

Homeowner Guide

Congratulations on your decision to purchase a new home from Stylecraft Builders, Inc. We share your excitement about your new residence and look forward to working with you as we build your new home.

Stylecraft Builders, Inc. 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 contact us. We are delighted to welcome you as part of the Stylecraft Builders, Inc. family and are always ready to serve you.

Sincerely,

Stylecraft Builders, Inc.



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Tip for Easy Navigation:

Clicking on the dotted lines below will take you to the chapter.

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Introduction

This introduction provides a brief overview of the steps in the new home process. The chapters that follow detail those steps and will 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 Stylecraft Builders, Inc. 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. Stylecraft Builders, Inc. hosts several planned meetings with each home buyer. 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.

Chapter 1 | Purchasing Your Home

The purchase agreement and various addenda constitute the legal agreement regarding the purchase of your new home. Please read the purchase agreement and all attachments carefully. As with any legal agreement, you may wish to have your attorney review them. Once all the paperwork is signed, we suggest you insert those documents in Chapter 1 of this guide, Purchasing Your Home.

Chapter 2 | Arranging Your Loan

Once you have signed the purchase agreement, finalizing the details for financing is next. Chapter 2, Arranging Your Loan, contains hints and information on the loan process.

Chapter 3 | New Home Selections

Chapter 3 of this guide, will explain to you the purpose, process, and importance of the preconstruction meeting. Further, this chapter will assist you in the exciting process of personalizing your new home with your selections.

Chapter 4 | Construction of Your Home

Please read Chapter 4, Construction of Your Home, for guidelines on safety and construction site protocols, and quality. This chapter goes into detail about what you can expect from us during construction and some general guidelines that need to be followed during this process.

Chapter 5 | Homeowner Orientation

The homeowner orientation has two purposes. The first is to demonstrate the features of your 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.

Chapter 7 | Caring for Your Home

Many of your responsibilities as a homeowner and Stylecraft Builders, Inc.'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.

Welcome to the Stylecraft Builders, Inc. Family!

Buying a new home is one of life's most exciting decisions. Our goal at Stylecraft Builders, Inc. has been to make the process of purchasing and moving into your home a great experience.

To make sure we are providing you with a memorable experience as a homebuyer and homeowner, we will be asking you for an evaluation at three points over the next year. These important evaluations will come to you via email from Eliant, our customer satisfaction partner.



- Move-In Evaluation 1 month after your move-in date
- Mid-Year/Customer Service Audit 5-6 months after your move-in
- Year-End/Home Quality Assessment 10-12 months after your move-in

Each time you complete an evaluation, you will automatically be entered into a drawing conducted by Eliant. Please watch for Eliant's surveys in your inbox and then evaluate your purchase and ownership experience! Your candor will be appreciated.

Communication

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 or minimally *acknowledge* voice mail and email communications within **one business day**, often even sooner. If a question requires input from experts outside 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 regular office hours (Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.). Outside of these hours, please expect more time to elapse before they get back in touch with you.
- 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 more quickly 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 question 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.

- Recognizing how busy all of us are these days and wanting to disrupt your normal schedule as little as possible, we will also be asking you to let us know the best way to reach you and which method you prefer. Our intention is to follow your wishes as consistently as we can.
- Text messaging can be an effective way to communicate casually, but if the communication is of a business nature, we feel it is more effective to use phone or email. Although we do not strictly prohibit texting employees, we do ask that all formal requests and changes be made in writing via email.

Notes

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Chapter 1 Purchasing Your Home

The first step in purchasing your new home is becoming pre-qualified for a home loan. This is a simple process that is described in more detail below. The next step in the process is executing a purchase agreement.

You will use several standard forms when you buy your new home. These include the purchase agreement and several addenda. The purchase agreement becomes binding only when all parties have signed all forms and attachments.

If you are new to the United States, Stylecraft Builders, Inc. 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.

Pre-Qualification

As early in the home buying process as possible, you should apply to become pre-qualified with a mortgage company. The first step in this process is filling out a pre-qualification form for the mortgage company. Depending on your income and credit history, you will be “pre-qualified” for a certain purchase price. If you have questions, your sales executive or mortgage professional can help.

The mortgage company uses the information you provide, along with a copy of your credit report, to estimate the amount of mortgage for which you may qualify. This is called a pre-approval, or the maximum amount the mortgage company is willing to lend, which will help guide you in determining which loan type and home you will be able to purchase.

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.

Earnest Money

Earnest money is a required deposit showing the buyer’s good faith in a real estate transaction. You will need to have earnest money (a personal check or money order is acceptable) at the time you sign the contract. The amount of earnest money required varies depending on the neighborhood, type of home and financing. Your sales executive can help clarify the amount of earnest money required per community. We have a policy of depositing this payment the same business day it is received. For additional information on Earnest Money, please refer to page 9.

Buyer Selections Deposit

Under certain circumstances, your sales executive will ask you to make a buyer selections deposit. This deposit is the result of the total optional features exceeding our allowable sales price. In general, we have a ceiling that we think the home should appraise. Any optional features added above that ceiling, are taken as a deposit and used towards the down payment, if there is an appraisal shortage.

In the event of an appraisal shortage, all or part of the buyer selections deposit (depending on the shortage amount) will be used towards the down payment. However, the total buyer selections deposit will be credited as a line item on the final closing disclosure (shortage or not) so your funds are only retained once.

Homeowner Association (HOA) Documents

The homeowner association for your community, if applicable, is organized around written covenants, conditions, and restrictions (CC&Rs). Begin now to become familiar with the details that protect your investment and the services provided

by the HOA. Annual or monthly fees associated with membership will also be explained in this material. CC&R documents can be found on our website under your particular community's page.

Homeowner Guide

This book is your Homeowner Guide. The information it contains will be helpful throughout the building process and serve as a useful reference after your move in.

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Chapter 2 Arranging Your Loan

Although you are free to go through any lender of your choosing, Stylecraft Builders has a featured mortgage company in your area and your sales executive can provide their contact details. Benefits include established lines of communication with loan officers, their familiarity with our paperwork, and an established track record of being ready to close on time.

Your lender's job is to understand your particular financial circumstances completely. 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.

Preparation

The amount of documentation and information required for a mortgage application can seem overwhelming. 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. This information is confidential and unavailable even to Stylecraft. We recommend that you refrain from sharing these details with anyone other than your lender.

Credit Report

Please note that if you are working with our featured lender, you will not be asked to pay for a credit report and an appraisal upon signing the mortgage application.

Property Information

The purchase agreement will include the legal description of the property and the sales 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

Documentation on any supplemental income such as bonuses or commissions

Names, addresses, and phone numbers of all employers for last two years

W-2s 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

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

Alimony or child support payments

Documentation of credit accounts that might not have shown up on your credit report

Names, addresses, phone numbers, and account numbers of accounts recently paid off, if used to establish credit

Application Paperwork

Once you have given all preliminary information to your loan originator, 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 Loan Estimate.

Loan Estimate

The Loan 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. Other numbers are set fees that should remain the same. The Loan Estimate will show you the estimated payment and estimated cash to close.

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 money you owe to each of your creditors, minimum monthly payments, and your payment history. Your lender may request an updated credit report just before you close to assure scores have not dropped and additional debt hasn't been assumed.

Underwriting

Typically, several weeks pass as these reports and forms are returned to the lender. If any delays are encountered, the loan originator may contact you for assistance. The credit reporting agency may call you to verify that the information they have gathered is correct.

Once the loan processor has collected this standard documentation, you may be asked to write letters describing your assets, income, or credit. Few loans are finalized without requests for additional information just before the package is submitted to the underwriter for final approval. At this point you may become frustrated with the loan process.

Please remember that your lender requests these letters to assist you in obtaining your financing. Do not hesitate to discuss your concerns with your loan officer. Perhaps he or she can provide some additional insight on what may seem to be redundant requests.

Amount Requested

Before the processor submits your file to the underwriters for final approval, he or she will verify the final sales price. Make sure that you provide copies of all change requests to your lender. This assists the lender in determining the exact loan amount. If change requests affect the total price after this point, you may have to resubmit your loan application for the higher amount or the lender may require that you pay for the additional items in cash.

Approval

Obtaining prequalification allows us to start the home even though final approval is still pending. You will discuss with your lender additional items that you may need to obtain final loan approval. If any of the documents requested have not been returned to the lender in a timely manner, approval may take longer.

Contingencies

Loan approvals often carry conditions of approval. The sale of a previous home or proof of funds are two examples. Discuss any concerns you may have about such conditions with your loan officer and obtain any requested documentation as soon as possible. Once all contingencies are met, the final loan can be approved.

Loan Amount Approved

If you qualify for an amount that is less than you requested, ask your loan office what changes might qualify you for a larger loan. Or, consider omitting some items now and adding them to your home later.

Loan Declined

If, after your best efforts, you are not approved for a loan, in accordance with your Purchase Agreement, Stylecraft Builders, Inc. will refund your earnest money upon your signing a release letter and returning this Homeowners Guide to the sales office. Option money will not be refunded.

Loan 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, the decision to lock your loan is at best a gamble.***

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. 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 sofa or increases in your credit 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.

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Chapter 3 New Home Selections

Part of the fun of buying a new home is selecting features, finish materials, and colors. You will make some of these choices at your community sales center. Note that if you are purchasing a home already under construction or preparing to start construction, some of the selections have already been finalized depending on the timeframe purchased. Your new home sales executive will assist you with these questions if applicable.

Plans and Specifications

Take as much time as you need to visit the model homes alone or with your sales executive to become familiar with all of our included features. If you visited one of our other communities to see an example of a floor plan not shown 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 executive will assist you.

Included Features

Each floor plan includes a substantial number of appealing features and materials as listed on the included features sheet available from our sales center. Please review this information carefully to prevent misunderstandings about which features are included in the base price of your new home. If you have any questions, your sales executive will be able to assist you.

Optional Features

Based on feedback from our buyers, Stylecraft Builders, Inc. 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 executive. 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. Your sales executive will provide details regarding community selection payment requirements.

Think, dream, imagine, look—we will assist you in any way that we can to make these decisions as easy 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 optional features are documented in detail on a change request as described later in this chapter.

