natural light that windows make to a space.
- Layer lighting in most rooms to provide flexibility: ambient, task, decorative, and accent lighting are the main elements to consider.

Flooring

Your choice of flooring materials raises another set of points to consider. Take a few minutes to review the maintenance and warranty information in the Caring for Your Home chapter of this guide for each type of floor covering. We want you to make informed choices. The time and type of attention a particular material will need from you as well as its normal long-term performance may influence your decisions in this area. In addition, consider the function of the space.

- What activities will occur in each room/area? High traffic? Shoes, boots, pets, children?
- What are your design objectives with regard to atmosphere?
- What is your overall budget?

Each flooring material comes with positives and negatives. For instance—

- Tile is easy to care for, but can be cold on bare feet, and an item dropped is an item usually broken. Sealing grout will be your choice and responsibility. If you decide to use tile, keep in mind that the larger the tiles the larger the space is likely to feel.
- Hardwood floors add warmth but are more easily damaged by normal foot traffic or moving chairs around a table. With a wood floor, lighter stains generally create a less formal atmosphere and make a small room seem larger; darker stains typically encourage a more formal and intimate feeling. Some species of wood will change color slightly over time and strong sunlight can cause fading.

Likewise, the various styles of carpet or resilient floor coverings each come with unique characteristics. By understanding the details you will be more satisfied in the long term.

Chapter III - New Home Selections

Measurements

To make your rooms comfortable for the people who use them, begin with these measurements as guidelines and adjust them as needed for your household.

- Plan for 14 to 18 inches of leg room between a coffee table and sofa.
- The distance between a television and seating should be three times the screen size. For example, a 30-inch screen needs seating 90 inches away.
- Traffic lanes should typically be 3 feet wide.
- Adult seating at tables requires 20 inches plus 12 to 16 more inches to pull a chair back to get up and down. Therefore plan for 32-36 inches of clearance between table and wall. You are likely to want just over a meter 44 inches on the serving side.
- The minimum clearance between the edge of bed and nearest wall should be 24 inches.
- When arranging twin beds, allow 18 inches or more between them.
- When using an area rug, begin with 8 to 12 inches of exposed floor on all sides. (Ignore this if your goal is to create a special-use space in a large space.)
- For arranging art and other items on your walls, begin with items located 6 to 9 inches above a sofa or at eye level when you are seated in the area. Frames should be approximately $\frac{2}{3}$ of the size of the piece over which an item hangs. When you are placing a smaller piece, you might want to pair it with another of approximately the same size.

Chapter III - New Home Selections

Window Coverings

Window coverings are typically installed for one or more reasons:

- To control natural light.
- To provide insulation or privacy.
- For decor purposes—adding color, pattern, or texture to a space.

As you select your window treatments, you will want to consider details such as the following:

- Function of the room—what time of day is the room used?
- Orientation of windows and resulting natural light—do you want to tone down the light or—maximize it?
- Window size—strive for a harmonious balance of window and room size. If windows are large, keep your window treatments simple.
- What is the view? Do you want to be able to look out? Or do you want privacy, in which case you will want window coverings of a different type.
- How often will you want to open and close each window?
- Will combinations of blinds, shades, sheers, or draperies work best? If shutters are part of your vision, will furniture interfere with operating them?
- Some homeowner associations require that window treatments that can be seen from the exterior be white or cream.
- Budget—your personal “magic number.”
- Maintenance, including cleaning, operational care (lubrication and so on), consumable parts that will need replacement over time (such as batteries in remote controlled shades).

Because a home expresses your personality and style, expect that as time passes your tastes may change. A home is a process. From time to time you will re-arrange, re-paint, or replace furnishings. The steps and factors outlined above can again be applied to assist you in discovering what changes you want to make.

Chapter III - New Home Selections

Selection Appointment - *Meeting Details*

At times the short time frame combined with the number of choices involved in this process can seem overwhelming. In preparing to make selections for your new home, the following suggestions may increase enjoyment and decrease frustration.

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Appointment Set by | Design Consultant |
| When | Tuesday or Thursday, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. |
| Where | Design Center |
| Attendees | <p>Purchasers</p> <p>Design Consultant</p> <p>When applicable, a real estate agent is welcome but not required to attend</p> <p>If possible, make other arrangements for small children so that you can devote your full attention to making the most of your personalization experience</p> |
| Length | 2-3 hours |
| Purposes | <p>Select and document choices for your new home</p> <p>Review maintenance and warranty details on unfamiliar products</p> <p>Discuss any questions you have</p> |
| Preparation | <p>Take time to enjoy a preview visit to become familiar with the Design Center and the choices available</p> |

Chapter III - New Home Selections

Change Requests

Smith Family Home uses a change order form to describe and document all changes you may request to your new home's plans and specifications.

Change orders fall into two categories. You may decide to

- Add or delete an item after signing your selection sheets
- Change a selection previously ordered

** Please note that structural options are only allowed to be selected at the time of the original purchase agreement.

Processing and Fees

In order to deliver your home in a timely manner, we order many items well in advance of installation. Once a particular item is ordered, making further changes may involve adjusting the planned delivery date and additional costs. By requesting all changes prior to signing your selection sheets, you avoid both.

When you request a change, the sales counselor will document the request and submit it for approval, pricing, and construction schedule review. Some change requests may involve conversations with multiple employees, trades, and/or suppliers. The process typically takes 3 to 5 business days unless we advise you otherwise. There are also some changes that are not allowed depending on the current stage of construction of your home.

Information on pricing and any schedule adjustment is returned to your sales counselor who will then contact you for a final decision. Sometimes a seemingly minor change impacts other elements of the home and therefore may come with hidden costs. For example, if you add a window, framing, drywall, interior and exterior trim, and paint costs may all be affected.

If you elect to proceed with the change, we ask that you sign the change order and make full payment, including the required administration fee. Change requests that remain unsigned or unpaid become null and void upon the expiration date shown on the change request.

For the protection of all concerned, all changes are documented and incorporated into your new home only when—

- Smith Family Home approves and signs the change request
- You approve, sign, and pay for the change request prior to its expiration date
- The applicable building department has approved the change, when applicable

Please note that our contracts with our trade contractors prohibit them from making any changes to plans or specifications without written authorization from Smith Family Home. You are therefore not allowed to make 'side' agreements with our contractors, as discussed in our purchase agreement.

Chapter IV

Construction of Your New Home

The construction of a new home differs from other manufacturing processes in several ways. By keeping these differences in mind, you can enjoy observing the construction process as we build your new home.

- You have more opportunity for input into the selections and details of a new home than for most other products. Our success in personalizing your home depends on effective and timely communication of your choices.
- Because of the time required for construction, you have many opportunities to view your home as it is built, ask questions, and discuss details.
- As a consumer, you rarely have the opportunity to watch as the products you purchase are created. Unlike other products that are created in a setting where mistakes can be corrected before the product leaves the factory, you will be able to watch as mistakes are made and corrected along the way.
- Your home, like all other new homes, is built using imperfect materials, applied and installed by imperfect people, in an imperfect environment. Therefore there is no such thing as a perfect home. We strive to meet our own high quality standards as well as generally accepted industry standards.



Chapter IV - Construction of Your Home

Start of Construction

Before construction of your home can begin, Smith Family Home has several important tasks to accomplish that involve outside people and entities. For example:

Your selections or change requests may necessitate an update to floor plans, elevations, trade contractor schedules, and material orders. Approved change requests that involve structural (load bearing) elements of your home require review by an engineer. This must be completed prior to applying for a building permit and can take from several days to several weeks.

Next, residential construction requires that we obtain a building permit. The application process can take from a few days to many weeks depending on the volume of applications being processed by the building department where volume varies from month to month. The time of year and related weather conditions may also affect the start date and early stages of construction.

Chapter IV - Construction of Your Home

Pre-Construction Orientation

You will have the opportunity to meet with your Project Manager four times during the entire building process. The first of these is a preconstruction conference. Your sales counselor schedules this appointment once your building permit has been issued and just as we are starting construction. This meeting takes approximately 60 to 90 minutes.

The purpose of the preconstruction conference is to conduct a comprehensive review of your final plans and specifications as well as the building process itself. We will discuss such things as site visit protocols, how to handle questions, trade contractor communication, change requests, and target delivery date. Meeting Details and a copy of the agenda follow. Please bring any questions you have and this guide with you to this meeting.

Pre-Construction Orientation - Meeting Details

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Appointment Set by | Customer Experience Agent |
| When | Tuesday through Friday, between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. |
| Where | Main Office and/or at the homesite |
| Attendees | Customer Experience Agent Your real estate agent, if applicable and desired. |
| Length | 60-90 minutes, depending on your questions |
| Purposes | Review plans, specifications, selections and change requests Discuss what you should expect during the construction process Outline construction site safety, site visit protocols, and how to handle questions |
| Preparation | List any questions you wish to discuss Bring your selection materials and this homeowner guide |

Chapter IV - Construction of Your Home

Safety

We understand that you will want to visit your new home between these construction reviews. A new home construction site is exciting, but can also be dangerous. Your safety is of prime importance to us. Therefore, we ask that you contact your New Home Sales Consultant before visiting your site. We reserve the right to require that you wear a hard hat and that a member of our staff accompany you during your visit. Please observe common sense safety procedures at all times when visiting:

- Keep older children within view and younger children within reach, or make arrangements to leave them elsewhere when visiting your homesite.
- Do not walk backward, even one step. Look in the direction you are moving at all times.
- Watch for boards, cords, tools, nails, or other construction materials that might cause tripping, puncture wounds, or other injury.
- Do not enter any level of a home that is not yet equipped with stairs and rails.
- Stay a minimum of six feet from all excavations.
- Give large, noisy grading equipment or delivery vehicles plenty of room. Assume that the driver can neither see nor hear you.

In addition to safety considerations, be aware that mud, paint, drywall compound, and other construction materials are in use and can get onto your shoes or clothing.

Chapter IV - Construction of Your Home

Pre-Drywall Orientation

Many buyers appreciate the opportunity to tour their home just after the rough mechanical stage, before or immediately following insulation. The rooms have begun to take shape but the inner workings are still visible. This is an opportunity for you to see the quality that we build into the walls of your home.

Although the time to make changes has passed, this meeting provides all of us with an opportunity to confirm that we are correctly installing your selections. We will also update you on the target delivery date during the Pre-Drywall Orientation, with a firm closing date given once cabinets are installed.

As with the preconstruction conference, your Pre-Drywall Orientation is scheduled by your sales counselor. You will meet your Project Manager at your new home. Pre-Drywall Orientations usually take 45 to 60 minutes. Please remember to bring this homeowner guide, selection sheets, and any approved change requests.

Please understand that if for any reason you are unavailable to attend this meeting, we will continue with construction. Meeting details and a copy of a sample agenda follow.

Chapter IV - Construction of Your Home

Pre-Drywall Orientation - *Meeting Details*

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Appointment Set by | Customer Experience Agent |
| When | Tuesday through Friday, between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. |
| Where | Your new home |
| Attendees | Customer Experience Agent Your real estate agent, if applicable and desired |
| Length | 45-60 minutes, depending on your questions |
| Purposes | Review exterior and interior quality Confirm installation of selections up to this point |
| Preparation | List any questions you wish to discuss •Bring your selection materials and this homeowner guide •Wear shoes and clothing appropriate to an active construction site |

Locks and Keys

Once exterior doors and locks are installed, we will access your home with a construction master key. Company policy prohibits staff members from loaning these keys to purchasers or their agents. At closing, you will receive your permanent keys. Once used on your home, only your keys will open the locks.

Plans and Specifications

The building department of the city or county where your home is to be located must review and approve the plans and specifications for your home. We construct each home to comply with these approved plans and specifications. They become part of our agreements with trade contractors and suppliers. Only written instructions from Smith Family Home can change these contracts. Even with this detailed documentation, each home is still unique. There are many factors that can cause variations between the model home you viewed and the home we deliver to you, as follows:

Regulatory Changes

From time to time, city or county agencies adopt new codes or regulations that can affect your home. Such changes are usually adopted in the interest of safety and are legal requirements with which Smith Family Home must comply. Therefore, our on-site builders may construct the same floor plan slightly differently in two different jurisdictions or at two different times within the same jurisdiction. .

Individual Foundation Designs

Another area where variations among homes can appear is in the foundation system. The foundation design is specific to each home. Based on individual site conditions, we will determine which foundation system is appropriate. Because of variations in soil conditions among home sites, your foundation may differ from your neighbors' foundations or that of the same home in another neighborhood

Topography and Homesite Conditions

Because each homesite is shaped differently, the position of your home on the site may vary from others in the community. You will view a copy of a plot plan, a drawing that shows you the home's position on your home site, at your preconstruction meeting. In addition, the exterior elevations of each home are affected by the topography, or surface contours, of your homesite. For instance, slope on the site may affect the configuration of the driveway and walks, as well as the number of steps, and where rails occur. Exterior finish varies in accordance with the slope on the site and retaining walls are sometimes needed for extreme conditions.

Existing Trees

Smith Family Home identifies any existing trees on your home site that must be removed to create room for your home, drive, and so on. Our construction practices include steps intended to preserve other trees in a healthy condition. However, because the reaction of trees to construction activities and your new home are outside our control, we cannot guarantee the health or survival of any existing trees. Smith Family Home retains the sole right to make decisions concerning which existing trees need to be removed and which trees stay.

Utilities and Mailboxes

The location of meters, phone and electrical junction boxes, and mailboxes are examples of items outside the control of Smith Family Home. The authority of the utilities and the postal service to designate the placement of these items is well established.

Chapter IV - Construction of Your Home

Changes in Materials, Products, and Methods

The new-home industry, building trades, and product manufacturers are continually working to improve methods and products. In addition, manufacturers sometimes make model changes that can impact the final product. For instance, appliance manufacturers generally make design changes every year. The model homes will show the appliances that were current when the models were built although your home may have a more recent version.

In all instances, as required by your purchase agreement, any substitution of method or product that we make will be of similar quality to that shown in our models. Since such substitutions or changes may become necessary because of matters outside our control, we reserve the right to make them without notification.

Models

Model homes are equipped with larger capacity air conditioners to accommodate high traffic; models also display many decorator items, window coverings, and furnishings. Mature landscaping, extra walks, fences, lighting, fountains, signs, and flags are other examples of items which are not part of the home we will be building for you. Please review your home's specifications as well as information Smith Family Home provides about standard features and available choices displayed in the models carefully to avoid misunderstandings. Contact your sales consultant with any questions.

Measurements

Because finish sizes can vary slightly, you should measure for window coverings in your home rather than in any model.

Television and the Internet

You may be aware of various home construction methods and materials from watching television programs or exploring the Internet. Smith Family Home routinely reviews new approaches with a focus on building homes with materials and methods that perform predictably and to our standards. While we will be happy to discuss alternative methods and materials you may be interested in, we take a conservative approach to utilizing new approaches until they have been proven over time. In addition, what is appropriate for a home in one area may not be appropriate for your home because of soil, climate, and other conditions.

Natural Variations

Dozens of trade contractors work to assemble your home. The same individuals rarely work on every home and, even if they did, each one would still be unique. The exact placement of switches, outlets, registers, and so on will vary slightly from the model and other homes of the same floor plan.

Chapter IV - Construction of Your Home

Quality

Our company will build your new home to the quality standards described in our documents and demonstrated in our model homes. Each new home is a handcrafted product—combining art, science, and raw labor. The efforts of many people with varying degrees of knowledge, experience, and skill come together.

Errors and Omissions

From time to time during a process that takes several months, involves dozens of people, and occurs exposed to weather conditions, an error or omission may occur. We have systems and procedures for inspecting our homes to ensure that the level of quality meets our requirements. We inspect every step of construction and are responsible for quality control. In addition, the county, city, or an engineer conducts a number of inspections at different stages of construction. Your home must pass each inspection before construction continues.

Your Questions

We also respect your interest and appreciate your attachment to the new home. Therefore, your input into our system is welcome. However, to avoid duplication of efforts, confusion, misunderstandings, or compounding errors, we ask that you first check your purchase documents to review what you ordered and the specifications for construction of your home. If you still believe we are in error, do one of two things:

- Bring your concern up at the Pre-Drywall Orientation.
- Contact your sales consultant, in writing, with your question. We will note the date and time it was received and will respond within two business days unless we notify you that additional time is needed.

Also keep the following points in mind once you have notified us of a concern:

- Your concern may involve a detail Smith Family Home has already noticed or appreciates your pointing out. Still, correction may not occur immediately. Trades and suppliers often impose trip charges for extra visits to the home site so to be efficient, we may schedule the correction for the next routine visit. Also, a particular trade may be unavailable on short notice.
- Work may simply be incomplete; an early stage can look wrong and be correct when complete.
- Methods and materials vary from region to region and change over time. When you are familiar with one method, you naturally question a different one. That does not make the new method wrong. Ask questions until you are comfortable.

Ugly Duckling Stages

During the construction process, every new home experiences days when it is not at its best. Homes under construction endure wind, rain, snow, foot traffic, and activities that generate noise, dust, and trash. Material scraps are a byproduct of the process. Although your new home is cleaned by each trade upon completion of their portion of the work, during your visits you will encounter some messy moments. Keep in mind that the model homes you toured also once endured these “ugly duckling” stages.

Chapter IV - Construction of Your Home

Single Source

Smith Family Home is a single source company. That means that we select all personnel and companies who supply materials to or work in your new home. We order all materials and products from suppliers with whom we have established relationships. Trade contractors who work on our sites are subject to review and evaluation by construction and warranty personnel. They are also required by our trade agreements to attend safety training and company meetings.

Although sweat equity arrangements are unavailable as a part of our purchase agreement, you are welcome to add your personal touches to the home after you close and take possession of it.

Trade Contractors

Your home is built through the combined efforts of specialists in many trades—from excavation and foundation, through framing, mechanicals, and insulation, to drywall, trim, and finish work. In order to ensure you the Smith Family Home' standard of construction, only authorized suppliers, trade contractors, and Smith Family Home employees are permitted to perform work in your home.

Each trade contractor works on a limited portion of the home; they may not be aware of all the details that affect the home and are not in a position to offer judgments. All questions or requests for changes should go through Smith Family Home, and we will obtain input from trades when that is appropriate.

Suppliers and trade contractors have no authority to enter into agreements for Smith Family Home. For your protection and theirs, the terms of our trade contractor agreements prohibit alterations without written authorization from Smith Family Home. Their failure to comply with this procedure can result in termination of their contract. Therefore, please refrain from discussing details of your home with any of our trade contractors. Discuss your questions and any changes you are considering with your sales counselor only.

Chapter IV - Construction of Your Home

Private Home Inspector Authorization

If you wish to retain the services of a private home inspector to review your home during or at the end of construction, please be aware of Smith Family Home's policies regarding private home inspectors. These are listed on the Home Inspector Authorization Form which you will find at the end of this chapter.

Please review the requirements carefully prior to retaining any home inspector. This form should be completed by the inspector you hire and submitted to your sales counselor a minimum of two weeks prior to your inspector visiting our job site. Smith Family Home will address concerns involving building code or contract issues only. Design details that are a matter of taste and style are outside the areas appropriate for comment by an inspector.

Construction Schedule

The delivery date for your new home begins as an estimate. Until the roof is on and the structure is enclosed, weather can dramatically affect the delivery date. Even after the home itself is past the potential for weather-related delays, weather can severely impact installation of utility services, final grading, and concrete flatwork, to mention a few examples. Extended periods of wet weather or freezing temperatures bring work to a stop in an entire region. When favorable conditions return, the trades people go back to work, picking up where they left off. Please understand that they are as eager as you are to get caught up and to see progress on your home.

“Nothing’s Happening”

Expect several days during construction of your home when it appears that nothing is happening. This can occur for a number of reasons. Each trade is scheduled days or weeks in advance of the actual work. This period is referred to as “lead time”. Time is allotted for completing each trade’s work on your home. Sometimes, one trade completes its work a bit ahead of schedule. The next trade already has an assigned time slot, which usually cannot be changed on short notice.

Progress also pauses while the home awaits building department inspections. This is part of the planned sequence of the construction steps and occurs at several points in every home. Additionally, throughout construction of a home, work progresses rapidly at times as highly visible stages are completed (such as installing large expanses of walls) and more slowly at others (such as detail work to frame soffits and closets). If you have questions about the pace of work, please contact your sales counselor.

Delivery Date Updates

Smith Family Home recognizes that timing is critical to planning your move. Although a guaranteed date is unrealistic in the early stages of construction, we can provide regular updates. We will update you on the estimated delivery date at each of our construction meetings. You are also welcome to check with us for the most current target date.

As completion nears, more factors come under our control and we can be more precise about your delivery date. Expect a firm closing date no later than 30 days before delivery. We suggest that, until you receive this commitment, you avoid finalizing arrangements for your move. Until then, flexibility is the key to comfort, sanity, and convenience. We want you to enjoy this process and avoid unnecessary stress caused by uncertainty that cannot be avoided. Review the Loan Lock heading in Chapter 2, *Arranging Your Loan*, and Chapter 6, *Closing on Your Home* for additional information on this topic.

Please keep in mind that your belongings may be brought into the home and garage only after the closing because of insurance issues and the building department regulations.

Construction Sequence

The specific sequence of construction steps can vary somewhat and in later stages, interior and exterior work occurs simultaneously. Generally, we build your home in the following order:

Construction Start Pre-Construction Orientation*

Foundation

- Excavation
- Footers (if applicable)
- Block foundation (if applicable)
- Form foundation
- Dirt backfill
- Plumbing Rough-in
- Inspection
- Prep slab for pouring
- Inspection
- Pour Slab

Framing

- First floor
- Second floor
- Roof trusses
- Roof sheathing

Mechanical systems rough-in

- HVAC Rough-in
- Plumbing Top-out
- Electrical Rough-in, including low-voltage wiring

Inspections

Roofing

- Felt paper
- Shingles

Chapter IV - Construction of Your Home

Exterior

Exterior trim

- Fascia (boards at ends of rafters)
- Finish materials
- Trim
- Deck, if applicable
- Gutters, if applicable

Exterior painting or staining

Concrete or asphalt

Fine grading

Landscaping, if applicable

Interior

Insulation

Drywall Hang

- Inspection
- Tape and texture

Interior trim Doors

- Baseboards, casings
- Applicable built-ins

Paint and stain

Finish work

- Cabinets
- Countertops
- Tile
- Floor coverings
- Appliances
- Hardware
- Screens
- Light fixtures
- Plumbing fixtures

Chapter IV - Construction of Your Home

Construction cleaning

Internal Quality Inspection by Management

Final detailing

Certificate of occupancy

New Home Orientation*

Re-Walk Pre-Closing Confirmation Meeting*

Closing*

Move-in

Warranty Visits*

**Meetings you are invited to attend*

Smith Family Home welcomes visits by a private home inspector you retain for that purpose provided that he/she has registered with our main office as detailed below. Please review our policies carefully. Your inspector–

- ☐ Must provide us with evidence of current worker's compensation and liability insurance.
- ☐ Should be a member of a professional association such as the American Society of Home Inspectors.
- ☐ Should be familiar with the codes applicable in your jurisdiction.
- ☐ Should be experienced with new home construction.
- ☐ Is responsible for staying informed as to the stage of construction the home has reached.
- ☐ Should avoid making any markings on the home itself.
- ☐ Should provide you and Smith Family Home with a written report of any concerns.

Ask your inspector to complete this form, attach the required documentation, and deliver it to your sales office a minimum of two weeks prior to any desired site visit appointment.

Your Project Manager will permit an inspector to visit only after company approval has been issued. Smith Family Home will address questions involving building code or your purchase agreement documents only.

Chapter IV - Construction of Your Home

Home Inspector Authorization Form

Purchaser _____ Date _____

New Home Address _____ Community _____

Home Phone _____ Home Site # _____

Work Phone _____ Plan _____

Cell Phone _____ E-mail _____

Inspector Use

Purchaser _____

Company _____

Address _____

Office Phone _____ Email _____

Cell Phone _____ Fax _____

Smith Family Homes Use

License _____

Insurance _____

Approved Date _____ By _____

Scheduled _____



Chapter V

New Home Orientation

Your new home orientation is an introduction to your new home and its many features. We follow a preplanned agenda and a set route through the home to assure that we cover everything. Our homeowner orientation provides you with a

- Demonstration of your new home.
- Review of key points about maintenance and limited warranty coverage.
- Confirmation that Smith Family Home installed selections and options as you ordered them.

Chapter V - New Home Orientation

Quality

The overall quality of your home should equal that shown in our models and described in your purchase documents. We list items that need further attention and arrange appropriate work. Orientation items typically fall into several categories:

- Incomplete or missing (Cabinet knob not installed.)
- Incorrect (Porch light should be polished brass, not antique.)
- Dysfunctional (Bath fan does not come on.)
- Below company standard (Mitered corner rough, top right of den door, hallway side.)
- Damaged (Scrape on wall from carpet installation.)
- Uncleaned (Mud on the garage floor.)

At some point, quality ceases to be scientific and becomes a matter of personal taste. In a few areas, your personal standards may be even higher than ours. Our commitment to you is that we will deliver what we promised. If you wish to make it even better after moving in, we will be happy to assist you with information.

Last Minute Activity

If you visit your home a day or two prior to orientation, you may notice dozens of details that need attention. During the last few days just prior to your orientation appointment, many trades people and Smith Family Home' employees will be working in your home. They are completing last-minute adjustments and fine-tuning your home. These finishing touches cannot be performed until all of the parts have been installed. What seems like a rush of activity is a normal part of the construction process.

Cosmetic Surfaces

Cosmetic surface damage caused during construction is readily noticeable during the orientation. Such damage can also occur during the move-in process or through daily activities. Therefore, during your orientation, we will confirm that all surfaces are in good and acceptable condition. Details that need attention will be listed on your orientation forms. After we correct cosmetic items noted during the orientation, repair of future cosmetic surface damage is your responsibility. Additional details appear on the orientation forms.

Our limited warranty specifically excludes repairs for damage caused by moving in or living in the home. If your movers scratch the marble entry floor bringing the piano in, notify the moving company. If you slide a packing box across a counter and a staple scratches the surface, repair of the counter is your responsibility. Smith Family Home is always available to assist you with information about cosmetic repairs you may need to make.

Chapter V - New Home Orientation

Scheduling

We schedule the orientation with you as your home nears completion, typically several days to a week before your closing. Appointments are available Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Especially in winter months, beginning by 3:00 P.M. assures sufficient day light to view all surfaces adequately. We meet at your new home. Expect your orientation to take approximately 2 hours.

Preparation

Following these hints will assure that you get the maximum benefit from your orientation. Of all the meetings we host with home buyers, this one is probably the most detailed and many would agree it is the most important.

Allow Enough Time

Arrange your schedule so you can use the full amount of time allotted—we plan on 2 hours.

Bring This Guide

By bringing this guide with your selection sheets and any approved change orders with you, any questions about the items installed in your home can usually be answered conveniently and immediately.

Attend Alone

Our experience shows that the orientation is most beneficial when buyers focus all their attention on their new home and the information we present. Although we appreciate that friends and relatives are eager to see your new home, it would be best if they visit after your orientation. Similarly, we suggest that, if possible, children and pets not accompany you at this time. If a real estate agent has helped with your home purchase, he or she is welcome but not required to attend.

Bring Questions

If you have not already done so, please read the maintenance information, limited warranty, and warranty guidelines in Chapter 7 of this guide. If you have questions, make note of them to bring up at the orientation.

Attire

Wear shoes that are convenient to get off and on. We will tour both the exterior and interior of your home. Anticipate that some dust, bending, kneeling, and reaching will be encountered.

Get Involved

Plan to listen carefully and take a hands-on approach. Push buttons, lock locks, and flip breakers. This helps you remember the dozens of details we cover.

Pre-Drywall Orientation - *Meeting Details*

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Appointment Set by | Customer Experience Agent |
| When | Monday through Friday, between 8:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. • Occurs approximately 1 week before closing |
| Where | Your new home |
| Attendees | Project Manager |
| Length | Up to two hours, depending on your questions |
| Purposes | <p>Demonstrate features of your home</p> <p>Review key maintenance points</p> <p>Confirm quality reflects the standards shown in our models</p> <p>Confirm installation of selections</p> <p>Confirm the good condition of cosmetic surfaces</p> <p>Discuss warranty reporting procedures</p> |
| Preparation | <p>List any questions you wish to discuss</p> <p>Bring your selection materials and this homeowner guide</p> <p>Wear shoes and clothing appropriate to an active construction site</p> <p>Attend alone—we would like your undivided attention</p> <p>Plan to participate in a hands-on way</p> |

Chapter V - New Home Orientation

Re-Walk Confirmation Meeting

Smith Family Home takes responsibility for resolving items noted during the orientation. Many of these can be completed before our homeowners move in.