Preconstruction Meeting

If you are purchasing a home that is “to be built,” you will meet with your superintendent and sales executive at a Preconstruction Meeting. The closing coordinator schedules this appointment. This meeting takes approximately 60 to 90 minutes and appointments are available Wednesdays and Thursdays between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. or Fridays at 2:00 p.m. ***The Preconstruction Meeting is almost always followed by the Selections Meeting.***

At the Preconstruction Meeting your sales executive will introduce you to the construction superintendent. What follows is a thorough confirmation of your home plans and changes made at the time of contract. You will also discuss the construction process, including such things as site visit protocols, how to handle questions, trade contractor communication, change requests, and estimated delivery. This meeting is also the point at which regular communication with you is transferred from your sales executive to your superintendent and closing coordinator.

Selection Process and Paperwork

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.

Colors

You are welcome to bring cushions or swatches to showrooms 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 the 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 but remember that some owners might have altered their original selections after moving in. Selections often look different on a full-size home.

Availability

If a selection you make turns out to be unavailable, we will contact you and request that you make a different selection. Because so many choices are offered, Stylecraft Builders, Inc. 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 and replacement items in your home.

Meet the Builder

If you are purchasing a home that is already under construction or preparing to start construction, you will have the opportunity to meet with your superintendent at the home site. This meeting replaces the preconstruction meeting and is scheduled by your closing coordinator and is usually held at "frame stage" or later, depending on the construction stage of the home at the time of purchase. During this meeting you meet the construction superintendent, review any changes made at the time of purchase, and gain a general understanding of what to expect as we continue the construction of your home. These will be scheduled Monday – Friday between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.

Change Requests

Stylecraft Builders, Inc. uses a change request form to describe and document allowable changes you may request to your new home's plans and specifications. Change requests fall into two categories. You may decide to either add or delete an item after signing your selection sheets, or change a selection previously ordered.

Processing and Fees

Changes requested after the Purchase Agreement or Selections Meeting, depending on the status of construction at the time of construction, include an administrative fee. This is necessary because previously issued paperwork must be canceled and reissued. Errors in this process are a Stylecraft Builders, Inc. responsibility. If the change you request impacts the construction schedule, our pricing will include construction loan interest for the additional days. The cost of deleted items will be credited to you although administrative fees are non-refundable.

When you request a change, the sales executive will document the request and submit it for approval, pricing, and construction schedule review. If a change is requested after selections have been made, your sales team will submit a request for change and an administrative fee will incur. Some change requests involve drafting, code research, and conversations with multiple trades and suppliers. The process typically takes three to five business days unless we advise you otherwise.

Information on pricing and any schedule adjustment is returned to your sales team 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

additional costs. For example, if you add a window, framing, drywall, interior and exterior trim, and paint costs may all be affected.

Signatures and Payment

If you elect to proceed with the change, we ask that you sign the change request and make full payment. Change requests that remain unsigned or unpaid become null and void after 10 days. For the protection of all concerned, all changes are documented and incorporated into your new home only when—

- Stylecraft Builders, Inc. 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
- An amendment to your contract, if the sales price was changed, is executed.

Please note that our contracts with our trade contractors prohibit them from making any changes to plans or specifications without written authorization from Stylecraft Builders, Inc.

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Chapter 4 Construction of Your 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. 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, and if mistakes are made, you can see them being corrected along the way.

Start of Construction

Before construction of your home can begin, Stylecraft Builders, Inc. 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.
- 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.

Safety

We understand that you will want to visit your new home while it's under construction. A new home construction site is exciting and can also be dangerous. Your safety is of prime importance to us. Please observe commonsense safety procedures at all times when visiting. *Stylecraft Builders is not responsible for incidents occurring with customers on jobsites while homes are under construction:*

- Keep older children within view and younger children within reach, or make arrangements to leave them elsewhere when visiting your home site.
- Do not walk backward, not 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. This includes any holes, trenches, or openings in the floor of your home.
- If you see any large, noisy grading equipment or delivery vehicles at your job site, we ask that you please come back at another time.

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.

Locks and Keys

Once exterior doors and locks are installed, we will access your home with a construction master key. When you take possession, using your permanent key in the locks for the first time will reposition the lock tumblers and the construction master keys will no longer open your home.

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 Stylecraft Builders, Inc. can change these contracts. Even with this detailed documentation, each home is still unique.

Many factors can cause variations between the model home you viewed and the home we deliver to you. The following are a few examples:

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 Stylecraft Builders, Inc. 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 the results of a soil test, an engineer determines 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 Home Site Conditions

Because each home site is shaped differently, the position of your home on the site may vary from others in the community. In addition, the exterior elevations of each home are affected by the topography, or surface contours, of your home site. 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

Stylecraft Builders, Inc. 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. (Please note that Post Oaks are especially susceptible to stress).

Utilities and Mailboxes

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

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 equal or better quality than 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 Stylecraft Builders, Inc. provides about available choices displayed in the models carefully to avoid misunderstandings. Contact your sales executive with any questions.

Measurements

Because finished sizes can vary slightly, you should measure for any window coverings you would like to install in your home rather than in any model home.

Television and the Internet

You may be aware of various home construction methods and materials from watching television programs or exploring the Internet. Stylecraft Builders, Inc. 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.

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 to form your new home.

Errors and Omissions

From time to time during a process that takes several months, involves dozens of people, and occurs while 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, your home is inspected at slab, pre-sheetrock, and move-in stage. Your home must pass each inspection before construction continues.

Your Questions

We 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, contact your superintendent with your question.

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

- Your concern may involve a detail Stylecraft Builders, Inc. 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.

Single Source

Stylecraft Builders, Inc. 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.

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 guarantee you will receive Stylecraft Builders, Inc.’s standard of construction, only authorized suppliers, trade contractors, and Stylecraft Builders, Inc. 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 Stylecraft Builders, Inc., and we will obtain input from trades when that is appropriate.

Suppliers and trade contractors have no authority to enter into agreements for Stylecraft Builders, Inc.. For your protection and theirs, the terms of our trade contractor agreements prohibit alterations without written authorization from Stylecraft Builders, Inc.. Their failure to comply with this procedure can result in termination of their contract. Discuss changes you are considering with your superintendent.

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 superintendent.

Delivery Date Updates

During the preconstruction conference, we will inform you of the targeted start and completion dates. We will provide updates to you at the actual start date, when the job is insulated, and again when countertops are installed. At those times, we will give you a status update on the targeted completion 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:

**Meetings you are scheduled to attend*

Interior

1. Foundation
2. Framing
3. Plumbing
4. Electrical (extra outlets need to be installed at this point)
5. HVAC (heating, ventilating, and air conditioning)
6. Inspections
7. Insulation
8. Drywall
9. Interior Trim
10. Paint and Stain

11. Cabinets
12. Countertops
13. Tile
14. Hardware
15. Light fixtures
16. Plumbing fixtures
17. Floor coverings
18. Construction cleaning
19. Final detailing
20. Homeowner Orientation*
21. Confirmation Tour*
22. Closing*

Exterior

1. Exterior Trim/Windows/Exterior Doors
2. Roofing
3. Mechanical/Electrical/Plumbing Rough In
4. Exterior painting
5. Fine grading
6. Landscaping
7. Sod

Notes

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Notes

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Chapter 5 Homeowner Orientation

Your homeowner 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 Stylecraft Builders, Inc. installed selections and options as you ordered them.
- Orientation handover between Construction and Warranty

Quality

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

- Incomplete or missing (missing globe on light fixture)
- 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 study, hallway side)
- Damaged (Scrape on wall from carpet installation)
- Soiled (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.

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 Stylecraft Builders, Inc. 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 wood entry floor bringing the sofa 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. Stylecraft Builders, Inc. is always available to assist you with information about cosmetic repairs you may need to make.

Scheduling

We schedule the orientation with you as your home nears completion, typically 20 to 30 days before your closing. Appointments are available Tuesday through Thursday, 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. It is best, especially in winter months, to

begin no later than 2:00 p.m. to assure sufficient day light to view all surfaces adequately. We meet at your new home. Expect your orientation to take approximately two 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 homeowner guide with your selection sheets and any approved change request 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.

Completion of Items

Stylecraft Builders, Inc. takes responsibility for resolving items noted during the orientation. Many of these can be completed before you move in. However, if any remaining 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 these orientation items is a concern to homeowners and builders alike. Stylecraft Builders, Inc. 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.

As part of our closing processes, we will schedule a Confirmation Tour to review completed items and document what, if any, work remains to ensure accuracy for our mutual records. See Chapter 6, *Closing on Your Home* for complete details.

Chapter 6 Closing on Your Home

At closing, the ultimate purpose of your purchase agreement is achieved: Ownership of your new home is transferred from Stylecraft Builders, Inc. to you. This process involves several steps and detailed preparation.

30-Day Notification

Stylecraft Builders, Inc. recognizes that timing is vitally important in planning your move. We can specify an exact delivery date when construction reaches a point at which weather and other factors are unlikely to affect completion of your home. This occurs approximately 30 days before the confirmed closing date. Until then many factors can influence the schedule, such as:

- Weather can delay getting the foundation in and can affect framing, roofing, and exterior finish.
- Material shortages and labor availability may also affect the construction schedule.
- If you are delayed in responding to a request from your lender, this can affect work progress.
- Delay of loan approval including appraisal
- Change requests signed after selections were completed can impact the construction schedule.
- Delays in municipal inspections can add time to the schedule as well.

Confirmation Tour

This is a final meeting between you and the Area Warranty Manager to prepare for the transfer of ownership from Stylecraft Builders to you. During this meeting you will verify the work that has been completed on any items noted during your Homeowner Orientation, sign-off on the home (having been completed to your satisfaction), and review warranty procedures and emergency contacts. This 15 to 20 minute meeting typically takes place the day before or the day of closing and allows you to go to closing feeling confident about the completion of your home and the attention we have provided.

Closing Appointment

The Closing includes finalizing your loan, including execution of documents and payment of any funds due by your lender made payable to the title company. During this process title will also be conveyed from Stylecraft Builders, Inc. to you.

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. Although these documents are non-negotiable and thousands of home buyers have signed them, you should read them.

The closing on your new home takes place at the title company and the appointment will be confirmed at the time your orientation meetings are scheduled or shortly thereafter.

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 title company, and Stylecraft Builders, Inc. 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.

Title Commitment

At or before closing, we will deliver to you a standard form for a Texas Land Title Association owner's title insurance commitment. This commitment is 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 company will provide a Commitment for Title Insurance within 20 days of receipt of your 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. Review the title commitment carefully. Discuss any questions with your title company.

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 if required by your loan.

Deed of Trust

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

Homeowner Association Documents

You will confirm that you have had the opportunity to review your homeowner association covenants, conditions, and restrictions; the association bylaws; and articles of incorporation at closing. Stylecraft Builders, Inc. recommends that you read these carefully. The provisions they contain will be enforced. The CC&Rs can be found on the Stylecraft Builders website.

Closing Disclosure: 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 nearer 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 preliminary closing disclosure that lists costs you will be paying at closing at least three business days before the closing appointment.

Preparation

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

Form of Payment

The title company will notify you directly with the acceptable form of payment if any closing costs or a down payment is due. Wire fraud has become a daily occurrence in many industries, including real estate. Realtors, real estate brokers, buyers, sellers and title companies are targets for wire fraud and many have lost hundreds of thousands of dollars because they wired funds based on bogus/revised wire instructions received via email. This money is not recoverable! Always call your escrow officer to confirm instructions before wiring your funds. Keys can be released only after funds are received. Please note that the title company is unable to accept cash and personal checks.

Insurance

You will need to provide your lender contact information for the company you have selected for homeowner insurance. We suggest you arrange for this at least three weeks before the expected closing date.

Stylecraft Builders, Inc. 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.

Connections Letter

Stylecraft Builders, Inc. will have utility services removed from its name usually 3 business days after closing. A connection letter detailing the contact information for applicable utility providers will be emailed to you when the closing coordinator schedules your Homeowner Orientation and Confirmation Tour. 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. Do not transfer utilities into your name prior to your scheduled closing date, doing so could delay your closing.

Internet and Cable

Internet, telephone, and cable TV services are provided by third party companies (typically Frontier or Suddenlink). Stylecraft Builders, Inc. has installed the necessary underground infrastructure for the internet, TV cable, and phone services to be provided, but unfortunately it is out of our control when these companies begin providing service in your area. We highly recommend beginning to call them as soon as you can to request service for your new home if it is not already provided.

Keys

When the closing process is complete, you will receive the keys to your new home. The keys are released the same day your loan is funded. As explained in the chapter on construction, when you insert your new key for the first time in each lock, the tumblers are altered and our master key will no longer unlock your door. 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 Remotes

Garage door opener remote, if applicable, will be on top of the operator in the garage. Contact your construction superintendent if you are unable to locate them. 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.

Mailbox Keys

Postal service state regulations prohibit Stylecraft Builders, Inc. from delivering mailbox keys to you. Where applicable, mail box keys are available from your post office. You will need proof of identity, proof of ownership, and you will be asked to sign for your keys. See your connections letter to determine which post office your keys will come from.

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.

Living in a Community under Construction

Life in a new community is a good news-bad news story. The good news is that as an early purchaser you had a wider selection of home sites, elevations, and colors. You also received the benefit of purchasing before prices increased as new phases were added and material costs rose. The bad news is that construction is still ongoing. This cloud does have a silver lining however—it goes away when construction is complete. Meanwhile, some things you should expect include:

Hours of Work

When weather and daylight permit, workers begin work at 7:00 a.m. and may work until 7:00 p.m.

Construction Traffic

You may find the street full of delivery trucks and worker vehicles. At times, you may need to back up to let a truck through. Occasionally, you may need to wait for a delivery to be unloaded before a truck can get out of your way.

Construction Noise

The operating sounds of equipment and tools are part of the process along with conversations and radios.

Mud in the Streets

After rains, and especially in winter, mud will get into the streets. We make an effort to minimize this and clean the streets regularly.

Construction Debris

On windy days, construction debris can blow over the community and across your yard—front and back. When workers are on scaffolding on the side of a neighboring home, they are literally just feet away from your home and some scraps may land in your yard. Although we pick up regularly, you will occasionally see some scraps in the interim.

Mud on Your House

If you move into a home with an empty home site adjacent, chances are that mud or dust will splash on your home during construction of the neighboring home. The builders are aware of this and will clean it in a timely manner.

Damaged Sod

Sod along the edge of your yard, adjacent to a home under construction, may get damaged. We will repair this and replace damaged sod when the adjacent yard is landscaped.

Flat Tires

One of the greatest annoyances is the possibility of getting a flat tire. While our trade contractors and our own personnel make an effort to keep items that can cause flat tires out of the streets, we also recognize that in some communities other companies are building homes alongside Stylecraft Builders. The variety of contributing factors combined with the real possibility of picking up a nail nearly anywhere you drive prevent us from reimbursing staff or customers for such events.

If we overlook something that is causing you an inconvenience, please let us know by calling our main office. We will make every effort to correct the condition promptly.

Notes

Chapter 7 Caring for Your Home

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.

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.

Prompt Attention

Many times performing minor maintenance 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.

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 of the new owner's name and the date of closing. Please pass this homeowner guide along to the new owners or suggest that they contact us to request one.

See also Additional Warranty Coverage at the end of this chapter.

Warranty Requests

Providing warranty service for a new home is more complicated than for other products. When you purchased your home, you actually purchased hundreds of items and the work of 35 to 50 independent trade contractors. With so many details and people involved, a planned system is essential. Our system includes numerous types of service. If you are ever in doubt as to which applies to your situation, contact our office for assistance.

Submitting a Warranty Request

1) Normal Service Requests:

- Fill out the warranty service request online: <https://www.stylecraft.com/warranty>. Choose correct Closing date before or after July 2017. Enter item(s) / save and then submit /. Note: You should receive an automated confirmation, if you failed to receive this confirmation, please resubmit your request.

- Or hand deliver request to Stylecraft Builders office, at 4090 SH 6 South, College Station, Texas ATTN: Director of Warranty.

We accept verbal requests only for emergency situations

- Please avoid contacting your superintendent or sales executive for normal service requests. They are not equipped in how this system works.
- By utilizing our online system you will benefit from our streamlined process to track your requests.

2) Emergency Service Requests:

1. **Directly contact the applicable trade contractor** (electrical, plumbing, HVAC, etc.) identified on a sticker inside the cabinet door under the kitchen sink.
2. A secondary notification should be sent to Stylecraft Builders (using the normal submission process described above) within 24 hours of initial notification to trade contractor for follow up.

What is an Emergency?

Emergency situations, as defined by the limited warranty, include the following:

- **Total loss of heating or air conditioning**
This is considered an emergency only if the outside temperature is less than 50°F or higher than 82°F
- **Total loss of electricity**
Check with the utility company prior to reporting this circumstance to Stylecraft Builders or an electrician.
- **Total loss of water**
Plumbing leak that requires the entire water supply to be shut off or causes damage to the home or its contents. Again, check with your water company to determine if there is a general outage in your area.
- **Gas leak**
Leave your home immediately and contact your utility company or call 911 from outside your home if you smell gas.

Roof Leak

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

Other Emergencies

In addition to emergency situations covered by our limited warranty, be prepared for other kinds of emergencies. Post phone numbers for the fire

department, police, paramedics, and poison control near phones in your home. Have companies in mind in the event you need a locksmith, water extraction, glass breakage repair, or sewer router service. If you are new to the area, neighbors may be able to recommend good service providers. Introduce your children to neighbors who might be available to help in an emergency if you are not home.

Help Us to Serve You

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

- Your name, address, email address, and the phone numbers where you can be reached during business hours.
- A complete description of the problem, for example, “guest bath—cold water line leaks under sink,” rather than “plumbing problem.”
- Information about your availability or the best days or times to reach you. For instance, if calling you at work is acceptable, let us know. Otherwise, we will use your cell phone number or email address. If you are usually home on Thursday, mention that.

Inspection and Repair Hours

Many homeowners ask whether evening and weekend appointment times are available. We understand the desire for appointments outside normal business hours. In investigating how such appointments could be arranged, we discovered many factors that make extended service hours impractical.

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

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.

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 limited warranty itself, 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.

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 responsibility.

Trade Day Appointment

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

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

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

Exterior Items

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

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.

Signatures on Work Orders

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

We routinely contact homeowners at random by phone or email to ask for feedback about the repair process. If you have suggestions on how we can improve the service we provide we want to hear them. If you are dissatisfied with any service we provide, you can note that on the work order or call the warranty office with your feedback. We are available to review your concerns and determine whether our requirements have been met.

And naturally if we exceeded your expectations, the service personnel of our company and the trades with whom we work sincerely appreciate your compliments on their efforts.

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.

11-Month Warranty Inspection

A Warranty Administrator will be reaching out to you approximately 10 months after closing to schedule an 11 Month Warranty Inspection with your Area Warranty Manager with the object of reviewing any warranty work completed over the previous 11 months, assessing any new items that may have come up that need to be addressed prior to the home going out of warranty as well as reviewing homeowner maintenance responsibilities and answering any questions you may have. This meeting is optional but the majority of our homeowners appreciate the opportunity to meet prior to the end of the one-year limited warranty.

Consumer Product Warranties

Warranties for consumer products are assigned by Stylecraft Builder, Inc. to you at closing. With the exception of the water heater literature, you will find these in the kitchen drawer beside the range. The water heater materials will be on the side of the water heater. During your Homeowner Orientation, we will point these documents out.

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.

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.

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Air Conditioning

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

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

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 p.m. when the temperature has reached 85 degrees and set your thermostat to 65 degrees, the air conditioning unit will begin cooling, but will take much longer to reach the desired temperature. During the whole day, the sun has been heating not only the air in the house, but the walls, the carpet, and the furniture. At 6:00 p.m. 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 65 degrees will not cool the home any faster and can result in the unit freezing up and not performing at all. Extended use under these conditions can damage the unit.

Adjust Vents

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

Compressor Level

Maintain the air conditioning compressor in a level position to prevent inefficient operation and damage to the equipment. *See also Grading and Drainage.*

Condensate Line

While using your air conditioning system, every sixty (60) days pour one cup of bleach down the condensate line to kill any algae that may grow on the inside of the drain line. This keeps the condensate line free from obstruction and minimizes the chances of it backing into your home.

Extended Absence

If you have a delayed move-in or if you will be away for an extended period of time, do not completely turn off your a/c unit. Extreme indoor temperatures and humidity can cause premature caulking and drywall cracks as well as potential flooring issues. It is recommended to set the thermostat to a moderate temperature and leave it.

Filter

We recommend that air filters be changed every thirty (30) days or as needed. In areas with heavy dust, more frequent changes may be in order. Fresh filters can significantly reduce operating costs and will prolong the life of your system. You must place all panels back securely in their place or the system will not operate properly or not at all.