Sometimes parts need to be ordered or assistance from specialty trades may be required. Under these circumstances you can expect us to resolve all items within 15 working days unless we inform you of other scheduling. Any items still outstanding at your Re-Walk Confirmation tour are documented on the meeting agenda.

If work does need to be performed in your new home after your move-in, construction personnel are available for appointments Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Gaining access to occupied homes to complete orientation items is a concern to homeowners and builders alike. Smith Family Home asks that you make appointments so that someone over 18 is present for repairs. Working around your busy schedule may result in service taking longer than anyone wants. Your cooperation is essential.

Re-Walk Confirmation - Meeting Details

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Appointment Set by | Customer Experience Agent |
| When | Monday through Friday, between 8:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. Occurs on day of closing, typically just before going to the attorney's office |
| Where | Your new home |
| Attendees | Project Manager |
| Length | 20-30 minutes |
| Purposes | Tour your home's exterior if weather prevented that at the orientation Review completed work performed on orientation items Document any still outstanding items and discuss expected scheduling |
| Preparation | Bring any questions you have about operation of your new home or warranty services |

Chapter VI

Closing on Your Home

At closing the ultimate purpose of your purchase agreement is achieved: Ownership of your new home is transferred from Smith Family Home to you. The steps include finalizing your loan (one set of papers and checks) and Smith Family Home selling you the home (another set of papers and checks).

Funds are disbursed to the appropriate people and companies, title is transferred to your name(s), and the loan is recorded against your new property. This process involves about 75 documents—some of which are duplicates.



Chapter VI - Closing on Your Home

Date

Smith Family Home recognizes that timing is vitally important in planning your move and locking in your loan. We can specify an exact delivery date when construction reaches a point at which weather, material and labor shortages, lender issues, or change requests are unlikely to affect completion of your home. The closing takes place shortly after your orientation. Smith Family Home will notify you of the closing date 30 days or more before the date. We set the specific appointment time with at least 3 day's notice. Typically, the closing process takes about an hour.

Location

The closing on your new home either takes place at an attorney's office or at Smith Family Home's main office in Richmond Hill. We confirm the location with you when we set the appointment.

Documents

At closing, the documents necessary to convey your new home to you and to close the loan from the mortgage company will be signed and delivered. In addition to these standard items, the lender, the closing attorney, and Smith Family Home may require other documents to be signed. The principal documents typically include the following:

General Warranty Deed

The general warranty deed conveys the home and lot to you, subject only to permitted exceptions. (This does not apply if you already own the homesite.)

Title Commitment

At or before closing, we will deliver to you a standard form for an American Land Title Association (ALTA) owner's title insurance commitment to insure salable title of your home to you in the amount of the purchase price, subject to the permitted title exceptions that may be described in the purchase agreement.

The title insurance company will mail the actual policy in the weeks following the closing. When you receive this keep it in a safe place with your other important papers. What you will see on the day of closing is a commitment to issue the policy.

Lenders require title insurance in the amount of the mortgage. This insurance protects the lender in the event the title search missed anything. You are wise to request an owner's policy to protect your interest in the property. By ordering the owner's policy from the same company that issues the lender's policy, you can save a bit. The title insurance company will usually issue a second policy at a discount. Review the title commitment carefully. Discuss any questions with your title company.

Smith Family Home Limited Warranty

We provided a copy of the limited warranty for your review when you signed the purchase agreement. A signed and dated copy is included with your closing documents.

Promissory Note

The promissory note is from you, payable to the lender in the principal amount of the loan, plus interest. One-twelfth of your annual taxes and homeowner's insurance will be added to the principal and interest payment to determine your total monthly payment.

Chapter VI - Closing on Your Home

Deed of Trust

This encumbers your home as security for repayment of the promissory note.

Homeowner Association Documents

You will receive and sign for another copy of your homeowner association covenants, conditions, and restrictions; the association bylaws; and articles of incorporation at closing. Smith Family Home recommends that you read these carefully. The provisions they contain will be enforced.

“The Final Number”

Certain customary items in connection with the property will be prorated to the date of closing such as prepaid expenses, or reserves required by your lender and homeowners’ association, if applicable. Prorations of general real property taxes and applicable assessments will be based on the current year’s taxes and assessments or, if they are unavailable, on the taxes and assessments for the prior year.

The final cost figure is available near to the actual closing. Although a reasonably close estimate may be determined before the date of closing, the proration of several items included is affected by the closing date and cannot be calculated until that date is known. The Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act (RESPA) provides you with many protections. Under this law, you can review the settlement page that lists costs you will be paying at closing, 3 days before the closing appointment.

Preparation for Closing

The key to a smooth closing is preparation. Several details require your attention. You can handle most of these by phone or email. Address these details during the weeks before closing to prevent last-minute delays.

Form of Payment

The closing attorney will give you instructions as to the form of payment that will be acceptable to bring to closing to cover your fees from the closing statement and any down payment. In your planning, be sure to allow time to arrange for and obtain these funds. Keep in mind that some banks place a hold on monies moved from another account. .

Insurance

You need to provide proof of a homeowner's policy from your insurance company. Your insurance agent should know exactly what is needed. We suggest you arrange for this at least 3 weeks before the expected closing date.

Smith Family Home or Lender Issues

The title company is unable to negotiate or make representations on behalf of any of the parties involved in the closing. Therefore, please discuss any questions, agreements, or other details directly with us or your lender in advance of the closing.

Utilities

Smith Family Home will have utility service removed from its name 3 days after closing. You will need to notify all applicable utility companies of your move so that service continues in your name. We suggest that you contact these companies well ahead of time to avoid any interruption in service.

If you ordered a security system for your home, you can arrange to activate that system by contacting the monitoring service for a connection appointment.

Keys

When the closing process is complete, you will receive the keys to your new home. Where applicable, the same key will operate both the knob and the deadbolt locks. We recommend that you try all of the keys in all of your locks to confirm smooth operation. Depending on the number of family members living in the home, you may want to get extra copies of your house keys made.

Garage Door Opener Operators

Garage door opener operators, if applicable, will also be given to you when the closing process is complete. If you wish to change the code, review the manufacturer instructions. Batteries typically need to be replaced about once a year. You will receive two operators for each garage door opener installed in your home. If you need additional operators, contact the garage door opener company using the customer service number shown in the manufacturer's literature that came with the openers.

Chapter VI - Closing on Your Home

First Mortgage Payment

Your lender will provide you with information on where to send your mortgage payments and when the first payment will be due. Many lenders supply payment coupons for you to send in with your payments

Storing Documents

We suggest that you store the legal documents from your closing with other valuable papers, in a safe place. You will need them for tax purposes and when you refinance or sell your home.

Closing - Meeting Details

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Appointment Set by | Closing Attorney |
| When | Closings will be scheduled on business days (M-F) and coordinated with the closing attorney's office. Requests for time slots will be considered, but not guaranteed. |
| Where | Closing Attorney's office or Smith Family Home main office |
| Attendees | Closing Attorney |
| Length | Approximately one hour, depending on your questions |
| Purposes | <p>Arrange for homeowner insurance and have your agent forward evidence of insurance to the Lender</p> <p>Transfer utility services into your name</p> <p>Confirm with your lender that financial arrangements are finalized for closing</p> <p>Transfer funds, if necessary, sufficiently in advance to allow for processing</p> <p>Arrange to bring your required funds in the appropriate form of payment as instructed by the closing attorney. For funds in excess of \$500, the acceptable form of payment should be confirmed prior to closing. Pending the dollar amount needed to close, a wire transfer may be required; this can take up to 24 hours to process so arrangements should be made three days prior to your closing date. Please contact the attorney's office for wiring instructions or with any questions.</p> <p>Plan to turn your cell phone off if at all possible</p> |

Chapter VI - Closing on Your Home

Moving Hints

Take precautions to protect vulnerable surfaces such as hardwood or resilient floors. Cover rails with moving pads or blankets. Remove doors where furniture might be a tight fit. You can protect carpet with ribbed, plastic runners.

Professional movers should have insurance for any damage they might accidentally cause. Friends and relatives will not. They are also unlikely to have the training and practiced skills of professional movers. If you are moving yourself, organize the schedule to avoid rushing and include rest breaks. People who are tired or in a hurry are more likely to hurt themselves or your belongings.

Whatever else is going on, at dinner time assemble the family for your first meal together in the new home. Sit across the card table from each other, smile, and say “*We made it!!!*”

Chapter VI - Closing on Your Home

Moving Preparation Checklist

- ☐ Compare proposals of professional movers:
 - Costs for services such as packing and unpacking
 - Costs of packing materials and boxes
 - Distance and weight charges
 - Insurance
 - Availability and notice needed
- ☐ Plan a self-move well in advance:
 - Make truck reservation early (6–8 weeks, or more)
 - Include a reservation for a dolly and moving pads
 - Reconfirm one week prior
- ☐ If you have children, involve them in planning and preparing for the move, if age appropriate
- ☐ Create a file for storing documents about your home and manufacturer literature
- ☐ Retain receipts for tax purposes. Moving costs may be deductible
- ☐ Send change-of-address cards to magazines and book clubs six weeks prior to your move
- ☐ Give the forwarding order to your old post office one month prior to assure uninterrupted service
- ☐ Register children in their new schools
- ☐ Transfer medical and dental records, if necessary
- ☐ Arrange for homeowner insurance and obtain the certificate you need for closing
- ☐ Order checks with new your address; update financial records
- ☐ Update your driver's license, car and voter registration
- ☐ Properly dispose of flammable or hazardous materials that should not be moved

Chapter VI - Closing on Your Home

Packing Materials

- ☐ Boxes of various sizes; cartons for mattresses
- ☐ Packing tape and heavy string
- ☐ Packing paper, newspaper, bubble wrap
- ☐ Labels to identify boxes (include a number, room/name); "Fragile" labels for special items Markers
- ☐ Master packing list (list each box by number with name/room and brief description of contents) Scissors
- ☐ Furniture pads, blankets, rugs

Moving Day Necessities

- ☐ Children's toys and games
- ☐ Toilet paper
- ☐ Beverages and snacks
- ☐ Paper towels
- ☐ Soap and hand towels
- ☐ Trash bags
- ☐ First aid kit
- ☐ Prescription medication
- ☐ Medical supplies for special needs
- ☐ Pad and pen
- ☐ Shelf liners
- ☐ Small tools: Tape measure, scissors, screwdrivers, hammer
- ☐ Ice maker hook-up kit
- ☐ Dryer vent flex hose
- ☐ New hoses for washing machine
- ☐ Picture hangers
- ☐ Plant hooks
- ☐ Scratch cover
- ☐ Phone and phone book

Chapter VII - Caring for Your Home

Preparation for Closing

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

Similar to an automobile, your home requires care from the first day. Regular attention is essential to maintaining a quality home for a lifetime. This chapter of our guide was assembled to assist you in that effort.

Please note that this guide is written based on commonly accepted industry standards and assumes normal use in average environmental and weather conditions. It is the responsibility of the homeowner to read the manufacturer's documentation and warranty information that came with the products installed in their home. In the event that a conflict between the guidelines in this book and those provided by the manufacturer of any component in a home, the manufacturer's guidelines prevail. All of the products mentioned in this guide may not be installed in every home; conversely, all products and components in a home may not be addressed in this guide. It is the homeowner's responsibility to become familiar with the actual products and components installed in their home.

Chapter VII

Caring for Your Home

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Chapter VII - Caring for Your Home

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. Natural fluctuations in temperature and humidity also affect your home, resulting in maintenance items.

We recognize that it is impossible to anticipate and describe every attention needed for good home care. We focused on items that homeowners commonly ask about. The subjects are listed in alphabetical order to make finding answers to your questions convenient. Because we offer a variety of floor plans and optional features, this guide may discuss components that are not present in your home.

Checklists

You will find several checklists included in this guide. These cover fire prevention reminders, energy and water conservation tips, green home care ideas, suggestions for extended absences, appliance service information, home maintenance supplies list, and a maintenance schedule. Again we make no claim that we have included every detail. We do believe we have provided you with a good start and we've allowed space for you to add your own notes to our checklists.

Prompt Attention

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

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

Some manufacturer's warranties may extend beyond the first year and it is in your best interests 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.

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

While we strive to build a flawless home, we are realistic enough to know that, with repeated use, an item in the home may fail to perform as it should. When this occurs, we will make necessary corrections so the item meets our warranty guidelines. In support of this commitment, we provide you with a one-year limited warranty. The guidelines described in the pages that follow apply to the one year time period unless otherwise stated.

If you sell your home during the warranty period, advise us and the 2-10 Homebuyers Warranty Corporation of the new owner's name and the date of closing. Please pass this guide along to the new owners or suggest that they contact us to request one.

Warranty Service Requests

When you purchased your home, you actually purchased hundreds of items and the work of 35 to 50 independent trade contractors. We construct your home with carefully selected materials and the effort of experienced craftsmen and laborers under the supervision of our field personnel. Although this group works from detailed plans and specifications, because a home is one of the last hand-built products left in the world, each one is unique and over time, each behaves differently.

At the time of closing, we enrolled your home in the 2-10 Home Buyers Warranty program (2-10 HBW) which includes 1-Year Workmanship, 2-Year Systems and 10-Year Structural coverage. Please take time to review the enclosed manuals regarding your home warranty. You will also find your 30-Day and 11-Month Warranty Request forms; you may use these to maintain your warranty request lists for future submission. Kindly remember that 2-10 HBW does not cover owner damages.

Please ensure you complete Homeowner Central registration to access your online portal so that this is ready to use when it is time to submit your warrantable items at 30-day and 11-month. Use the 30-day and 11-month form provided in this packet to keep a list of items as you come across them until it is time to submit them.

Chapter VII - Caring for Your Home

Below is a short summary of our standard warranty process during the 1st year of coverage:

30 Day Warranty Service

This warranty service is to address items that may be found in or on the home during the 30-Days after closing. Please refer to your 2-10 Warranty Booklet to determine which items are warrantable. The homeowner should submit a 30-day list using the Homeowner Central Portal online. Instructions for registering with and using the online portal are included with this closing packet. We highly encourage you to submit a single request rather than multiple individual requests. Multiple requests may result in delays in your service. Use the 30-day and 11-month form provided in this packet to keep a list of items as you come across them until it is time to submit them.


After a 30-day list is submitted, our SFH Warranty Team will verify all items on the list are warrantable items. A SFH Warranty Representative may request additional information from the homeowner at this time regarding the items listed. Once received, an SFH warranty team member will make contact directly with the homeowner to schedule a “workday”. The timeline for these items varies depending on that relevant trade’s schedule and other factors. The work day will need to be scheduled during normal business hours which may require the homeowner to take time off of work. Once the SFH team member has confirmed a day that the homeowner will be available for the work day, the SFH warranty team member will schedule all relevant trades for the scheduled work day. After all trades have finished their approved items during the work day, an SFH team member will meet the homeowner at their home to verify and have the homeowner sign off that the warrantable items have been completed.

In the event you find additional items after your schedule 30-Day visit, simply add them to your 11-Month Service.

Some items will be addressed one time only. These are items that need to go through a full year of weather cycles, heating, cooling and settling before being addressed. Examples of these items are drywall, flooring, and trim work. We recommend deferring these items until the 11-month warranty service unless the items are severe.

Missed Appointments

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. In the event that you miss an appointment and do not notify us, and our trade contractor shows up and cannot perform the repairs, there are times that they will charge us a service fee for the missed appointment. In these events, we may need to pass along that service charge to you.



The screenshot shows the Smith Family Homes warranty portal. It has a dark blue header with the company name. Below the header, there are four sections arranged in a 2x2 grid. The top-left section is titled '30 DAY WALK' and contains a form with a 'NEW' button and a '30 DAY WALK' label. The top-right section is titled '30 DAY WORK DAY' and contains a form with a 'NEW' button and a '30 DAY WORK DAY' label. The bottom-left section is titled '11 MONTH WALK' and contains a form with a 'NEW' button and an '11 MONTH WALK' label. The bottom-right section is titled '11 MONTH WORK DAY' and contains a form with a 'NEW' button and an '11 MONTH WORK DAY' label. At the bottom of the page, there is a small disclaimer: 'Within 30 days of trades scheduled, must be completed within 48 hours in instance. If not completed by 48 hours, customer will be charged \$500 to cover the cost of the items based on schedule. Checking the 30 day walk will result in the work day being to be scheduled.'.

11 Month Warranty Service

This warranty service follows the same process as the 30-day warranty service. The main difference is that the 11-Month is when we bring in drywallers and painters to correct any warrantable items. Warrantable items for this service should be submitted to the Homeowner Central Portal no later than 11-Months after closing.

Chapter VII - Caring for Your Home

Emergency Warranty Service

If you experience an emergency service situation:

- Call the emergency trade numbers found on your electrical panel. Once the appropriate trade has been contacted, submit the issue using the Homeowner Central Portal so that SFH has a record of your claim.
- Failure to submit your emergency claim in the portal can result in delays in your scheduling and follow-ups. Timely record keeping helps us keep our building partners accountable and in providing you with the best customer care possible.

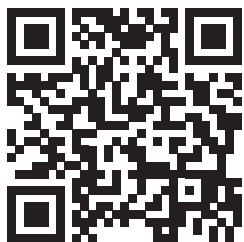


Submit requests online using the Homeowner Central Portal

You will receive a registration email after your closing; please click the link provided and complete registration to access your online portal to submit warranty requests. It is imperative to submit all claims (including emergency services) in your Homeowner Central Portal. To ensure accurate record keeping, all communication between our warranty team and you, the homebuyer, should be kept within the portal.

Before submitting a warranty claim, please familiarize yourself with the following sections from your 2-10 Home Buyers Warranty booklet:

- 2-10 Warranty Booklet section III. C. Access to your home for inspection and making repairs.
- 2-10 Warranty Booklet section VII will explain your maintenance responsibilities under this express limited warranty.
- 2-10 Warranty Booklet section VIII Exclusions.



Scan this code to access the Portal and
download 2-10 Warranty Booklets

smithfamilyhomes.com/warranty

Chapter VII - Caring for Your Home

Important information and reminders for the 1st year of warranty coverage

- If an emergency call is determined to be non-warrantable, the homeowner will be responsible for any service fees and/or labor costs.
 - Plumbing example - clogged sewer line caused by too much toilet tissue or child's toy
 - Electrical example – breakers tripped because circuit overloaded
 - HVAC example – dirty air filters or clogged condensation line
- Your appliance user manuals and warranty cards are in your kitchen drawer.
- Warranty cards contain with a link to register your appliances.
- You will find maintenance/care guides in this package and in the New Home Maintenance Manual.
- You have GFI protection on your receptacles in the kitchen, bathrooms, whirlpool tub, garage, laundry room, outside and wet bar. This protection can be in the form of a breaker in your electrical panel in your garage or a GFI receptacle at the beginning of the electrical run. If you have an outlet or outlets that stop working, please check to see if the GFI breaker or GFI outlet has been tripped and needs resetting.
- Arc Fault Breakers are located in your electrical panel. They protect several of your room outlets and lights. If any lights or outlets stop working, please check your electrical panel for any tripped breakers. These breakers, when tripped, usually have to be pushed fully to the off position before they will reset.
- Your smoke detectors are hard-wired to the electrical system and also have battery backup.
- If your smoke detector starts beeping it typically means it needs a new battery.
- You have filters in your air return(s) that will need to be changed every 30-Days.
- 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.
- It is the responsibility of the homeowner to read the manufacturer's documentation and warranty information that came with the products installed in their home.
- Warranty coverage does not cover owner damages.
- If you sell your home during the warranty period, advise SFH and the 2-10 Homebuyers Warranty Corporation of the new owner's name and the date of closing.

With so many details and people involved, a planned system is essential. Our system includes numerous types of service. If you are ever in doubt as to which applies to your situation, contact our warranty office for assistance.

Chapter VII - Caring for Your Home

Additions or Modifications to the Home during Warranty Period

We prefer that you do not make any changes to the home during the first year of the warranty period. Changes made to the home during the warranty period will exclude that area of the home from the remaining warranty. For example, if you add wallpaper or custom painting to a room then that room would be excluded from any paint or drywall repairs.

Any work that is performed by others during the warranty period that affects the electrical, plumbing, heating and air conditioning or structural systems in the house will void that warranty on the entire house.

If the contractor, whom the home is under warranty with, performs the work, then the warranty will remain through the warranty period. For your protection, please do not have any work on these systems performed during the warranty period by contractors other than those who performed the original work.

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 that 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 an adult is available to admit them to your home. An adult is a person 18 or older who has your written or verbal authorization to admit service personnel and sign completed work orders.

Renters

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

Chapter VII - Caring for Your Home

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 regular home maintenance task, we will review the maintenance steps with you and offer whatever informational assistance we can. Occasionally the inspection step is unnecessary. In that case, we issue the needed work orders and notify you that we have done so.

Warranty Decisions

In addition to the information contained in the 2-10 Homebuyers Warranty booklet, this 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. The guide describes the corrective action we will take in many common situations. Nothing written herein changes any part of the warranty policy as outlined by the 2-10 Warranty booklet nor is it intended to supersede the guidelines set forth in that booklet.

If a warranty question arises other than those discussed here, refer to the 2-10 Warranty booklet for more information.

We Sometimes Break Our Own Rules—in Your Favor

Our criteria for qualifying warranty repairs meet or exceed established guidelines as defined by your warranty program's requirements and normal industry practices. Please note that we reserve the right, at our discretion, to exceed these guidelines if common sense or individual circumstances make that appropriate, without being obligated to exceed all guidelines to a similar degree or for other homeowners whose circumstances are different.

We Sometimes Say No

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 job.

Exterior Items

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

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Children

Children are naturally curious about tools and work in progress on your 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 and 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 becoming injured or lost, or giving in to its natural curiosity about tools and materials used for repairs 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

In all work that we perform we are concerned that your furniture, appliances, and personal items be protected. When warranty work is needed in your home, we will ask that you remove vulnerable items or items that might make performing the repair difficult. This includes furniture, appliances, 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 on the street, and have appropriate materials to cover the work area, protecting your home from damage and catching the dust or scraps from the work being performed. Similarly, all personnel should clean up the work area, removing whatever 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.

Completion Time

Regular review of outstanding work orders is part of our office routine. Checking with trades and homeowners alike, we strive to identify the cause for delays and get all warranty work completed within an appropriate and reasonable amount of time.

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

Missed Appointments

Good communication is one key to successful completion of warranty items. We strive to keep homeowners informed and to protect them from inconvenience. One of our challenges in this regard 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. In the event that you miss an appointment and do not notify us, and our trade contractor shows up and cannot perform the repairs, there are times that they will charge us a service fee for the missed appointment. In these events, we may need to pass along that service charge to you.

Chapter VII - Caring for Your Home

Warranty Visit - *Meeting Details*

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Appointment Set by | Warranty office |
| When | Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. |
| Where | Your new home |
| Attendees | Homeowner(s) Warranty Manager |
| Length | 30 minutes to an hour, depending on your questions |
| Purposes | Review our warranty inspection agenda and/or your list of items Discuss any questions you have |
| Preparation | Note items or maintenance questions you want to discuss |

Chapter VII - Caring for Your Home

Air Conditioning (through Wood Trim)

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 the system 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 important 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 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, the carpet, and the 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 may well 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 15 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

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, follow the maintenance instructions for your furnace as part of maintaining your air conditioning system.

Chapter VII - Caring for Your Home

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 that the

- Thermostat is set to “cool” and the temperature is set below the room temperature.
- 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.)
- 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.

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

The air conditioning system should maintain a temperature of 78 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.

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.

Chapter VII - Caring for Your Home

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.

One Year Limited 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 possession. 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.

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

As applicable, we confirm that all appliance surfaces are in acceptable condition during your new home orientation. We assign all appliance warranties to you, effective on the date of closing. The appliance manufacturers warrant their products directly to you according to the terms and conditions of these written warranties.

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. 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.

Brick and Cultured Stone

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Brick and stone 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.

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. Before performing any cleaning operation on your brick or stone, please consult the manufacturer for instructions on cleaning the specific brick or stone that was installed on your home. Certain brick and stone should not be cleaned with a brush or any type of cleaner. Consult your home center or hardware store for commercial products to remove efflorescence, only after verifying a proper cleaning method for your particular brick or stone. 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.

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

We check the brickwork during the new home orientation to confirm correct installation of designated materials.

Cracks: One-Time Repair

One time during the warranty period, we repair masonry cracks that exceed 1/4 inch.

Chapter VII - Caring for Your Home

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 and the way each piece takes stain. These variations are normal and are not considered warranty concerns.

Cleaning

Consult your manufacturer's recommendations for care and maintenance.

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. Steam from boiling water in stovetop pots can also be a source of moisture damage on nearby cabinets – use hood vents for keeping moisture moving away from finished cabinets, and dry them off with a cloth as soon as moisture is found in order to help prevent damage.

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

During the new home 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 between cabinets and the ceiling or cabinets and the walls by caulking or other means if the gap exceeds 1/4 inch. 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.

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.

Chapter VII - Caring for Your Home

Cabinets

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Read the manufacturer's manual 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 in a fire. After cleaning, push the test button to confirm the alarm is working.

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

We will test carbon monoxide detectors during the new home orientation to confirm that they are working and to familiarize you with the alarm. Replacing batteries after closing is a homeowner maintenance item. Smith Family Home 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

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 the 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 soapless cleaner and sponge with water. If the burn is extensive, talk with a professional about replacing the damaged area.

Cleaning

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. This actually acts like sandpaper and breaks down the fibers of the carpet causing premature wear.

Please note however, that beater bar vacuum attachments should not be used on any type of berber 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 18 months in your home and then once a year after that. *See also Stains*

Chapter VII - Caring for Your Home

Crushing

Furniture and traffic may crush a carpet's pile fibers. Frequent vacuuming in high-traffic areas and glides or cups under heavy pieces of furniture can help prevent this. 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 wear.

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 develops at the threshold or vicinity of the return air vent. *See also Ghosting*

Fuzzing

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

Pilling

Pilling or small balls of fiber can appear on your carpet, depending on the type of carpet fiber and the type of traffic. 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 carpeting using a power stretcher, not a knee-kicker.

Seams

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 more dense and 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 show 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. A good vacuuming, which makes the pile all go in the same direction, provides a temporary remedy.

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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 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 Web site for recommended cleaning procedures for your particular fiber. Pretest any spot-removal solution in an inconspicuous area 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. Confirm that your humidifier is set appropriately to help control static build-up (if applicable).

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

During your new home 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 type of vacuum attachments on berber type 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 any visible gaps or overlapping at the seam due to improper installation within the one year warranty period.

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Caulking

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Time and weather will shrink and dry caulking so that it no longer provides a good seal. As part of your routine 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.

Latex Caulk

Latex caulking is appropriate for an area that requires painting, such as along the stair stringer or 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 tub meets tile or a sink meets a countertop.

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

During the new home orientation we confirm that appropriate areas are adequately caulked.

Separations

Please refer to the Warranty booklet you received for an explanation of warranty coverage on caulking.

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

Chapter VII - Caring for Your Home

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.

Grout Discoloration

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.

Sealing Grout

Sealing grout is your decision and responsibility. Once grout has been sealed, ongoing maintenance of that seal is necessary and limited warranty coverage is void.

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 package directions.

Tile around bathtubs or countertops may appear to be pulling up after a time. This is caused by normal shrinkage of grout or caulk and shrinkage of 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 directions on the container. This maintenance is important to protect the underlying surface from water damage.

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

During the new home 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 first 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 that time is your responsibility. If you adjusted or replaced any of the original grout, the warranty becomes void.

Concrete Flatwork

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

The constant expansion and contraction of the soil under the concrete and the concrete itself causes shifting and movement that can result in cracks. By maintaining good drainage, you protect your home's foundation and the concrete flatwork: patio, driveway, garage floor, and sidewalks.

Soil composition affects the sub-base on which concrete is placed. Homes built on one side of a street may experience more movement and hence cracking, than those across from them. Concrete cracking is not in itself an indication of a serious problem.

Reinforcing concrete using wire mesh or reinforcing bar does not eliminate cracking. The reinforcing is for structural purposes and helps control the cracking that will naturally occur.

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 for keeping exterior concrete 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 recommend sweeping to clean the garage floor.

Control Joints

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.