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.

Professional Servicing

Stylecraft Builders recommends an inspection by a heating professional every year.

Secondary Drains

The secondary drain exists as a safety valve and is connected to the drip pan under your furnace. If there is an excess of water from this drain, it is probable that your primary drain is clogged. The secondary drain exits your house from the soffit, or siding, usually over a window. This is done so that you can see if there is an excess of water coming from this drain. If you suspect a clog in your primary drain, call your air conditioning contractor.

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.

Thermostat

The thermostat for your home is either a digital or a programmable, setback thermostat.

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

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

Zoned System

Some systems are designed using a zoned system. They use one air conditioning unit and two thermostats to control the system. With this type of operation, a series of dampers control air flow to the zones. You will not feel air out of all registers at the same time as air is directed to various zones for proper operation.

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

HVAC cooling system will be capable of maintaining a temperature of 78° Fahrenheit, as measured in the center of each room at a height of 5 feet above the floor under local outdoor summer conditions. In the case of outside temperatures exceeding 95° Fahrenheit, the system will

keep the inside temperature 15 degrees Fahrenheit cooler than the outside temperature. This is only a rough estimate as there are adjustments for ceiling height, window size and placement and direction the house faces.

Compressor

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

Coolant

The outside temperature must be 70 degrees or higher for the contractor to add coolant to the system. If your home was completed during winter months, this charging of the system is unlikely to be complete and will need to be performed in the spring. Although we check and document this at your new home orientation, your call to remind us is welcome in the spring.

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.

Dishwasher

Your dishwasher and disposal share the same drain. Make sure the garbage disposal drain is empty before starting the dishwasher.

Dryer Vent

Periodically remove the dryer hose from the dryer vent stack. Check for lint build up or blockage. This will help increase the life expectancy of the dryer. If clothes are taking longer to dry, it is probably a clogged dryer vent.

Electric Stove

An electric stove will usually have a separate circuit. If your range should fail to work, check the circuit breaker for its circuit. *See also Electrical/Breakers.*

Garbage Disposal

Avoid loading the disposal with food items before turning it on. For proper operation, turn on the cold water and start the disposal. Drop the food items slowly into the unit. When the unit sounds clear, turn it off and leave the water running for 15 seconds. This allows the food waste to be carried into your sewer lines.

Only foods that are non-fibrous and easily pulverized should be placed into the disposal. Examples of foods not to place in the disposal unit are cornhusks, celery, onion skins, olive pits, bones and solid or liquid grease. These items may cause your unit to overload or jam. If this happens, follow these corrective measures. Turn off the disposal and the cold water. Wait three minutes for the disposal unit to cool, then press the reset button usually located on the bottom of the unit. If this does not correct the problem, your disposal unit is probably obstructed. In that case, follow manufacturer instructions for clearing it.

Gas Stove

If the burners on your stove, oven or broiler fail to light, check your burners for clogs and clean. If clogs are encountered consult the manufacturer's recommendations for cleaning them.

Range Hood/Microhood

Remove and clean the filters. They are dishwasher safe. Clean accumulated grease deposits from the fan housing and surrounding cabinetry.

Ranges, Ovens and Broilers

The outside of your stove, oven or broiler can be cleaned with a non-abrasive cleaner such as baking soda sprinkled on a damp cloth or sponge. Never use harsh abrasive cleaners on the outside of stoves, ovens or broilers.

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.

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

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

Brick and Masonry

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. All building materials are subject to expansion and contraction caused by changes in temperature and humidity. Dissimilar materials expand or contract at different rates. This movement results in separation between materials, particularly dissimilar ones. This type of expansion and contraction is also applicable to the masonry and concrete portions of your home.

Efflorescence

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

Tuck-Pointing

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

Weep Holes

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

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 1/8 inch or are visible from a distance further than 20 feet. Variations in the color of the brick and/or mortar may result.

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.

Cleaning

Consult your manufacturer's recommendations for care and maintenance. We suggest products such as lemon oil, Liquid Gold, Old English Furniture Polish and Scratch Cover for wood finish cabinets. Follow the container directions. Use such products a maximum of once a month so as to avoid excessive build-up. Avoid using paraffin-based spray waxes or washing cabinets with water as both of these will damage the luster of the finish. Products such as Windex or Simple Green are suggested for RTF finish cabinets. Follow the container directions.

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. While cooking food on your stove, be sure to turn on the vent hood.

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. Individual cabinets should not have a deviation of more than 3/16 inch out of level. Cabinet faces more than 1/8 inch out of line, and cabinet corners more than 3/16 inch out of line are considered excessive.

Operation

Cabinets should operate properly under normal use.

Separations

Gaps greater than 1/4 inch in width are considered excessive and will be repaired with caulk, putty, scribe molding, or will reposition/reinstall cabinets to meet the performance guideline.

Warping

If doors or drawer fronts warp in excess of 1/8 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.

Note: If you choose to remodel at a later date, you and the contractor may agree to disregard the guideline in order to match or otherwise compensate for preexisting conditions.

Carbon Monoxide/Smoke Detectors**Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines**

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

Cleaning

For your safety, clean each carbon monoxide/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.

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

We will test carbon monoxide detectors during the orientation to confirm that they are working and to familiarize you with the alarm. Stylecraft Builders, Inc. 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 your manufacturer's recommendations for additional information on the care of your carpet.

Burns

Take care of any kind of burn immediately. First, snip off the darkened fibers, then use a 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 most important thing you can do to protect your carpet is to vacuum it frequently.

Vacuum twice each week lightly and once a week thoroughly. Heavy traffic areas may require more frequent

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

Please note however, that beater bar vacuum attachments should not be used on any type of Berber 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.

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 may be visible. We will repair any gaps or fraying within the one year warranty period.

Caulking**Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines**

Time and weather will shrink and dry caulking so that it no longer provides a good seal. 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. Caulking is excluded from one-year warranty coverage.

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

Ceramic Tile**Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines**

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

Cleaning

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

The ceramic tile installed on walls 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; this is caused by normal shrinkage. 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 Homeowner Orientation we confirm that tile and grout areas are in acceptable condition. We will repair or replace cracked, badly chipped, or loose tiles noted at that time. We are not responsible for variations in color or discontinued patterns. New grout may vary in color from the original.

Grout or Mortar Joint: One-Time Repair

After grout or mortar has been cured, color variations at a joint that is readily visible from a standing position facing the surface at a distance of 6 feet under lighting conditions will be repaired.

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.

Lippage

Lippage of adjoining marble or ceramic tile greater than 1/16 inch will be repaired, except where the materials are designed with an irregular height such as handmade tile or tile larger than 13 x 13 inches.

Concrete Flatwork**Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines**

Soil and climate conditions in our area can cause concrete movement and may result in concrete cracks. By maintaining good drainage, you protect your home's foundation and the concrete flatwork.

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 and the garage floor 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.

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

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.

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

Drainage

Be aware of areas where water is collecting adjacent to flatwork and fill these in. Do not allow downspouts to drain in such a way that the water can get under the concrete.

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.

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, and so on.

Sealer

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

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

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

Color

Concrete slabs vary in color. We provide no correction for this condition.

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 material will vary from the original concrete.

Separation

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

Settling

Adjoining concrete sections may deviate and settle. We will repair any deviations in which the adjoining concrete sections deviate in height by more than a 1/2 inch.

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. Spalling is excluded from warranty coverage unless it results from faulty material or workmanship. Where this applies, we will repair the concrete surface if exposed aggregate exceeds 10 percent of the total area.

Water Collecting

We will repair or replace affected area if standing water collects or ponds on sidewalk that is 3/8 inch deep on a sidewalk 24 hours after the end of a rain.

DRIVEWAY

Driveway Cracks: One-time repair

We will repair cracks one-time in the driveway in excess of 1/4 inch, excluding chips, in width or vertical displacement. As mentioned above, repaired areas will vary in color from the original concrete.

Settling or Heaving

We will repair differential movement between surfaces in excess of 1/2 inch.

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.
- Develop the habit of running the hood fan while you are cooking.
- Run your bath fans for a minimum of 30 minutes after bathing or showering.
- Air your house by opening windows for a time when weather permits.

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 30 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. 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.

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 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. Avoid abrasive cleaners or scouring pads that will damage the luster of the surface.

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 and colors in the granite may evolve over time with exposure to materials that come into contact with it. Each piece of granite reacts differently to foods, beverages, and acidic items. Please use caution.

ENGINEERED MARBLE

A selection that may be used in bathrooms. Do not use acids to clean (see below) as it may cause permanent etching of the marble.

Acids

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

Sealer

Granite is highly resistant to chips and scratches, but it is porous. Granite countertops are sealed before installation.

The granite surface should be treated once a year 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, a resin sealer should be used for sealing all surfaces of the granite. Silicone or siloxane sealers should NOT be used. Sealing countertops is your decision and Homeowner Guide responsibility.

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

During your Homeowner Orientation we confirm that all countertops are in acceptable condition. We repair noticeable surface damage such as chips, cracks, and scratches noted on the new home orientation list that are greater than 1/32 inch. Repair of surface damage noted subsequent to this is one of your home maintenance responsibilities.

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.

Subsequent caulking will be one of your home maintenance responsibilities.

GRANITE

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

Decks

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Wood decks, if offered as an option in your area, 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.

Snow and Ice

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

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 Homeowner 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 or the building of the deck (whichever is the later).

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

Adjustments

The doors installed in your home are wood products subject to the natural characteristics of wood such as shrinking and warping. Due to natural fluctuations of humidity and the use of forced air furnaces, showers, and dishwashers, and so on, interior doors may require minor adjustments.

Putty, filler, or latex caulk can be used to fill any minor separations that develop at mitered joints in the door trim. Follow with painting.

Another effect of normal settling is that doors may require minor adjustments for proper fit. Panels on wood doors will normally expand or shrink due to changes in humidity and temperature. Touch up with paint or stain on the exposed unfinished areas is the normal maintenance.

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 Finish

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—once a year is typical. Stained exterior doors with clear finishes tend to weather faster than a painted door. Treat the finish with a wood preserver quarterly to preserve the varnish and prevent the door from drying and cracking. Reseal the stained exterior doors whenever the finish begins cracking or crazing.