Cracks

Because concrete is a water based product, shrinkage and cracking will occur. 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.

Soil and climate conditions in our area can cause frost heave, which may cause concrete movement and may result in concrete cracks. During the summer, moisture finds its way under the concrete along the edges or through cracks in the surface. In winter, this moisture forms frost that can lift the concrete, increasing the cracking. Maintaining drainage away from all concrete slabs will minimize cracking from this cause.

Expansion (Isolation) Joints

We sometimes install expansion joints to isolate a concrete slab from other parts of the home such as foundation walls, garage floor, and so on. They permit movement of the slab in response to soil expansion and can help reduce cracking. However, as the concrete shrinks during the curing process, moisture can penetrate under the concrete and cause separation or displacement. When this occurs, fill the resulting gap with a gray silicone sealant which you can purchase at most hardware stores.

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Heavy Vehicles

Prohibit commercial or other extremely heavy vehicles such as moving vans and other 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.

Spalling (Surface Chips)

Causes of spalling include repeated hosing of concrete for cleaning, animal urine, radiator overflow, fertilizer, uncleared 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.

Garage Floor

Garage Floor Cracks

We will repair cracks in garage floors in excess of 3/16 inch in width. When repairs are necessary the color and texture of the repair materials will vary from the original concrete.

Condensation

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 a layer of moisture on a glass containing a cold beverage, on windows and 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:

- Do not cover or interfere in any way with the fresh air supply to your home's systems (if applicable).
- Develop the habit of running the hood fan while you are cooking.
- Run your bath fans for a minimum of 15 minutes after bathing or showering.
- Air your house by opening windows for a time when weather permits.

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.

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New Construction

Some experts have estimated that a typical new home contains 50 gallons of water. Water is part of lumber, concrete, drywall texture, paint, caulk, and other materials used in building. Wet weather during construction adds more. 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.

Normal Activities

As you live in your home, your daily lifestyle contributes to the moisture in the air also. Cooking, laundry, baths and showers, aquariums, plants, and so on all add water to the air in your home. Likewise, 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 the materials to dry out faster, generating more moisture into the air; drying the materials out too fast also increases shrinkage cracks and separations.

Ventilation

The best way to assure adequate moisture ventilation after a shower is to run exhaust fans in bathrooms, leaving the bath fan running for a minimum of 15 minutes after bathing or showering. Use your range hood fan when using the stove. When weather conditions permit, open windows so fresh air can circulate through your home. Keep the dryer exhaust hose clean and securely connected.

Refer to your manufacturer's Web site for recommended cleaning procedures for your particular fiber. Pretest any spot-removal solution in an inconspicuous area 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. *See also Ventilation*

One Year Limited 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. .

Chapter VII - Caring for Your Home

Countertops

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Caulking

The caulking between the countertop and the wall, along the joint at the backsplash (the section of counter that extends a few inches up the wall along the counter area), and around the sink may shrink, leaving a slight gap. Maintaining a good seal in these locations is important to keep moisture from reaching the wood under the laminates or granite and to prevent warping.

Cleaning

Mix a small amount of mild detergent in clean water and use a clean cloth. Dry with a soft clean cloth. Do not allow water to sit on the surface, especially on the seams. 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 on the edge of the counter.

Moisture

Coffee pots, electric fry pans, slow cookers, and so on 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

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 soft drinks can etch some natural stone surfaces.

Sealer

Granite is highly resistant to chips and scratches, but it is porous. The granite surface should be treated every 6 months with a sealer to help prevent staining. If droplets of water dripped on the countertop bead up the sealer is still doing its job. If not, the sealer should be applied.

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Corian and Cultured Marble

Corian and cultured marble countertops, while great choices and are both very durable, do reveal scuffs and scratches more easily than granite countertops. Please take great care in setting and moving items on these types of surfaces. Scuffs, scratches, nicks, gouges, and the like, are not warrantable items. However, most of these are preventable with careful use. Also, most common scratches and damage can be sanded and buffed out by the supplier for a reasonable service charge.

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

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

Separation from Wall: One-time repair

Separation of countertops from 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, we will re-caulk these areas one time during the materials and workmanship warranty. We recommend you request this during our year-end visit. Subsequently caulking will be one of your home maintenance responsibilities.

Laminate

Laminated countertops may have one or more discernible seams. We confirm seams to be tight and uniform at the new home orientation. Following that, seams in laminate countertops that form gaps or cracks greater than 1/16 inch are covered by warranty.

Granite

Edges should be smooth and even. Where backsplash joints occur at corners, the top edges should be even.

Chapter VII - Caring for Your Home

Decks

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Wood decks add to the style and function of your home and are a high maintenance part of your home's exterior.

Effects of Exposure

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

Foot Traffic

As you use your decks, abrasives and grit on shoes can scratch or dent the wood surface. Regular sweeping and mats can mitigate this but will not completely prevent it.

Outdoor Furniture

Moving grills, furniture, or other items can damage the surface of the decking. Use caution when moving such items to prevent scratches, gouges, and so on.

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 directions carefully.

Stain

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

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

Exposed wood decks are constructed to meet structural and functional design. During the new home orientation, we will confirm that the wood decks are in satisfactory condition.

Your deck has a one-year limited warranty from the time of possession.

Color Variation

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

Replacement Boards or Rails

Shrinkage, cracking, splitting, cupping, and twisting are natural occurrences in wood decks and are excluded from limited warranty coverage. In extreme situations where personal safety is involved, if we provide replacement of boards or rails, the new material will vary in color from pieces that have been exposed to elements and use. Corrections needed for concerns that result 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. Minor maintenance is sometimes needed and with just routine care they will serve you well for many years.

Bi-Fold Doors

Interior bi-fold doors sometimes stick or warp because of weather conditions. 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 the routine homeowner maintenance.

Exterior Paint Finish

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.

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.

Slamming

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

Sticking

The most common cause of a sticking door is the natural expansion of lumber caused by changes in humidity. When swelling occurs during a damp season it may cause sticking. Do not plane the door unless it continues to stick after the weather changes.

Before planing a door because of sticking, try two other steps: first, apply either a paste wax, light coat of paraffin, or candle wax to the sticking surface; or second, tighten the screws that hold the door jamb or door frame. If planing is necessary even after these measures, use sandpaper to smooth the door and paint the sanded area to seal against moisture.

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Warping

Some minor warping of interior doors is normal due to natural fluctuations in humidity caused by forced air furnaces, showers, dishwashers, and so on. 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 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, and swipes around the perimeter of the entry doors. Adjust or replace as necessary. Exterior door thresholds occasionally require adjustment or replacement as well.

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

During the new home orientation we confirm that all doors are in acceptable condition and correctly adjusted. We will repair construction damage to doors noted on the new home orientation documents.

Adjustments

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

Failure to Latch

If a door will not latch because of minor settling during the first year of occupancy, please notify the warranty office.

Warping

Doors should operate with relative ease to engage and release the latch. We will repair doors that warp in excess of 1/4 inch when measured corner to corner.

Chapter VII - Caring for Your Home

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. This is very normal, particularly during the first year of homeownership of a new home, as the home continues to dry out and acclimate.

Repairs

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. This work is best done when you redecorate the room. We recommend that you wait through one complete seasonal cycle to do so.

Repair hairline cracks with a coat of paint. You can repair slightly larger cracks with spackle. To correct a nail pop, reset the nail with a hammer and punch. Cover it with spackle, which is available at paint and hardware stores. Apply two or three thin coats. When dry, sand the surface with fine-grain sandpaper, and then paint. You can fill indentations caused by sharp objects in the same manner.

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

During the new home 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 warrantybased 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.

Separation and Nail Pop Repairs: One-Time Repair

One time during the materials and workmanship warranty, generally as part of your year-end visit, we will repair drywall shrinkage cracks and nail pops, and touch up paint to match as closely as possible.

You are responsible for custom paint colors or wallpaper that has been applied subsequent to possession. 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.

Easements

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Easements are areas where such things as utility supply lines can pass through your property. They permit service to your lot and adjacent lots, now and in the future. Your lot may 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 on the plat of record 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 the 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 to name a few. 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.*

Gutters and Downspouts (if applicable)

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Check gutters periodically and remove leaves or other debris. 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 asphalt particles from the roofing materials is a home maintenance concern. Removing such material is your responsibility.

Downspout Extensions or Splash Pads

Extensions should discharge outside of rock or bark beds so that water is not dammed behind the edging materials that might be used. The downspouts that end on sod should have an extension or splash pad along the ground to move water away from the perimeter of the home. The extensions must be in place and in their lowered position to move water away from the foundation. Always return downspout extensions to their lowered position after mowing lawns.

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.

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

Gutters over 10 m (3 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 one inch) will stand for short periods of time in gutters immediately after rain. No correction is required for this condition.

Chapter VII - Caring for Your Home

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 a 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, and some other areas of your home. 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 back 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 a voltage requirement (such as a power tool) for the circuit. The starting of 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.

Buzzing

Fluorescent fixtures use transformer action to operate. This action sometimes causes a buzzing which is normal.

Dimmable Fixtures/Dimmers with CFL Bulbs (if applicable)

Dimmers have changed a lot in recent years. The old dimmers were a buzzing heat source that didn't save any power at all. Today's dimmers are much improved and actually save power. Dimmers can come with a rotary knob or a slider (either is effectively the same) and are used to control some of our larger light sources. Please note that if you are using compact florescent lights (CFLs) for lighting, use dimmable bulbs. A little buzzing with CFLs is normal.

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.

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GFCI (Ground-Fault Circuit Interrupters)

GFCI receptacles have a built-in element that senses fluctuations 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 (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.

Caution: Never plug a refrigerator or food freezer into a GFCI-controlled outlet. The likelihood of the contents being ruined is high and the limited warranty excludes such damage.

Each GFCI receptacle has a test and reset button. Once each month, press the test button. This will trip the circuit. To return service, press the reset button. If a GFCI breaker trips during normal use, it may indicate a faulty appliance and you will need to investigate the problem. One GFCI breaker can control multiple outlets.

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 noted during your new home orientation.

Modifications

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

Motion Switches (if applicable)

One of the energy saving devices in your home is the motion sensor. There are 3 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 “sensor” position, this 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 a CFL bulb with this device, ensure you use a dimmable bulb as a regular CFL 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.

If you have small children in your home, install safety plugs to cover unused outlets. Education of children to electrical safety is important—they need to know how to use electrical outlets, sockets, or fixtures. This also minimizes the air infiltration that sometimes occurs with these outlets.

Chapter VII - Caring for Your Home

Troubleshooting Tips: No Electrical Service

GFCI receptacles have a built-in element that senses fluctuations 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 (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.

No Electrical Service Anywhere in the Home

Before calling warranty or the electrician, check to confirm that the

- Service is not out in the entire area. If so, contact the utility company.
- 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, check to confirm that the

- Main breaker and individual breakers are all in the on position.
- Applicable wall switch is on
- GFCI is set (see details on GFCIs, earlier in this section)
- Item you want to use is plugged in
- Item you want to use works in other outlets
- 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.

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

During the new home orientation, we confirm that light fixtures are in acceptable condition and that all bulbs are working. Our limited warranty excludes any fixture you supplied, or changed after taking possession.

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.

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One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

During the new home orientation, we confirm that light fixtures are in acceptable condition and that all bulbs are working. Our limited warranty excludes any fixture you supplied, or changed after taking possession.

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.

GFCI (Ground-Fault Interrupters)

We are not responsible for food spoilage that results from your plugging refrigerators or freezers into a GFCI outlet.

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. We strongly recommend using surge protectors for providing power to these sensitive equipment in order to protect them from damage.

Chapter VII - Caring for Your Home

Energy and Water Conservation

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. In the process of conserving, you also save money as an additional benefit. Keep these hints in mind as you use your home's features.

Heating and Cooling

- Maintain your home's heating and cooling systems in clean and good working order to prevent inconvenience and maximize efficiency. Arrange for a professional to service heat and air conditioning systems a minimum of once every two years.
- Keep filters clean or replace them regularly.
- Learn how to use your programmable thermostat for comfort and efficient energy use.
- If you have a zoned system (more than one furnace and separate controls) think through operating schedules and temperature settings to maximize comfort and minimize energy consumption.
- Plan landscaping elements that support efficient energy use:
 - Deciduous trees provide shade during the 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 garage overhead doors closed.
- If you expect a house full of dinner guests, you can turn the heat down a few degrees as 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.
- Where applicable, limit use of a wood burning fireplace in extremely cold or windy weather when the chimney draft will draw room air out at an extreme rate.
- During the winter, humidifying the air in your home allows the air to retain more heat and is a general health benefit. Note: If condensation develops on your windows, you have taken a good thing too far and 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.
- Avoid use of a humidifier when you are using your air conditioner.

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Summer

- If you include them in your home, 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 heat gain.

Water and Water Heater

- If you have a traditional tank style water heater, set it at “normal” or 120 degrees Fahrenheit if your dishwasher has a water booster heater. If not, set the water heater at 140 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Follow the steps outlined in the manufacturer’s directions for draining water from your water heater in order to remove accumulated hard-water scale that builds up inside the tank. Timing will depend on the nature of your water supply.
- If you have a tankless or heat pump water heater, follow manufacturer instructions for the timing and steps to clean the unit.
- Correct plumbing leaks, running toilets, or dripping faucets as soon as possible.
- Keep aerators clean.
- Use the dual flush feature on low flush toilets whenever possible.
- 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

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.

Chapter VII - Caring for Your Home

Appliances

- In selecting your home's appliances, compare the information on the (black and white) EnerGuide 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 disposal. This not only saves hot water you pay to heat, it 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.
- Use a phosphate free detergent.
- Select an appropriate size for your needs; two small refrigerators use more energy than one large one.
- Refrigerators with the freezer on top generally use significantly less energy than side-by-side models. Bottom freezer models are the most energy efficient models available.
- Refrigerators shelves are warmer near the door and the coolest parts are near the bottom and toward the back. If possible, keep your meats and dairy products in those cooler places.
- A fuller 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 into the refrigerator; allow them to cool a bit 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 condenser by cleaning every three months or as needed.