Failure to Latch

If a door will not latch due to minor settling, this can be corrected by making a new opening in the jamb for the latch plate (re-mortising) and raising or lowering the plate accordingly.

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.

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.

Failure to Latch

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

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. We will repair doors that warp in excess of 1/4 inch beyond the doorjamb when the door is closed. In the case of double doors, if either side permanently warps more than 1/4 inch beyond the face of the adjacent door, we will repair it. Exterior door thresholds occasionally require adjustment or replacement.

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

During the Homeowner 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. Weather conditions may result in some precipitation entering around the door. This unavoidable condition is a natural result of weather conditions and is excluded from warranty coverage, however the addition of a covered porch, storm door, or gutters can alleviate some of the water intrusion during these conditions.

Adjustments

Exterior doors should operate smoothly, except during occasional periods of high humidity or with variations in temperature and 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.

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. As the soils around and under your home react to the amount of moisture they receive, the foundation will follow and this can cause minor distress in wall and ceilings. This separation and cracking is non-structural and is excluded from warranty coverage.

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.

Textured Ceilings

Generally the care and maintenance of a textured ceiling is minimal. Care should be taken that the ceiling is not scraped or damaged. Periodic dusting will remove dust or cobwebs.

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

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

Lighting Conditions

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

Related Warranty Repairs

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

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

Separation and Nail Pop Repairs: One-Time Repair

One time during the materials and workmanship warranty, we will repair drywall shrinkage cracks, cracked corner beads, excess joint compound, trowel marks, blisters in tape joints, and nail pops. The repaired area will appear white and will need to be painted. Remember that touch-ups may be visible.

Repainting the entire wall or the entire room to correct this is your choice and responsibility. You are also 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.

Protruding Joints: One-Time Repair

Any joints that are visible from a standing position facing the surface a distance of 6 feet under normal lighting conditions are considered excessive.

Truss Uplift

Truss uplift can occur when outside temperatures are significantly colder than inside temperatures. The result appears as a minor crack along the joint of the ceiling and wall. We will repair separations in excess of 3/16 inch.

Easements

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Easements are areas where 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 will also include drainage easements: the runoff from adjacent lots may pass across your property. Likewise, water from your property may run across a neighboring lot. Easements are recorded and are permanent.

Trees, shrubs, gardens, play equipment, storage sheds, fences, or other items which you install in or across these easements may be disturbed if service entities—such as 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 that will include such equipment.

See also Grading and Drainage.

Electrical System

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Know the location of the breaker panel; it includes a main shut-off that controls all the electrical power to your home. In addition, there is a subpanel with individual breakers that control the separate circuits.

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. 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.

Breaker Function

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

Breakers Tripping

Breakers trip because of overloads caused by plugging too many appliances into the circuit, a worn cord or defective appliance, or operating an appliance with too high 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.

Ceiling Fans

Ceiling fans will give you extended, trouble-free service if a small amount of maintenance is performed. All ceiling fans are installed by screwing the threaded part of the extension rod into the fan housing. Then, a setscrew is installed to keep the fan from rotating. Over a period of time, if not checked and tightened, the set screw can become loose causing the housing to unscrew and the fan to fall. Periodic tightening of the set screw will prevent this problem.

Electrical Modifications

To preserve your warranty protection on the electrical system, do not tamper with or add to your electrical system. For any modification that is needed, contact the original electrical contractor who worked on your home. You will find that information in your list of trade contractors.

Electrical Service Entrances

The electrical services entrance, which provides power to the service panel, has been designed for the electrical needs of the house. Do not tamper with the cable.

Fixtures

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.

Some fixtures have an on/off switch located on the fixture. If a hanging light fixture does not work, make sure the switch is on. If your fixture does not have a switch, reset any tripped circuit breakers.

Fluorescent Bulbs

If a luminous light fixture does not work, make sure all fluorescent bulbs are installed properly. Adjust any tubes that are flickering or buzzing. Check wall switches, circuit breakers and GFCI breakers. Fluorescent fixtures will emit a buzzing sound which is normal. Fluorescent bulbs that are darkening at one or both ends should be replaced for optimum lighting.

GFCI (Ground-Fault Circuit Interrupters)

GFCIs are designed as a low voltage breaker and installed as a safety feature to control the electrical current to the “wet” areas of your home. Building codes require installation of these receptacles in bathrooms, the kitchen, garage, and outside (areas where an individual can come into contact with water while holding an electric appliance or tool).

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. Because of this design, it is unlikely that the circuit will allow the use of power tools or appliances such as freezers.

If you are going to place a freezer in your garage it will be necessary for you to add another 110V plug using a Certified Electrician. Test and reset the GFCI outlets monthly by using the test button on the outlet.

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.*

GFCI receptacles have a test and reset button. Once each month, press the test button. This will trip the circuit. (If the test button does not trip, the outlet does not have GFCI protection and must be replaced.) 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 Homeowner Orientation.

Modifications

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

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.

TROUBLESHOOTING TIPS: NO ELECTRICAL SERVICE

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 entry)
- 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. In most cases, wires run in a straight line from the service panel to the nearest public utility pad. Maintain positive drainage around the foundation to protect electrical service connections.

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

Designed Load

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

Flickering Lights

Any flickering of an individual light other than fluorescent lights should be reported to the electrical contractor. In the event all of your lights are flickering repeatedly, please contact your local utility provider

GFCI (Ground-Fault Circuit 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.

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 the humidifier when you are using your air conditioner.

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 heating.

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.

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

Caulking is excluded from warranty coverage.

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, 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.

Variation

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

The fence has been installed in accordance with our building specifications and therefore we are not able to accommodate specific homeowner requests to modify fencing for your pets.

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 un-treated 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. When applied to both sides of the fence, a water-sealer can extend the life of your fence. Also check the posts and any gates twice a year and tighten hardware or make needed adjustments.

Wrought Iron Fencing

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

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

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

If fencing is part of your home purchase, we will confirm the acceptable condition of the fence during your Homeowner Orientation. Although developer-installed

fencing falls outside our limited warranty we may be able to assist in communicating any concerns you have and obtaining a response. If we installed your fence, we will correct fence posts that become loose during the warranty period.

Fireplace

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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.

WOOD BURNING FIREPLACE

For homes where gas is unavailable, we provide wood burning fireplaces. 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. We install a fresh air vent to supply the fireplace with combustion air and reduce the amount of heated air the fire draws from your house.

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.

Chemical Logs

Do not use Duraflame, Presto or any type of chemical logs. Their extremely high burning temperatures could cause damage to the firebox.

Chimney Cleaning

Creosote and other wood-burning by-products accumulate inside the flue over a period of time. This build-up 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.

Fresh Air Vent and Damper

A fresh air vent has been installed to provide the fire with combustion air and reduce the amount of heated air the fire draws from your home. Open this vent prior to starting the fire as you do the damper. When not in use, the damper and the fresh air vent should be closed. Leaving them open is equivalent to having an open window in your home. 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.

Gas Log Lighter

Refer to the fireplace instructions to determine the proper use of a gas log lighter.

Glass Doors

Do not close glass doors over a roaring fire, especially if you are burning hard woods (for instance, oak or hickory) because the fire 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.

GAS FIREPLACE

The majority of Stylecraft homes that contain fireplaces have a ventless (no chimney) fireplace unit. If you are unsure whether your fireplace is ventless or wood burning, please check with your superintendent or refer to the fireplace instructions.

Ventless fireplaces are designed for gas logs only. These manufactured logs do not actually burn, but give the appearance of a "real" fire. The heat source of this unit is natural gas. A porcelain log set is provided with your home purchase.

Do not, under any circumstances, burn wood in this type of fireplace.

This type of unit requires special operation and maintenance procedures that are different from those of wood burning fireplaces.

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. Mortar-style 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 Homeowner 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.

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

Slight cosmetic imperfections in the foundation walls, such as a visible seam where two pours meet or slight visible aggregate (known as honeycombing), are possible and require no repair. We will repair cracks in the floors and foundation walls in excess of 3/16 inch in width during the one-year warranty period.

Foundation

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

The foundation of your home has been designed and installed in accordance with standard local practices, or by a professional engineer. The city and/or the designing engineer inspect it before it is placed in order to assure conformance.

Our area experiences very high plastic soils, which means the soil swells and shrinks greatly with seasonal moisture changes. You should expect to experience movement of your foundation, and resultant aesthetic effects such as sheet rock and masonry cracking, wood trim separation, and tile grout cracking. However, developing good watering habits around your foundation, which creates consistent moisture levels in the soil year round, can minimize these symptoms.

Whatever you do in watering, the goal is to create consistent moisture levels evenly around the perimeter of your home. Symptoms of poor watering include dead grass, the soil pulling away from the foundation, and movements in the wood trim at the top of brick walls.

Perimeter Moisture Maintenance

To protect your home's foundation and preserve the protection provided by structural warranty coverage, establish a method for maintaining consistent moisture levels around the entire perimeter of your home. If you are unfamiliar with methods to accomplish this, please consult a professional engineer for recommendations. Common methods are soaker hoses and regular yard watering. Any method used should be used consistently throughout the year.

Trees in Close Proximity to the Foundation

Keeping any tree whose drip line encroaches on the foundation line can cause settlement of the foundation. Trees absorb moisture from the soils that would normally keep the soils at a consistent moisture level.

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

Slight cosmetic imperfections in the foundation walls, such as a visible seam where two pours meet or slight visible aggregate (known as honeycombing), are possible and require no repair. We will repair cracks in the floors and foundation walls in excess of 3/16 inch in width during the one-year warranty period.

Framing**One Year Limited Warranty 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.

Floor Level

Within a room, the floor should appear level when seen from a normal viewing position. Where a floor is sloped, a maximum ratio of one inch over 10 feet applies when measured between the opposite walls or defined limits of the room area.

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 one inch in an 8 foot distance of the wall. The variation of a bowed wall may not be more or less than 3/4 inch over the length 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 them one time during your warranty period.

Garage Overhead Door**Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines**

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

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.

Lock

If the lock becomes stiff, apply a silicone or graphite lubricant. Do not use oil on a lock as it will stiffen in winter and make the lock difficult to operate.

Lubrication/Maintenance

Every six months, apply a thirty weight automobile oil or similar lubricant to all moving parts: track, rollers, hinges, pulleys, and springs. Avoid over lubricating to prevent dripping on cars and the concrete flooring. At the same time, check to see that all hardware is tight and 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

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

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.

Clean safety sensors periodically to allow proper function.

For your safety, after the expiration of the one-year warranty, have any needed adjustments made by a qualified specialist. Garage doors 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 Homeowner 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.

Grading and Drainage**Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines**

You share in an overall drainage plan for the community that was predetermined before the homes were built. We will grade the areas within 20 feet of the foundation of the home on all lots. The remaining area may or may not be final graded depending on the size of the lot. The rough and final grades around your home have been inspected and approved for proper drainage of your lot. Use caution when installing landscaping, fencing, or additions to your home to prevent causing water problems on adjacent lots.

Backfill Settlement

The area we excavated for your home's foundation was larger than the home to allow room to work. In addition, some trenching is necessary for installation of utility lines. Although we replaced the soil, it does not return to its

original density. Some settling will occur, especially after prolonged or heavy rainfall or melting of large amounts of snow. Settling can continue for several years. Inspect the perimeter of your home regularly for signs of settling and fill settled areas as needed to maintain positive drainage.

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 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.

Roof Water

Downspout extensions, where installed, are sloped so the water drains away from your home quickly. They should be in the down position. Ensure that downspout extensions, where applicable, are not directed alongside the driveway/sidewalk slabs as this could erode the soil under the concrete and result in unwarrantable settlement.

Rototilling

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

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.

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.

Backfill Settlement

Backfilled or excavated areas around the foundation and at utility trenches should not interfere with the drainage away from your home. If these areas settle around the perimeter of the home during the first year contact our warranty office.

Irrigation

You or your neighbor may have irrigations systems that place water on the yard. Over watering can become a problem, especially from uphill neighbors who overwater and cause runoff into your yard. If this occurs, try to work out a watering plan with your surrounding neighbors that provides moisture for the grass but does not create runoff. Stylecraft Builders is not responsible for wet areas or standing water caused by over watering.

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.

Under Concrete: One-time repair

We will fill visible sunken areas under concrete as we

complete your grading and one time during your first year warranty. Following that, any further settlement is your responsibility to correct.

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 Homeowner Orientation. The limited warranty excludes repairs for cosmetic damage subsequent to the Homeowner Orientation.

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

Hardwood

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

In daily care of hardwood floor, preventive maintenance is the primary goal. Please see your flooring manufacturer's instructions or Website. Stylecraft Builders recommends Bona products for cleaning and caring for your floors. Bona products are available at most home repair and general merchandise stores.

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.

Avoid wet mops, wet jets or general mopping on Laminate floors. They are not sealed wood floors. Vacuum or sweep your floor periodically. Do not apply floor polishes, detergents, soaps or waxes to your Laminate flooring. Never use scouring pads or steel wool to clean your floor. Put doormats inside the entrances to your home and place floor protectors under furniture legs to prevent scratches.

Dimples

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

Filmy Appearance

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

Furniture Legs

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

Humidity

Wood 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.

Limit Water

Wipe up spills immediately to avoid damage and vacuum crumbs instead of washing laminate floors frequently with water. Mopping or washing with water should be avoided. Excessive amounts of water on laminate floors can penetrate seams and get under edges causing the material to swell.

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. Laminate floor is a floating floor and will expand and contract with changes in humidity. Occasionally pieces will separate during this expansion and contraction. Experienced floor installers can repair this fairly easily. *See also Warping.*

Shoes

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

Spills

Clean up food spills immediately with a dry cloth.

Splinters

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 Homeowner 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.

Cupping or Crowning

Cupping or crowing in hardwood floor boards will not exceed 1/16 inch height in a 3 inch maximum span measured perpendicular to the long axis of the board will be repaired.

Lippage

Excessive lippage observed along the joints of the prefinished wood flooring products greater than 1/16 inch will be repaired.

Heating System: Gas Forced Air**Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines**

Good maintenance of your furnace can save energy dollars and prolong the life of the furnace. Carefully read and follow the manufacturer's literature on use and maintenance. The guidelines here include general information only.

Adjust Vents

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

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

Avoid Overheating

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

Combustion and Fresh Air Ducts

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

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

Duct Cleaning

The furnace ducts in your home were cleaned prior to possession. We recommend that you have your home's ducts cleaned every two to three years. Yearly cleaning is only necessary if health issues are a factor.

Ductwork Noise

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

Electronic Ignition

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

Filter

A clean filter will help to keep your home clean and reduce

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

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

If you have a permanent, washable, removable filter, you need to clean this monthly. Use water only to clean the filter, tap to dry or air dry, and leave the furnace off for a brief period. Do not use soaps or detergents on the filter.

Furnace Fan Cover

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

Furnished Home

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

Gas Odor

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

Odor

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

On-Off Switch

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

Furnace Pilot

The furnace has no pilot light. It is equipped with a Hot Surface Ignition System (electronic ignition) that eliminates the waste of a constantly burning pilot. The radiant sensor ignition control lights the main burners upon a demand

for heat from the thermostat. If the unit fails to function, please contact your heating contractor.

Programmable Thermostat

A programmable thermostat is a great way to save energy dollars. Your thermostat can be programmed to keep temperatures lower while you're away and increase them in anticipation of your return. You can program the thermostat for up to a seven day cycle. Instructions are attached to your thermostat.

Registers

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

Return Air Vents

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

Temperature

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

During the winter, if you live in a two story home, the overall ambient temperature will vary 3°-8° between upstairs to downstairs (upstairs being hotter) due to heat rising.

Normal temperature variations from floor to floor (depending upon the style of home) can be as much as 10 degrees or more on extremely cold days. The furnace blower will typically cycle on and off more frequently and for shorter periods of time during severe cold spells.

Thermostat

The furnace will come on automatically when the temperature at the thermostat registers below the setting you have selected. Once the furnace is on, setting the thermostat to a higher temperature will not heat the home faster.

Trial Run

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

TROUBLESHOOTING TIPS: NO HEAT

Before calling for service, check to confirm that the:

- Thermostat is set to “heat” and the temperature is set above the room temperature.
- Furnace fan cover is installed correctly for the furnace fan to operate. This panel compresses a button that tells the blower it is safe to operate. Similar to the way a clothes dryer door operates, this panel pushes in a button that lets the fan motor know it is safe to come on. If that button is not pushed in, the furnace will not operate.
- 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.)
- Furnace switch is on.
- Gas line is open at the main meter and at the side of the furnace.
- Filter is clean to allow airflow.
- Vents in individual rooms are open.
- Air returns are unobstructed.
- Exhaust vent is not blocked by 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

We will install heating systems according to national and local building codes, as well as to designs of the particular home. Building codes specify that heating systems should be capable of maintaining an indoor air temperature differential of 21 degrees Fahrenheit.

Duct Placement

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

Ductwork

Although the heat system is not a sealed system, the ductwork should remain attached and securely fastened. If it becomes unattached, we will repair as needed.

Furnace Sounds

Expansion or contraction of metal ductwork results in ticking or popping sounds. While eliminating all these

sounds is impossible, we will correct oil canning. (Oil canning occurs when a large area of sheet metal like those found in air ducts makes a loud noise as it moves up and down in response to temperature changes.)

Thermostat

Thermostats are calibrated to plus or minus 2 degrees.

Heating System: Heat Pump**Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines**

If your home contains a heat pump system, you should be aware of the performance characteristics unique to these systems. The heating system will be capable of producing an inside temperature of 70 degrees Fahrenheit, as measured in the center of each room at a height of 5 feet above the floor under local outdoor winter design conditions. 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. If the light stays on when the outside temperature is more than 30 degrees Fahrenheit, contact a service person.

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. If your system is trying to defrost itself you should manually switch to emergency heat. During the defrost cycle the outside fan will stop temporarily. You may also see steam coming up from the fan where the unit is melting the ice. The temperature of airflow into the home will be a bit lower during the defrost cycle. The defrost cycle can only occur once every 90 minutes and lasts no longer than 10 minutes.

Night Setback

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 FAHRENHEIT 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 manufacturer's limited warranty for information regarding warranty coverage.

Insulation

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

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

Electrical outlets may emit detectable amounts of cold air when outside temperatures are low. This will happen due to convection in the wall. There are polyhats on the boxes to minimize this.

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

We will install insulation to meet or exceed the building codes applicable at the time of construction and outlined as part of your purchase agreement.

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.

Additions

Before installing patio additions or other permanent improvements, consider soil conditions in the design and engineering of your addition.

Backfill Settlement

We construct the foundation of your home beginning with an excavation into the earth. When the foundation walls are complete, the area surrounding them is backfilled. Soil in this area is not as compact as undisturbed ground. Backfill areas will settle and require prompt attention to avoid damage to your home and voiding of the structural warranty. Keep downspout extensions in the down position to channel roof runoff away from the foundation area of your home. Routine inspection of downspouts, backfill areas, and other drainage components is an excellent maintenance habit.

See also Grading and Drainage.

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.

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.

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.

Sprinkler Heads

Direct sprinkler heads away from the home. Water may cause mineral deposits to appear on your brick. Drain and service sprinkler systems on a regular basis.

Swales

In many cases, drainage swales do follow property boundaries. Stylecraft Builders will not alter drainage patterns to suit individual landscape plans. Typically a lot receives water from and/or passes water on to other lots. For this reason, homeowner changes in grade often affect those adjacent or nearby. Stylecraft Builders advises against making such changes.

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 Locations.

Waiting to Landscape

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

Watering

Watering should be done in a uniform systematic manner as equally as possible on all sides of the foundation to keep the soil moist, not saturated. Areas of soil that do not have ground cover may require more moisture as they are more susceptible to evaporation, causing a moisture content imbalance. During extreme hot and dry periods, close observations should be made around the foundation to insure adequate watering is being provided, preventing soil from separating or pulling back from the foundation.

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 during the Homeowner 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.

Mildew**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 Homeowner Orientation. Our warranty excludes mildew.

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 the 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.

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. Confirm that your sump pump functions correctly, check weather stripping, caulking, and 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.

Ventilation

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 furnace.
- 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 or replacement to prevent moisture from getting in around the door as well as to reduce air infiltration. As part of your routine maintenance, check weather stripping at all exterior doors and make any needed repairs.

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.

Paint and Stain

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. **Only walls painted with “scrubbable” paint may be cleaned with warm soapy water.** Gently rub the area to be cleaned instead of hard scrubbing. Excessive force will tend to remove the paint.

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.