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Electrical

- Use compact fluorescent bulbs (CFL) or LED lighting where possible. At this time, incandescent bulbs are the least efficient source of light. Keep your light fixtures and bulbs clean to get maximum light they produce.
- **Caution: Compact fluorescent bulbs contain small amounts of mercury. If you break one, ventilate the area and clean up wearing gloves. Disposed bulbs should be delivered to a facility designed to manage them. Always dispose of CFLs or fluorescent bulbs properly rather than putting them in your regular trash. Contact your local waste management program for instructions.**
- Light emitting diode (LED) bulbs, while expensive, last for 50,000 hours (5 times longer than CFL and 65 times longer than incandescent bulbs) and they do not contain mercury. They work best for task lighting such as desk lamps and under counter lights.
- 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.

Your Additional Reminders and Notes

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 all insurance policies that cover your property and belongings are current and provide sufficient coverage.
- Some insurance policies stipulate how often your home should be checked when 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.

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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.
- Leave a second car in the drive.
- Be energy conscious—change the settings on your thermostat for both summer and winter usage. Leaving the temperature in the home at a minimum 55 degrees in cold weather and 75 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 allowing heat to circulate.
- Arm your security system, if applicable.

Your Additional Reminders and Notes

Expansion and Contraction

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Changes in temperature and humidity cause all building materials to expand and contract. Dissimilar materials expand or contract at different rates. This movement results in separation between materials, particularly dissimilar ones. You will see the effects in small cracks in drywall and in paint, especially where moldings meet drywall, at mitered corners, and where tile grout meets a tub or sink. While this can alarm an uninformed homeowner, it is normal.

Shrinkage of the wood members of your home is inevitable and occurs in every new home. Although this is most noticeable during the first year, it may continue beyond that time. In most cases, caulk and paint are all that you need to conceal this minor evidence of a natural phenomenon. Even though properly installed, caulking shrinks and cracks.

Maintenance of caulking is your responsibility.

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

We provide one-time repairs to some of the effects of expansion and contraction. See individual categories such as drywall and caulk for details.

Chapter VII - Caring for Your Home

Fencing

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Depending on the community in which your home is located, fencing may be provided by us, it may be an optional item you select, the developer may provide it, or fencing may be an item you consider adding after your possession. When we install fencing as our responsibility we install it in conjunction with the landscaping. All types of fencing require some routine attention.

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 and style of fence allowed.

Specific requirements about style, height, and position on your home site are described in the current architectural guidelines, which you receive as part of your purchase documents or can obtain from the association or developer's office. Type, style, and color of fencing are addressed in these guidelines.

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 lot size, topography, and shape.

Weather Damage

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

Wood Fences

The lumber used to construct wood fences is All Weather Wood, or rough cedar or spruce. Over time it will 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 any gates twice a year and tighten hardware or make needed adjustments.

Chapter VII - Caring for Your Home

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 stand around the fence posts. Make corrections to drainage as needed to prevent this. *See also Utility Locates*

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

If fencing is part of your home purchase, we will confirm the acceptable condition of the fence during your new home 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.

Expansion and Contraction

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Changes in temperature and humidity cause all building materials to expand and contract. Dissimilar materials expand or contract at different rates. This movement results in separation between materials, particularly dissimilar ones. You will see the effects in small cracks in drywall and in paint, especially where moldings meet drywall, at mitered corners, and where tile grout meets a tub or sink. While this can alarm an uninformed homeowner, it is normal.

Shrinkage of the wood members of your home is inevitable and occurs in every new home. Although this is most noticeable during the first year, it may continue beyond that time. In most cases, caulk and paint are all that you need to conceal this minor evidence of a natural phenomenon. Even though properly installed, caulking shrinks and cracks.

Maintenance of caulking is your responsibility.

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

We provide one-time repairs to some of the effects of expansion and contraction. See individual categories such as drywall and caulk for details.

Chapter VII - Caring for Your Home

Fireplace

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. *See also Fire Prevention.*

Wood Burning Fireplace

Look upon burning a wood fire as a luxury that adds much to the atmosphere but just a little to the heat in a home. About 10 percent of the heat produced by a fire is radiated into the house. In many older homes, the air used by the fireplace for combustion is replaced with cold outside air drawn in through cracks around doors and windows. However, your home is constructed so tightly that this does not happen. A fresh air vent may be installed to supply the fireplace with combustion air and reduce the amount of heated air the fire draws from your house.

Close the damper when the fireplace is not in use. Leaving this open is equivalent to having an open window in the house. If the fire is still burning, but you are finished enjoying it, use glass doors to prevent heated air from being drawn up the chimney until your damper can be closed.

One caution on the use of glass doors: do not close them over a roaring fire, especially if you are burning hard woods (such as oak or hickory) because this could break the glass. Also, when closing the doors over a burning fire, open the mesh screens first. This prevents excessive heat build-up on the mesh, which might result in warping or discoloration.

Your objective in building a fire should be a clean, steady, slow-burning fire. Begin with a small fire to allow the components of the fireplace to heat up slowly. Failure to do so may damage the fireplace and can void the warranty. Start the fire by burning kindling and newspaper under the grate; two to three layers of logs stacked with air space between, largest logs to the rear, works best. One sheet of paper burned on top of the stack will help the chimney start to draw. Any logs 6 inches in diameter or larger should be split. **Caution: Do not burn trash in the fireplace and never use any type of liquid fire starter.**

Remove old ashes and coals from under the grate when completely cool. A light layer is desirable as an insulator and will help to reflect heat.

Chimney Cleaning

Creosote and other wood-burning by-products accumulate inside the flue over a period of time. This buildup can be a fire hazard. The way you use your fireplace and the type of wood you burn determine the frequency of your chimney cleanings. For instance, burning soft woods or improperly seasoned woods necessitates more frequent cleaning. Hire a qualified chimney sweep for this cleaning.

If the spark arrester becomes clogged, the diminished airflow will affect the performance of the fireplace and may be a fire hazard. Have the arrester cleaned professionally when needed.

Chapter VII - Caring for Your Home

Gas Fireplace

We offer direct-vent gas fireplaces. If you ordered this type of fireplace, we demonstrate it during the new home 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 any gas smell, immediately shut off the switch and report it to the gas company.

Materials found on the exterior surfaces of either wood or gas fireplaces (paints, sealants, lubricating oils and gasket adhesives) can produce odors and small amounts of carbon monoxide for the first few times the fireplace is used. This is called curing or burning in. It may take as much as 24 hours of use before the fireplace is cured. The fireplace should be burned for periods no less than 5 to 6 hours at a time with a high flame. If the fireplace system is equipped with a fan, do not run it during the curing period. **Caution: The exterior vent cover for a direct-vent gas fireplace becomes extremely hot when the fireplace is operating.**

One Year Limited 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.

Discoloration

Discoloration of the firebox or brick is a normal result of use and requires no corrective action. Mortarstyle fireplaces may develop cracks due to temperature changes and other factors.

Downdraft

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

Glass Doors

During the new home orientation we confirm that glass fireplace doors, when included with the home, are in acceptable condition. Use the cleaning product recommended by the manufacturer to clean these doors; cleaning fireplace doors 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.

Chapter VII - Caring for Your Home

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

- 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 instruct all family members in its location and use.
- Teach children the safe use of 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 matches away from children and heat sources.
- Avoid smoking in bed and always use a fire safe receptacle to extinguish smoking materials. Keep lighters and matches out of reach of children.
- 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 or leaving anything that you are cooking unattended.
- Keep the range hood filter clean to prevent a build up of grease.
- 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 candles safely. Never leave a burning candle unattended. Keep them out of reach of children and pets. Wicks should be cut to 1/4 inch.
- Use electric blankets with care, following manufacturer directions.
- Use the correct wattage of bulbs in all light fixtures.

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As You Leave

- Store volatile materials (paint, gasoline for the lawn mower, and so on) 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 Grills: Keep the barbeque clean and soap test the lines of a gas grill for leaks regularly. A quarter to a half turn provides enough propane; do not turn the valve on all the way. When lighting your barbeque, 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. When you are finished 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 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 fireplace:
 - Arrange for professional cleaning of the chimney at appropriate intervals.
 - Maintain the spark arrester on the chimney.
 - Never use liquid fire starters (such as for a charcoal barbeque) in an indoor fireplace.
 - Use a screen or glass doors when a fire is burning.
 - Confirm the fire is out before closing the flue.
 - Do not leave the fireplace unattended while a fire is burning.
- During holidays, ensure that all cords and connections are in good condition and of appropriate capacity for electrical decorations.

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- If you decide to 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, a gas fireplace, clothes dryer, and so on.
- Do not leave any house lights on for long periods of time. If you are leaving for an extended period, you may want to use a timer to simulate occupancy.

Your Additional Reminders and Notes

Chapter VII - Caring for Your Home

Fixtures

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. Applying a light coat of wax and buffing with a soft cloth helps maintain the gloss.

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

During the new home 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 foundation is poured concrete with steel reinforcing rods or pre-cast concrete. To protect your home's foundation, follow guidelines for installation and maintenance of landscaping and drainage in this guide.

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

The foundation is a structural element of your home and therefore carries an additional limited structural warranty which is described at the end of this chapter.

Cosmetic Imperfections

Slight cosmetic imperfections in the foundation, 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.

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Framing

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Floor Deflection

Floors will deflect (bend) 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.

Party Wall Items

In attached home or condominium communities, you may have a common shared wall (party wall) with your neighbor on one or both sides of your home. You may also have a shared ceiling/floor assembly 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 the fire resistance. When you have a common wall, floor, or ceiling, some sound transmission will still be evident. Loud music or high impact noise is quite common and is excluded from warranty.

Plumb Walls

We will correct walls that are out of plumb more than 3/8 inch in a 32 inch distance of the wall.

Squeaks: One-time repair

Some floor and stair squeaks are unavoidable. Although we do not warrant against floor squeaks, we will make a reasonable effort to correct loud and objectionable squeaks 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.

Keyless Entry

Each brand has a different method for programming so 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. Weather conditions may result in some precipitation entering around the 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.

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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 Web site for recommendation. 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 removed before operating the opener.

Caution: Operating an opener when the manufacturer's 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 power outage or leaving for an extended period of time, we suggest snapping a vise grip on to the track above a roller. Either way, upon your return, unlock the garage door first or remove the vise grip, then re-engage the motor (simply push the button to operate the opener and it will reconnect) to restore normal operation.

If you have an opener installed on your home after possession, 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 new home 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 about once a year. The battery is usually a 9-volt battery, however check your manufacturer's manual for correct battery size and other maintenance needs of your remote controls.

Painting

Garage doors are metal. The trim installed on some homes is likely to need painting maintenance on a more frequent basis.

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 can not be changed. Please refer to your exterior color selections or area manager for further information regarding your architectural controls.

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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, after the expiration of the one-year warranty, 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.

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

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

Gas Leak

If you suspect a gas leak, leave the home immediately and call the gas company for emergency service from another location.

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

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

Chapter VII - Caring for Your Home

Ghosting

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Recent feedback from homeowners (in both old and new homes) regarding black sooty stains which develop on surfaces in homes (on carpet, walls, ceilings, appliances, mirrors, and around area rugs—to list a few examples) 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 pollution of the air 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 (light-colored carpet, for instance), they are impossible to clean completely away.

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

Early in land development, general drainage patterns are established in principle with municipal and other authorities. You and your neighbors share an overall drainage plan for the community. Grading occurs in three stages:

- Pre-grading—regularly performed grading directs water away from your foundation and maintains safety standards during construction.
- Rough Grading—this grading is to ensure water is directed away from your foundation and to define the drainage swales and catch basins. In most cases, drainage swales do not follow property boundaries.
- Final Grading—topsoil is spread to follow the same contours of the rough grade; do not allow any disturbance to the topsoil as this may affect the drainage of the lot

Depending on the purchase agreement, we are either responsible for completion of rough grade or final grade and for obtaining approval from the municipality where required. Once our contractual commitment is met, you are responsible for maintaining the rough or final grade, as applicable. If you alter the drainage pattern later or if changes in drainage occur due to lack of maintenance, the limited structural warranty will be impacted.

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

You share in an overall drainage plan for the community that was predetermined before the homes were built. The rough and final grades around your home have been inspected and approved for proper drainage of your lot. Where required by municipal regulations, our surveyor completes a grading certification and then the local municipality inspects the site for approval. 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 adjacent lots.

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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. 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.

CC (Curb Cock) Valve (Main Water Line)

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

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 can result in major structural damage and will void your 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 lot 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 recorded community plat and/or the approved plot plan.

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 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.

Rototilling

Rototilling can significantly change drainage swales. You can minimize this 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 lake. 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.

Chapter VII - Caring for Your Home

One Year Limited 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. .

New Landscaping

New landscaping and the extra watering that accompanies it can cause temporary drainage problems, as can unusually severe weather conditions. If sod, trees, or shrubs are part of your purchase agreement proper watering and care of these items are your responsibility.

Swales

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

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.

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

We confirm that all hardware is in acceptable condition during new home orientation. The limited warranty excludes repairs for cosmetic damage subsequent to closing.

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

Chapter VII - Caring for Your Home

Hardwood 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 for more information refer to your warranty program's literature or Web site.

Appliances

Delivery, installation, 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. We recommend you avoid the use of floor steamers on hardwood flooring. 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. This condition is not a warrantable item.

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 floors respond noticeably to changes in humidity in your home. Especially during winter months the individual planks or pieces expand and contract (sometimes causing gaps) as water content changes. A humidifier helps but does not eliminate this reaction. The first two years are especially critical for fine woods in a home to normalize to climatic conditions.

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 are left to accumulate under these mats further damage to the flooring surface may occur. Gritty sand is wood flooring's worst enemy. However, 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, any heat-producing appliances, or during seasonal weather changes.
See also Warping

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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

When floors are new, small splinters of wood can appear.

Sun Exposure

Exposure to direct sunlight can cause irreparable damage to hardwood floors. To preserve the beauty of your hardwood floors, install and use window coverings in these areas.

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 also typical.

Wax

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

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

During the new home orientation we will confirm that hardwood floors are in acceptable condition. We will correct any readily noticeable cosmetic defects listed during the new home orientation found under normal lighting situation and circumstances.

Separations

Shrinkage will result in separation between the members 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 appears on the surface if the boards expand due to subsequent changes in humidity and expel the filler.

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 of your system. Clean or replace filters once a month. Provide professional service for your system at least once every two years.

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 ensure that window coverings are open 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 at the thermostat is moved .5 degree or more at one time.

Defrost Cycle

When the heat pump is operating 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 part of the 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.