Interior

The walls in your new home have been painted with latex paint, unless specifically requested otherwise. They should give you long service if cared for properly. DO NOT scrub walls painted with flat latex paint.

Re-Painting

During the One Year Limited Warranty period, we will repaint any areas that have been repaired that require paint such as drywall. If an interior area is repainted a different color, other than the original paint used, Stylecraft will not be responsible for painting or purchasing the paint. We will however repair any area that is subject to Warranty Guidelines.

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.

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.

Touch-Up

Walls have been painted with a flat latex paint and should be touched up with matching paint rather than being wiped with a wet sponge. 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.

If applicable, we leave a paint touch-up kit 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.

Woodwork

The interior woodwork has been painted with latex enamel that can be cleaned with a wet sponge. Spackle may be used to cover any small defect prior to paint touch-up. It is recommended that you wait a minimum of thirty days prior to washing any enameled surface. Do not use soaps, abrasive cleansers, scouring pads or brushes.

See also Drywall and Expansion and Contraction.

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

During your Homeowner Orientation we will confirm that all painted or stained surfaces are in acceptable condition. 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.

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-base paints often make wood grain visible on painted trim. We do not provide corrections for this condition.

Pests and Wildlife

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. Since your home was built in accordance with our building specifications we are not able to accommodate specific homeowner requests to modify your home for pest control purposes. Such requests include closing up weep holes, gaps around garage doors, and gaps under soffits. We recommend treating your home for bugs and other pests, which is one of your homeowner maintenance responsibilities.

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.

Bath Caulking

The grout around your tubs and showers over a period of time will begin to crack because of the settling forces in your home. When this occurs, we recommend that you use a brand name tub and tile caulk to repair the cracks. If this problem is left unattended, the water will seep behind the ceramic tile and cause the tile to become loose. This is a maintenance item that will require your attention.

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 such as Spic-n-Span or a liquid detergent is usually recommended by manufacturers). Then polish the fixtures with a dry cloth to prevent water spots. Care for brass fixtures with a good-

quality brass cleaner, available at most hardware stores.

Clogs

Clogged traps (P-traps) can usually be cleared with a "plumber's helper" (plunger). If you use chemical agents, follow directions carefully to avoid personal injury or damage to the fixtures.

The main causes of toilet clogs are domestic items such as disposable diapers, excessive amounts of toilet paper, sanitary supplies, Q-tips, dental floss, and children's toys. You can usually clear clogged traps with a plunger.

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.

When the drainpipe from a tub, sink or shower stops up, first use a plunger. Be sure the rubber cup of the plunger covers the drain opening and that the water comes well up over the cup edge. Working the plunger up and down rhythmically 10 or 20 times in succession will build up pressure in the pipe and do more good than sporadic, separate plunges.

Debris in Pipes

Even though your plumbing lines have been flushed to remove dirt and foreign matter, small amounts of minerals may enter the line. Aerators on the faucets strain much of this from your water. However, minerals and so on caught in these aerators may cause the faucets to drip because washers wear more rapidly when they come in contact with foreign matter.

Dripping Faucet/Shower Head

A dripping faucet may be repaired by shutting off the water at the valve directly under the sink, then removing the faucet stem, changing the washer and reinstalling the faucet stem. The shower head is repaired in the same manner. Replace the washer with another of the same type and size. You can minimize the frequency of this repair by remembering not to turn faucets off with excessive force.

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.

You may also wish to shut off the water heater. Do this by turning off the cold water supply valve on top and the gas control at the bottom. Drain the tank by running a hose from the spigot. If you prefer to leave the tank full, set the temperature to its lowest or “vacation” setting. Check manufacturer’s directions for additional hints and instructions.

Exterior Faucets

Outside faucets are not freeze proof. You must remove hoses during cold weather and replace them with a Styrofoam cover. Repair of a broken line that supplies an exterior faucet is a homeowner maintenance item. Stylecraft Builders does not warrant exterior faucets against freezing.

Fiberglass Fixtures

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

Flush Valve

The flush valve in your toilet should last for many years. If it fails or begins to leak, a new flush valve can be purchased at a home center or hardware store. If you are not entirely comfortable with this do-it-yourself project, a plumber can perform this task.

Freezing Pipes

Develop a specific freeze prevention plan for your home, including care of the pipes in the attic, hose bibs and any other piping prone to freezing.

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.

If your pipes freeze, do not turn your water back on. When pipes freeze, they usually burst. When they thaw, if the water is on, they can cause an enormous amount of damage to your home.

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 not freeze-proof. **You must remove hoses during cold weather, even if the faucet is located in your garage.** 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.

Running Toilet

To stop running water, check the shut-off float in the tank. You will most likely find it has lifted too high in the tank, preventing the valve from shutting off completely. In this case, gently bend the float rod down until it stops the water at the correct level. The float should be free and not rub the side of the tank or any other parts. Also check the chain on the flush handle. If it is too tight, it will prevent the rubber stopper at the bottom of the tank from sealing, resulting in running water.

Shut-Offs

Your main water shut-off is located in the front of your meter box. When closed, it will cut-off the entire water supply in your home. It is located in your front yard in an underground box near the street. Access is gained through a hinged access panel in the top. If a leak occurs shut off this valve and contact your plumbing contractor.

This is helpful to know if you install a sprinkler system or if you plan an addition to your home. It is also important to know and remember the location of the shut-off for emergencies such as a water line freeze or break. Other water shut-off valves are located under the sinks in the bathroom and the kitchen. Each toilet has a shut-off valve behind the toilet bowl on the wall.

If a major plumbing leak occurs, the first step is to turn off the supply of water to the area involved. This may mean shutting off the water to the entire home. Then, contact the appropriate plumbing contractor. If a leak is noticed under a sink or toilet, turn off the water to the fixture by using the shut-off valves located under or behind the unit. If you notice a leak in the tub or shower, turn off the water at the main shut-off valve and do not use the shower or tub until service can be provided.

Sinks, Tubs, and Showers

The tubs, sinks and showers in your new home are composed of one or more of the following materials: porcelain, fiberglass, ceramic tile, cultured marble and/or glass. All of these materials are vulnerable to scraping, scratching and dulling if they are not cleaned with the proper materials. DO NOT use an abrasive cleaner such as Comet on any of the surfaces. There are many non-abrasive cleaners on the market that will do an excellent job of maintaining these surfaces. These surfaces can also be chipped, so be careful not to drop any heavy or sharp objects on them.

Stainless Steel

Clean stainless steel sinks with soap and water to preserve their luster. Avoid using abrasive cleaners or steel wool pads; these will damage the finish. Prevent bleach from coming into prolonged contact with the sink as it can pit the surface. An occasional cleaning with a good stainless steel cleaner will enhance the finish. Rub in the direction of the polish or grain lines and dry the sink to prevent water spots.

Avoid leaving produce on a stainless steel surface. Prolonged contact with produce can stain the finish. Also avoid using the sink as a cutting board; sharp knives will gouge the finish.

Local water conditions affect the appearance of stainless steel. A white film can develop on the sink if you have over-softened water or water with a high concentration of minerals. In hard water areas, a brown surface stain can form appearing like rust.

Temperature Variation

Expect temperatures to vary if water is used in more than one location in the home at the same time.

Toilet Seat Lid

Do not stand on the toilet seat lid. It is not designed for this purpose and may crack.

Toilet Tank Care

Avoid exposing the toilet to blows from sharp or heavy objects, which can cause chipping or cracking. Avoid abnormal pressures against the sides of the tank or standing on your toilets. It is possible to crack the tank at the points where it is attached to the bowl. Uneven pressure applied to the toilet can break the wax seal at the base of the toilet, thereby causing a leak.

Toilets which are designed to use less water, approximately 1.6 gallons, have been installed in your home in an effort to reduce the amount of water used and the amount of wastewater treated and returned to our water sources. This has been required under Federal law since 1992. All of this results in a lower utility cost for you and an improvement to our environment. Since these toilets use approximately 50% of the water that older, traditional toilets use, you need to be aware of a few inconveniences you may experience.

The toilets have a tendency to become clogged more frequently than traditional toilets because of the newer toilet's reduced water flush capacity. On the occasions where one needs to dispose of a large amount of tissue, it is advisable to flush the toilet prior to the disposal of all tissue. Educating your family members as to the capacity of the toilet will help avoid unnecessary stoppages.

Do not place objects other than toilet paper in the toilet. Always keep a plumber's plunger on hand to use in the event of a stoppage of a toilet. Usually a few vigorous pumps with the plunger will free the obstruction. **Stoppages that are not construction related are your responsibility.** If you are unable to clear the obstruction yourself, we suggest that you call a plumber.

Avoid drain cleaners in toilets. The harsh chemicals in drain cleaners can damage the toilet seals and cause a leak.

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 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 Homeowner Orientation we will confirm that all plumbing fixtures are in acceptable condition, are functioning properly, and that all faucets and drains operate freely.

Clogged Drain

We will correct clogged drains that occur during the first year of possession if caused by construction debris. However, if a household item is removed from a clogged drain, we will bill you for the drain service.

Cosmetic Damage

We will correct any fixture damage noted on the Homeowner 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 Homeowner Orientation list. Subsequent to

Homeowner Orientation, repair of a broken line to an exterior faucet is your responsibility.

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.

Roof**Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines**

Your roof will give you many years of good service if it is properly maintained. 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.

Flashing

Flashing seals places where the roof abuts walls, chimneys, valleys and where two roof slopes meet. If a leak should occur after your warranty period, call a qualified roofer to make the repair. If it is repaired as soon as the roofing material has dried, the cost will be far less than if the job is postponed. If you have to walk on your roof for any reason, be careful not to damage the surface or the flashing.

Ice Damming

On occasion, depending on your home's orientation and surroundings, as rising heat from inside your home melts snow on the roof, the water runs down and when it reaches the cold eaves, it may freeze. An accumulation of this type of ice dams the subsequent runoff and the water begins to back up, sometimes working its way up and under shingles, ultimately leading into your home through windows or ceilings. Ice damming is a weather-related condition and therefore is excluded from warranty coverage.

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.

Limit Walking

Limit walking on your roof. Your weight and movement can loosen the roofing material and in turn result in leaks. Never walk on the roof of your home when the shingles are wet—they are slippery. Please refer to local safety codes regarding walking or completing repairs to your roof. You will find detailed information at the Occupational Health and Safety Web site: www.ohs.csa.ca.