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Night Setback

Unless you have a night setback thermostat designed to work with a heat pump system, do not turn the thermostat down in the evenings. 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 the vents, and then 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 as well. 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 30 Degrees Farenheit or Above

Before calling for service, check to confirm that the

- Thermostat is set to "heat" and the temperature is set above the room temperature.
- 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.)
- Filter is clean to allow airflow.
- Vents in individual rooms are open.
- Air returns are unobstructed.
- Outside snow or other materials do not block unit.
- Outside coil is not clogged with snow or ice.

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

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

Refer to the 2-10 Homebuyers Warranty Booklet for information regarding warranty coverage.

Landscaping

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

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 possession as weather permits. In addition to meeting your homeowner association requirements to landscape in a timely manner, well-designed landscaping prevents erosion and protects the foundation of your home.

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Architectural Requirements

Where landscaping is included with a home, the sod, shrub beds, shrubbery, and trees are chosen to adhere to the architectural requirements set by the developer for your community and the local building authority. Where applicable, when you sign your purchase agreement, you agree to maintain the landscaping according to these requirements. Where applicable, your area manager will provide additional developer specific information.

Bark or Rock Beds

Do not allow edging around decorative rock or bark beds to dam 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.

CC (Curb Cock) Valve (Main Water Line)

The main water line to your new home is typically located in the front yard and encased in a PVC pipe. Governing municipalities require that this be visible.

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 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 seed with erosion matting or reseed to establish grass in swales. It can take several years to fully establish your lawn in such challenging areas.

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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 do an installation in your yard. 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 pedestrian or bicycle traffic and 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. *See also Property Boundaries.*

Requirements

In addition to complying with applicable developer requirements, check with your local building department and homeowners association before designing, installing, or changing landscaping for any regulations that they require you to follow.

Sod

Sod is laid after the final grade elevations have been established. Lawn care is one of your responsibilities and therefore sod is excluded from warranty coverage. Keep the following points in mind regarding watering:

- 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 your sod is drying out. Sod installed against your foundation, especially along the south and west sides, is subject to drying out.
- Stay off of your new sod as much as possible except to water it.
- Be prepared by having enough hose to reach all corners of your yard.
- A good sprinkler is also necessary to ensure proper watering of the entire yard. Avoid watering by hand as doing so distributes water unevenly.
- Water on grass acts like a magnifying glass and will burn your new sod. Therefore, early morning or late evening is best. Avoid watering after 8:00 am or before 6:00 pm.
- New sod should be watered to the point that the soil is soft when you step on it.
- Water every day for 7 days then cut back to once every other day. If temperatures are hot and dry, water more often; if precipitation occurs, water less.

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.

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Trees and Shrubs

We respect and value trees as one of the features that make up 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 can 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 lot, 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 and other plant materials that exist on the home site when construction begins are excluded from warranty coverage.

Trees are planted in conjunction with the sod placement. As with sod, watering newly planted trees and shrubs is crucial.

- 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 rock around trees and shrubs unless you leave a hole in the fabric large enough to provide good aeration around base of tree or shrub.
- 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.
- To encourage budding in the spring, water your trees and shrubs thoroughly in the late fall.
- Trees and shrubs require regular inspection for insect infestation. Early detection and prompt treatment may prevent further damage. Insect damage is excluded from warranty coverage.

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 ground unlandscaped, it erodes. Correcting erosion that occurs after grading is approved is your responsibility.

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Weeds

Weeds will appear in your new lawn whether seed or sod is used. Left unlandscaped, your yard will quickly begin to show weeds. When soil is disturbed, dormant seeds come to the surface and germinate. The best control is a healthy lawn, achieved through regular care and attention.

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

We will confirm the healthy condition of all plant materials, sod, and/or seed during the new home orientation. Maintaining landscaping is your responsibility.

The developer plans for the placement of trees and shrubs on the boulevards and common areas within a community. Developer installed trees are also excluded from our warranty coverage. *See also Seasonal in Chapter 5.*

Hardware

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Mildew is a fungus that spreads through the air in microscopic spores. They love moisture and feed on surfaces or dirt. On siding, they look 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.

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

We will remove any mildew noted during the new home orientation. Our warranty excludes mildew.

Mirrors

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

To clean your mirrors, use any reliable liquid glass cleaner or polisher available at most hardware or grocery stores. Avoid acidic cleaners and splashing water under the mirror; either can cause the silvering to deteriorate. Acidic cleaners are usually those that contain ammonia or vinegar. Avoid getting glass cleaners on plumbing fixtures as some formulas can deteriorate the finish.

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

We will confirm that all mirrors are in acceptable condition during the new home orientation. We will correct scratches, chips, or other damage to mirrors noted during the new home orientation.

Chapter VII - Caring for Your Home

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 1000 of these are found in North America.

In order to grow, mold requires food, air, water, and a temperature between 40 and 100 degrees Fahrenheit. While not all molds are harmful, growth of mold within a home is inappropriate and may have side effects for the occupants, such as allergic reactions and infections, 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 insulations to name a few, can supply a food source. Likewise, air and temperature in most homes supply the needs of mold spores. If moisture is present and remains on a mold food source, mold can develop within 24 to 48 hours.

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. Spills, leaks, overflows, condensation, and high humidity are examples. Good housekeeping and maintenance are essential in your effort to prevent or eliminate mold growth.

Caulking

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

Cleaning

Mold grows well on dust and dirt. Therefore, vacuum and dust regularly. Clean or replace filters minimally in accordance to the manufacturer's recommendations. Keep weep holes for brick and on windows clear.

Most bath tile cleaning products contain chemicals that remove and help protect against mold growth. Check the refrigerator pan, air conditioning condensate line, coils and condenser pan for signs of mold growth. Wipe up any 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. *See also Condensation and Ventilation*

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.

See also Condensation and Ventilation

Chapter VII - Caring for Your Home

Inspections

Check your home regularly for signs of water intrusion. These might include a musty odor, staining, or actual standing moisture. Remember to check inside cabinets under all sinks and behind toilets as well as in seldom used closets, and in the attic(s). Confirm that your sump pump functions correctly, check weather stripping, caulking, grout, weep holes, and so on around doors, windows, and pipe or vent penetrations.

Landscaping and Drainage

Maintain positive drainage around your home. Avoid changes to the grade 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 heads to avoid their spraying the home and correct any leaks immediately.

Keep splashblocks 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 the warranty office. This includes roof, window, or plumbing leaks. Failure to report leaks promptly increases your risk and responsibility for repairs that might otherwise have been addressed by warranty.

Purchases or Stored Items

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

Tile Grout

Another vulnerable area is tile grout around showers and tubs. 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.

Vehicle Run-Off

Water, ice, and moisture can accumulate from vehicles parked in the garage. This can increase humidity and potential for mold in garages.

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Vehicle Run-Off

Water, ice, and moisture can accumulate from vehicles parked in the garage. This can increase humidity and potential for mold in garages.

Ventilation

Your daily habits can help keep your home well ventilated:

- Develop the habit of running the hood fan when you are cooking.
- Also run bath fans when bathrooms are in use.
- Connect your clothes dryer exhaust to the vent pipe. Clean the exhaust tube as needed to keep it clear and functioning efficiently.
- Air your house by opening windows for a time when weather permits.

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. *See also Plumbing, Ventilation, and Condensation*

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

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

Mold Prevention

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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. Often better results come from touching up rather than washing a painted surface.

Colors

Your selection sheets are your record of the paint and stain color names or numbers 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 preparation.

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.

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 popped nails. 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, so inspect your home after such weather. Promptly report damage caused by severe weather to your insurance company. Repair of storm damage falls outside the warranty coverage and is either your responsibility or that of your insurer.

See also Condensation and Ventilation

Stain

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

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Touch-Up

When doing paint touch-ups, use a small brush, applying 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.

If applicable, 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*

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

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

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. This is normal and to be expected.

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.

Mirrors

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

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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. However, foreign matter and small amounts of minerals may enter the lines. Aerators on the faucets strain much of this from your water. Minerals caught in these aerators may cause distortion in the stream of water from the faucets; this is a sign that the aerator needs to be cleaned. *See also Dripping Faucet*

Cleaning

Follow manufacturer's directions 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 (a nonabrasive cleaner or a liquid detergent is usually recommended by manufacturers). Then polish the fixtures with a dry cloth to prevent water spots.

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, feminine products, 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. This recommendation also applies to grease; supplied with a steady flow of cold water, the grease congeals and is cut up by the blades. If you use hot water, the grease remains a liquid, then cools and solidifies in the sewer line. 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.

Clean a plugged drain stopper—usually found in bathroom sinks—by loosening the nut under the sink at the back, pulling out the rod attached to the plunger, and lifting the stopper. Clean and return the mechanism to its original position.

Extended Absence

If you will be away for an extended period, you should drain your water supply lines. To do this, shut off the main supply line and open the faucets to relieve pressure in the lines. *See also Extended Absence Checklist*

Fiberglass Fixtures

For normal cleaning use a nonabrasive bathroom cleanser and sponge or nylon-cleaning pad. Avoid steel wool, scrapers, and scouring pads.

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Freezing Pipes

Provided the home is heated at a normal level, pipes should not freeze. Keep 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.

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

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 one inch above the jets. Be cautious about using the tub if you are pregnant or have heart disease or high blood pressure; discuss the use of the tub with your doctor. Tie back or pin up long hair to keep it away from the jets where it might become tangled—a potentially dangerous event.

Clean and disinfect the system every one to two months, depending on 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 and fill again. Run the tub jets for 10 minutes with plain water and then drain.

Avoid abrasive cleansers which will damage the surface and make keeping it clean difficult.

Leaks

If a plumbing leak occurs, the first step is to turn off the supply of water to the area involved and minimize damage to your home and personal property. This may mean shutting off the water to the entire home. Then contact the warranty office or, if the leak occurs after hours, the appropriate trade contractor's emergency number.

Low Pressure

Occasional cleaning of the aerators on your faucets (normally every three to four months) will allow proper flow of water. The city or municipality water department controls the overall water pressure.

Outside Faucets

Outside faucets (hosebibs) are freeze-proof, but in order for this feature to be effective, you must remove hoses during cold weather. If a hose is left attached, the water that remains in the hose can freeze and expand back into the pipe, causing a break in the line. Repair of a broken line that feeds an exterior faucet is a maintenance item. Damage caused by freezing is excluded from warranty coverage. We recommend that you get in the habit of always removing any hose you use from any exterior or garage faucet.

Porcelain

You can damage porcelain enamel with a sharp blow from a heavy object or by scratching. Do not stand in the bathtub wearing shoes unless you have placed a protective layer of newspaper over the bottom of the tub. If you splatter paint onto the porcelain enamel surfaces during redecorating, wipe it up immediately. If a spot dries before you notice it, use a recommended solvent.

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Clogged Drain

We will correct clogged drains that occur during the first 30 days after closing if caused by construction debris. However, if a household item is removed from a clogged drain, we will bill you for the drain service. After the first 30 days, you are responsible for correcting clogged drains.

Cosmetic Damage

We will correct any fixture damage noted on the new home orientation documentation. Repairing chips, scratches, or other surface damage noted subsequent to the new home orientation is your responsibility.

Outside Faucets

We will repair leaks at exterior faucets (hosebibs) noted on the new home orientation list. Subsequent to new home orientation, repair of a broken line to an exterior faucet is your responsibility. 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. If a plumbing leak caused by a warranted item results in drywall or floor covering damage, we will repair or replace items that were part of the home as originally purchased. Please note that payments or adjustments for secondary damages (for example, 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 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 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 no action of yours has caused the problem. Disruption of service due to failure of the water department system is the responsibility of the municipality to correct.

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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 on the next business day.

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, corrections occur during normal business hours.

- Shut off the water supply to the toilet involved.
- Use a plunger to clear the blockage.
- Use a snake to clear the blockage.

Sewer Back Up Affecting Entire Home

- Contact the plumber listed on your Emergency Phone Numbers sheet and notify our warranty office.
- Remove personal belongings to a safe location. If items are soiled, contact your homeowner insurance company.

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

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

During the new home orientation we will confirm that all plumbing fixtures are in acceptable condition, are functioning properly, and that all faucets and drains operate freely.

Property Boundaries

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

To construct the home we established the property boundaries and corners. However, during construction, some of the property line markers may be affected or covered up by grading, excavation, installation of utility lines, and other typical construction activities. Therefore if you wish to install a fence, swimming pool, a deck or patio to your home, or otherwise establish a permanent structure, you are responsible for retaining professional surveyors to locate and mark property boundaries to be certain they are accurate and that you have found all corners. *See also Easement*

Handrails

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Stained or wrought iron 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.

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

During the new home orientation we will confirm that all railings are in good condition. We install railings in positions and locations to comply with applicable building codes. Railings should remain securely attached with normal use.

Resilient (Vinyl) Flooring

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Although resilient floors are designed for minimum care, they do have maintenance needs. Follow any manufacturer's specific recommendations for care and cleaning.

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

Wipe up spills and vacuum crumbs instead of washing resilient floors frequently with water. Avoid getting large amounts of water on the floor from baths and showers. Limit mopping or washing with water; excessive amounts of water on resilient floors can penetrate seams and get under edges, causing the material to lift, curl, and/or discolor. Damage due to moisture/spills is not covered by warranty.

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Moving Furniture

Moving appliances across resilient floor covering can result in tears and wrinkles. Install coasters on furniture legs to prevent damage. If you damage the resilient floor, you can have it successfully patched by professionals. If any remnants remain when installation of your floor covering is complete, we leave them in the hope that having the matching dye lot will make such repairs less apparent.

No-Wax Flooring

The resilient flooring installed in your home is the no-wax type. No wax means 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.

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

We will confirm that resilient floor covering is in acceptable condition during your new home 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 such damage if it occurs in your home. 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. If the opposite end of the straight edge is 1/8 inch or more from the floor, we will repair this condition.

Seams

Seams will occur and are sealed at the time of installation. All seams will be visible, even though we make every effort to conceal them as much as possible. We will repair 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.

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Roof

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

The shingles on your roof do not require any treatment or sealer. The less activity your roof experiences, the less likely it is that problems will occur.

Clean Gutters

Maintain the gutters and downspouts so that they are free of debris and able to quickly drain precipitation runoff from the roof.

Leaks

If a leak occurs, try to detect the exact location. This will greatly simplify finding the area that requires repair when the roof is dry.

Severe Weather

After severe storms, do a visual inspection from the ground of the roof for damages. When extremely windy conditions occur, if you find pieces of shingles in the yard or shingle edges are lifted on the roof, notify your insurance company. However, be aware that repairs are often less than the deductible. *See also Tabbing*

Troubleshooting Tips: Roof Leak

Please keep in mind that roof leaks cannot be repaired while the roof is wet. However, you should report the condition immediately so repairs can be made as soon as conditions dry out, so do call in your roof leak.

- Confirm the source of the water is the roof rather than from a
 - Plumbing leak
 - Open window on a higher floor
 - Ice damming
 - Attic condensation
 - Clogged gutter or downspout
 - Blowing rain or snow coming in through (code required) roof vents
 - Gap in caulking

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- 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, then catching it in a container.
- 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 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.

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

We will repair roof leaks other than those caused by severe weather, such as hail damage, or some action you have taken, such as walking on the roof. Roof repairs are made only when the roof is dry.

Inclement 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 (if applicable)

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

A septic system consists of two basic parts. First a septic tank, and second an 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. To help preserve the effectiveness of the system, keep these points in mind:

- Avoid disposing of chemicals such as solvents, oils, paints, and the like, through the septic system
- Avoid using commercial drain cleaners. They can kill the bacteria that are working to break down the solid waste matter.
- Food from a disposal decomposes more slowly and adds to the solids in the tank. This is why disposals are typically not allowed to be installed in the kitchen sink when the home will be on a septic system. We recommend you do not install one either.
- Coffee grounds may clog the system
- Avoid disposing of any paper products such as diapers, sanitary supplies, feminine products, paper towels, etc., 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.
- Drain surface water away from the disposal field. Eliminate unnecessary sources of water in the area of the disposal field. Plant only sod over the disposal field. Avoid fertilizers in this area.
- Conserve indoor water use to put less strain on the system. Correct leaky faucets or running toilets promptly. Keep in mind that a water softener will generate 30 to 85 gallons of water every regeneration cycle.
- Do not drive any vehicles or heavy equipment on the disposal field or build over it. Typical riding lawn mowers are acceptable.

Pumping the System

Over time, the matter not broken down by the bacteria can clog the system and/or fill the tank. This will happen in spite of careful use and good maintenance, and is considered normal. To prevent serious problems, regular pumping to clean out the tank is essential – usually every 2 to 3 years, more often if usage is heavy.

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System Failure

Signs that your septic system is failing include:

- Black water with a foul odor backing up in drains and toilets
- Toilets flush slowly
- Water ponds on top of the disposal field
- Grass stays green over the disposal field even in very dry weather

If you believe your system requires attention, call a professional to assess the situation. Have the system pumped. If a new system is required, a permit must be obtained from the county or municipality where your home is located.

Water Softener

Prior to installing a water softener, discuss with the vendor whether the system you are considering will adversely affect your septic system.

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

During the 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 local codes and plans based on your soil conditions and requirements of the local health department or governing authority, we do not warrant that the septic system will function indefinitely. Weather, rainfall amounts, ground water, environmental conditions, topography, as well as your family's habits can all generate unpredictable effects.

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Shower Doors or Tub Enclosures

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Shower doors and tub enclosures require minimal care. We recommend Gel Coat for shower enclosures and commercially available cleaners (non abrasive) 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 keep mineral residue and soap film to a minimum.

Towels

Avoid hanging wet towels on corners of doors; the weight can pull the door out of alignment and cause it to leak.

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

During your new home orientation we will confirm the good condition of all shower doors and tub enclosures. We warranty that shower doors and tub enclosures will function according to manufacturer specifications.

Siding

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Shower doors and tub enclosures require minimal care. We recommend Gel Coat for shower enclosures and commercially available cleaners (non abrasive) 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 keep mineral residue and soap film to a minimum.

Towels

Avoid hanging wet towels on corners of doors; the weight can pull the door out of alignment and cause it to leak.

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

During your new home orientation we will confirm the good condition of all shower doors and tub enclosures. We warranty that shower doors and tub enclosures will function according to manufacturer specifications.

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Siding

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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 and 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.

Cement Based Products

Cement based siding may require repainting and caulking just as wood products do.

Hardboard

Use non abrasive household cleaners. Test the cleaner if in doubt on a small area prior to large scale use. Rinse surface thoroughly after cleaning. If power washers are used be certain that the pressure is on a low setting.

Touch up paint is sold through most manufacturers. Paint touch up is best applied only to the direct area with a small artist brush or q-tip. Hardboard siding can be re painted a different color but the surface must be cleaned and prepped with primer.

Vinyl

Vinyl siding expands in hot weather and contracts in cold weather; a popping noise can occur along with these changes. Vinyl siding will occasionally require cleaning. Start at the top to avoid streaking and use a brush such as you would use on a car and a cleaning product recommended by your siding manufacturer. Follow directions carefully. Do not use a power-washer on vinyl siding as this can result in water leaking into the wall.

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

We will confirm the good condition of the siding during your new home orientation. Repair of subsequent damage to the siding will be your responsibility to repair.

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 installation error we will correct it.

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Smoke Detectors

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Read the manufacturer's manual for detailed information on the care of your smoke detectors.

Cleaning

For your safety, clean each smoke detector monthly to prevent a false alarm or lack of response in a fire. After cleaning, push the test button to confirm the alarm is working.

Insurance

You are responsible for obtaining fire insurance.

Locations

Smoke detectors are installed in accordance with local building codes, which dictate locations. Building codes prohibit our omitting any smoke detector, nor should you remove or disable any smoke detector.

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

We do not represent that the smoke detectors will provide the protection for which they are installed or intended. We typically test smoke detectors during the new home orientation to confirm that they are working and to familiarize you with the alarm.

Stairs

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

No known method of installation prevents all vibration or squeaks in a staircase. Where 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.

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

Squeaks: One-time repair Stair vibration or squeaks are excluded from warranty coverage. However, one time during the warranty period we will make a reasonable effort to correct them.

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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.

Drainage

To ensure proper drainage, keep dirt and concrete flatwork a minimum of 6 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 your home center or hardware store for commercial products to remove efflorescence.

Sprinklers

Since stucco is not waterproof, avoid spraying water from irrigation or watering systems on stucco surfaces to avoid possible leaks. Check the spray from the lawn and plant irrigation system frequently to make certain that water is not spraying or accumulating on stucco surfaces.

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

We will confirm that stucco is in acceptable condition during the new home orientation.

Cracks: One-time repair

One time during the warranty period, we will repair stucco cracks that exceed 1/8 inch. The appearance of the repair will vary from the surrounding area due to natural fading and dye lot differences.

Telephone and Cable Outlets

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Your home is equipped with telephone and cable connections as shown on the blueprints and selection sheets. Initiating phone and/or cable/satellite service, additions to these services, and moving outlets for decorating purposes or convenience are your responsibilities.

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

We will repair wiring that does not perform as intended from the phone or cable service box into the home. From the service box outward, care of the wiring is the responsibility of the local service provider.

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Termites

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

We treat the foundation of your home for termites and provide you with a certificate confirming that treatment. Plan to renew this treatment annually or as directed by the literature that accompanies the certificate, which you will typically receive at closing. Treatment for other types of insects or animal infestations is your responsibility.

Regular Inspections

- Regularly inspect your home for signs of termites or conditions that would allow their attack.
- Check for wrinkles or waves in wood trim
- Tap wood to see if it sounds or feels hollow
- Inspect under the carpet tack strip by lifting the edge of carpet in the corner of a room. The tack strip is untreated and provides a convenient path for termites through the home.
- Watch for tubes of dirt, called mud tubes, that 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 and 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
- Before installing stepping stones, river rock, concrete, or so on, against the home, chemically treat the area that will be underneath the new material
- If you add onto or change the exterior of your home, be sure to have the areas treated first

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

We certify treatment of your foundation for termites at closing. This is our final action for termites. Smith Family Home' warranty excludes treatment for any other insect (such as ants) or animal (such as mice) infestations.

Ventilation

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Homes today are built more tightly than ever. This saves energy dollars but 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.

Daily Habits

Your daily habits can help keep your home well-ventilated:

- 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*

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

The warranty guidelines for active components (for example, exhaust fans) are discussed under the appropriate headings (such as electrical systems, heating system, and so on).

Water Heater

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Carefully read and follow the manufacturer's literature for your specific model of water heater.

Safety

Avoid using the top of a heater as a storage shelf. Maintain a clear area around the tank.

Temperature

A manufacturer recommended thermostat setting for everyday use is "normal," or 120 degrees Fahrenheit. 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 reaches the fixture. This is normal and not considered a deficiency.

Troubleshooting Tips: No Hot Water

Before calling for service, check to confirm that the

- Temperature setting is not on "vacation" or too low.
- Scald protection is not set too low on shower tap.
- Water supply valve is open.
- Exhaust and intake ducts are clear of ice and debris.

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

Traditional Water Heater

Drain Tank

Review and follow manufacturer's timetable and instructions for draining several gallons of water from the bottom of the water heater. This reduces the build-up of mineral deposits from the water, prolonging the life of the tank and saving energy dollars.

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

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

See also Plumbing

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Windows, Screens, Sliding Glass Doors

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Contact a glass company for reglazing of any windows that break. Glass is difficult to install without special tools.

Acrylic Block

Clean during moderate temperatures with only a mild soap and warm water using a sponge or soft cloth and dry 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 outside temperatures. Your family's lifestyle controls the humidity level within your home.

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.

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 for these tracks. Acquaint yourself with the operation of sliding door hardware for maximum security.

Under certain lighting conditions, 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 going through. You may want to apply a decal to the glass door to make it readily visible.

Sticking Windows

If sticking occurs or excessive pressure is required to open or close a window, refer to the manufacturer's information. You may also apply a silicone lubricant. This is available at hardware stores. Avoid petroleum-based products.

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.

Chapter VII - Caring for Your Home

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

We will confirm that all windows, screens, and sliding glass doors are in acceptable condition during the new home orientation. We will repair or replace broken windows or damaged screens noted on the new home orientation list. 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 one 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 before the installation of landscaping in the general area. Our warranty excludes this occurrence.

Scratches

We will confirm that all window glass is in acceptable condition at the new home 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 out. Heating and air conditioning, traffic patterns, and other living activities readily affect some interior trim elements. On your home's exterior sun exposure and weather will have an impact. Further, the materials used for interior trim are specifically selected for interior use and differ from those used for the exterior.

Interior

Shrinkage of interior wood trim occurs during the first two years or longer, 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 the effects of shrinkage. 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:* Occasional dusting is usually all the maintenance needed for casing and baseboards. Wiping with a slightly damp cloth may be necessary from time to time.
- *Touch Up:* Chips or scratches that occur can often be corrected with careful paint or stain touch up. In case of severe damage, wood filler may be needed. The appearance is likely to vary from the surrounding trim.

Exterior

As with interior wood components, most shrinkage will occur during the first two years, depending on climate conditions and exposure.

- *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 and touch up with putty and paint.
- *Splits:* Fluctuations in humidity and temperature can cause wood trim to split or cup.

Chapter VII - Caring for Your Home

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

During the new home orientation we will confirm that wood trim is in acceptable condition. Minor imperfections in wood materials will be visible and will require no action. We will correct readily noticeable construction damage such as chips and gouges listed during the new home orientation.

Interior

- **Exposed Nail Heads:** In finished areas of your home, we will correct exposed nail heads by filling and touch up of the original finish. 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 floor (slate, some ceramic tiles, and so on) are unavoidable and are excluded from this repair.
- **Hammer Marks:** We will correct hammer marks visible from a normal viewing position in normal lighting conditions.
- **Separation/Misalignment:** Hairline separations are acceptable between two pieces of the same material (for instance at a casing corner) or between two pieces of dissimilar materials (such as casing and drywall).

We will correct separation or misalignment between pieces of the same material that exceed 1/16 inch. Where trim is painted, pieces should be flush and no raw wood should show. 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 original stain or paint.

- **Splits:** Wood trim pieces that split will be corrected, typically using filler or caulk. Such repairs will be visible under certain lighting conditions.
- **Surface Roughness:** Wood surfaces that are touched or grasped during normal use should be uniformly smooth. Surfaces not touched during normal use shall appear smooth when viewed without magnification from a minimum distance of 1.5 m (5 feet) under normal lighting conditions and from a normal viewing position.

Exterior

- **Cracks: One-Time Repair:** We will caulk and apply touch-up paint to cracks in exterior trim components that are visible from 6 m (20 feet) or that result in trim becoming detached one time only near the end of the first year if needed. Paint or stain touch-up will vary.
- **Raised Grain:** Because of the effects of weather on natural wood, you should expect raised grain to develop. 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 allows water to enter the home.

Chapter VII - Caring for Your Home

Home Care Supplies

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 guide and in the manufacturer materials, note the materials and tools you will need. Note sizes, colors, brands, sources, and so on 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.

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Chapter VII - Caring for Your Home

Maintenance Schedule

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 CD containing pictures of each room is an excellent supplemental item.

In addition to normal daily and weekly care, develop a schedule of preventative routines based on the information in this guide and the manufacturer literature you receive. A change of season creates special maintenance needs so plan for winterizing and summarizing your home.

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Additional Warranty Coverage

Two-Year Systems & Building Envelope Warranty

There are certain items and/or systems that have additional warranty coverage during your second year of homeownership. Please refer to your 2-10 Homeowners Warranty Manual for details.

Report concerns related to this warranty coverage to your warranty office just as you did for one year warranty items.

Ten-Year Structural Warranty

The warranty coverage that comes with your home includes ten years of protection against defects in a load bearing component that result in damage due to the failure of a load bearing component. Load bearing components include the footings, foundation walls, load-bearing walls, beams, floor systems, and roof trusses. Please refer to your 2-10 Homeowners Warranty Manual for details.

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 repeated here. Although much of the information may be familiar to you, some points may differ significantly from homes you have had in the past.

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

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.

Chapter VII - Caring for Your Home

Appliance Service

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 possession date): _____

| Task | Manufacturer | Model # | Serial # | Service Phone # |
|-----------------|--------------|---------|----------|-----------------|
| Air Conditioner | | | | |
| Cooktop | | | | |
| Dishwasher | | | | |
| Disposal | | | | |
| Dryer | | | | |
| Heat Pump | | | | |
| Microwave | | | | |
| Oven | | | | |
| Range | | | | |
| Range Hood | | | | |
| Refrigerator | | | | |
| Washer | | | | |
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