Be particularly careful when installing a TV or radio aerial to your roof; a careless job can result in serious leaks for which be your responsibility to repair.

Severe Weather

After severe storms, do a visual inspection of the roof for damages. When extremely windy conditions occur, if you find pieces of shingle 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.

Even though they are properly installed, wind driven snow and rain may enter through vents. This is not a defect and is not considered a leak.

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:
 - o Plumbing leak
 - o Open window on a higher floor
 - o Ice damming
 - o Attic condensation
 - o Clogged gutter or downspout
 - o Blowing rain or snow coming in through (code required) roof vents
 - o Gap in caulking

- Where practical, place a container under dripping water.
- If a ceiling is involved, use a screwdriver to poke a small hole in the drywall to release the water.
- Remove personal belongings to prevent damage to them. If damage occurs to your personal belongings, contact your homeowner insurance company to submit a claim.
- Report the leak to us during 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.

Buckling Shingles

Asphalt shingle surfaces do not have to be perfectly flat, but shingles buckling higher than ¼ inch will be repaired

Flashing

Roof flashing should not leak under normal circumstances and any leak verified not to be caused by ice buildup, leaves, debris, abnormal weather conditions, or negligence will be repaired.

Ice Damming

We will repair damage from ice damming if it results from a demonstrated defect in work or materials we supplied. However, most of the time ice damming occurs naturally, is excluded from warranty, and damage that results may be covered by your homeowner insurance.

Inclement Weather

Storm damage is excluded from warranty coverage. Notify your homeowner insurance company if storm damage is discovered.

Ridge Beam Deflected

A roof ridge beam with deflection greater than 1 inch in 8 feet will be repaired.

Roof Sheathing

Roof sheathing that bows more than ½ inch in 2 feet will be repaired.

Shingles Blown Off

Shingles are installed according to the manufacturer's instructions and perform in accordance with the manufacturer's warranty. If it is determined that they were not installed per manufacturer's instructions, we will

repair or replace shingles in the damaged area. Note that shingles may blow off during wind events in excess of the manufacturer's design and installation instructions and replacement shingles might not match existing shingles.

Shingle Overhang

Shingles that hang too far over the edge or not far enough will be repaired if they hang less than $\frac{1}{4}$ inch from the edge of the roof or more than $\frac{3}{4}$ inch over the edge.

Tabbing

Tabbing (or sealing) of your shingles occurs during the first extended warm period after installation. Heat from the sun shining on the roof causes the glue on shingle tabs to adhere to the surface below, forming a bond. Until this has occurred, high winds can more easily lift the edges of the shingles and may cause some shingles to blow off. If this occurs and your home was shingled during fall or winter (or if you do not know when your roof was shingled), contact the warranty office and request a review of your circumstances.

Septic System

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Septic systems are governed by the Local County Health Department and must be maintained by a certified septic installer. Please check the duration of the maintenance agreement provided with your system at purchase. It is your responsibility to contract with a certified installer after the initial period. Consult with the County Health Department for a listing of qualified maintenance providers.

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 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 so on, 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. Coffee grounds may clog the system.
- Avoid disposing of any paper product (diapers, sanitary supplies, paper towels and so on) other than toilet paper through the system.
- Do not rely on yeast or chemical additive 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 on the disposal field or build over it.

Pumping the System

Over time, the matter not broken down by the bacteria can clog the system. This will happen in spite of careful use and good maintenance. To prevent serious problems, regular pumping to clean out the tank is essential—usually every 1 to 2 years, more often if usage is heavy.

System Failure

Signs that your septic system is failing include—

- Black water with a foul odor backing up in drains or toilets.
- Toilets flush slowly.
- Water ponds on top of the disposal field.
- Grass stays green over the disposal field even in 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 codes and plans based on your soil conditions, we do not warrant that the septic system will function indefinitely. Weather, ground water, environmental conditions, topography, as well as your family's habits can all generate unpredictable effects.

Glass and Mirrors

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Glass enclosures, mirrors and windows require minimal care. Over time repeated use can cause scratches or chips in window glass, door glass, shower glass, and mirrors. As part of your routine maintenance, check the glass and note any needed repairs. Using a squeegee to remove water after a bath or shower will keep mineral residue and soap

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

Your Area Warranty Manager should be able to provide you with a suggested contact to make these repairs for you at your expense.

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

During the new home orientation, we confirm that all glass surfaces are intact and free of chips or scratches as well as that all shower doors and tub enclosures will function according to manufacturer specifications.

Siding

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

The siding on your home is cement fiber siding (non-flammable). This product will give you excellent service if proper maintenance is provided. Cement based siding may require repainting and caulking just as wood products do.

Caulking Joints

All the joints in exterior siding and trim are caulked with a latex caulk. This material is subject to shrinkage and cracking and will require routine maintenance. All caulking shrinks and replacement is a homeowner maintenance task.

Fading

The areas of your home that are directly subjected to sunlight will fade over a period of time. 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. When you decide to touch-up your siding, it is unlikely that the paint will match exactly.

Mold

The exterior of your home is painted with an exterior latex paint that includes a mildew/mold retarder. Due to the humidity levels, it is likely that some mildew or mold will appear on the exterior of your home. There are a number of products on the market that kill mildew and mold and are easy to use.

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

We will confirm the good condition of the siding during your Homeowner Orientation. Repair of subsequent damage to the siding will be your responsibility to repair.

Bowed Siding

Siding with bows exceeding ½ inch in 32 inches will be repaired.

Buckled, Warped, or Cupped Siding

Boards that project more than 3/16 inch in 5½ inches will be repaired.

Cracked or Chipped Cement Board

As a cement product, this siding is susceptible to the same characteristic limitations as other cement products and cracks more than 2 inches in length and 1/8 inch in width will be repaired.

Joints

All the joints in exterior siding and trim are caulked with a latex caulk. This material is subject to shrinkage and cracking and will require routine maintenance. All caulking shrinks and replacement is a homeowner maintenance task.

Loose Siding

If siding becomes detached from the home due to installation error we will correct it.

Nail Stains

Visible nail stains on siding or ceiling boards that exceed ½ inch from the nail which is readily visible from a distance of more than 20 feet will be repaired.

Siding Not Parallel

A piece of siding that is not parallel with course above or below by more than a ½ inch in any 20 foot measurement will be repaired.

Split Boards

Any siding boards with a split wider than 1/8 inch will be repaired.

Visible Gaps

A visible edge or gap between adjacent pieces of siding or siding panels that are wider than 3/16 inch will be repaired unless the siding is installed as prescribed by the manufacturer's instructions.

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 building codes, which dictate locations. Building codes prohibit our omitting any smoke detector, nor should you remove or disable any smoke detector.

See also Carbon Monoxide/Smoke Detectors

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 will test smoke detectors during the Homeowner Orientation to confirm that they are working and to familiarize you with the alarm.

Stucco**Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines**

Stucco is a brittle cement product that is subject to expansion and contraction. Minor hairline cracks will develop in the outer layer of stucco. This is normal and does not reduce the function of the stucco in any way.

The elastomeric coating used in some homes requires no real maintenance. The coating is waterproof so cleaning with a hose is permitted. However **do not use high pressure as this can peel the coating**. If damage occurs, the affected area can be patched & coating reapplied.

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 Homeowner Orientation.

Cracks: One-Time Repair

One time during the warranty period, we will repair stucco cracks that exceed 1/16 inch. The appearance of the repair will vary from the surrounding area due to natural fading and dye lot differences.

Utility Locations**Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines**

Work that includes digging, augering, driving materials into the ground (for instance fence posts or stakes for concrete forms) or mechanical excavation, all require that you arrange to have utility lines located and marked before work begins.

NEVER assume that a gas line is deeper than your planned ground disturbance. The gas company responds to hundreds of damaged natural gas line calls each year.

Safety should be your first priority when working around natural gas pipelines. Contact with buried natural gas pipelines can result in serious injury or death. Property damage can occur as well as interruptions in natural gas delivery service to others. This can be costly to repair.

Hand expose the natural gas line if you will be digging within three feet on either side of the location marks. Dig carefully. Some gas lines are made of polyethylene and can easily be cut with a shovel.

If you damage a gas line—even if there is no odor or hissing sound—contact the gas company immediately.

- Clear all people from the vicinity and cordon off the site.
- Do not attempt to repair the leak or bend over the line to stop the escaping gas.
- Shut off all equipment and vehicles.
- Remove other sources of ignition.
- Do not use a cell phone in the vicinity.
- Extinguish all smoking materials and open flames.
- Allow gas to vent to the atmosphere.

Vinyl Flooring**Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines**

Although resilient floors are designed for minimum care, they do have maintenance needs.

Cleaning

Clean vinyl flooring with a solution of warm water and a commercial vinyl floor cleaner. Follow any manufacturer's specific recommendations for cleaning. Avoid abrasive cleaners or full strength bleach on vinyl flooring. Abrasives will dull the finish and can cause permanent damage. Full

strength bleach can etch and destroy the surface of the flooring.

Invest in high-quality floor mats for an extra layer of protection. Place the mats at entrances and exits to collect and trap corrosive substances that can be tracked in, such as dirt, sand, oil, grit, asphalt, and even driveway sealer. Your luxury vinyl plank or vinyl flooring is not only beautiful, but it is also highly durable and waterproof. It only takes a few simple care and maintenance steps to keep your luxury vinyl floor looking beautiful for years to come.

When cleaning vinyl floors, use a soft bristle broom to remove loose dirt. Damp-mop as needed with clean water and a nonabrasive floor cleaner. Harsh cleaning chemicals should not be used on luxury vinyl flooring. Manufacturer suggests R2X cleaning products for luxury vinyl flooring.

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.

Floor Finish

Some resilient floors require regular application of a good floor finish. This assures you of retaining a high gloss. Follow the manufacturer's specific recommendations.

Limit Water

Wipe up spills immediately 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 and curl.

Moving Furniture

Because of its relatively soft texture, vinyl flooring can be damaged. Moving appliances across resilient floor covering can result in tears and wrinkles; use extreme caution. Similarly, dropping heavy or sharp objects, and high heels can cause dimples and scratches. 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.

Scrubbing & Buffing

Frequent scrubbing or electric buffing is harder on floors than regular foot traffic. Use acrylic finishes more often if you scrub or buff.

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 vulnerable locations. Avoid getting large amounts of water on the floor from baths and showers.

Shrinkage

Some shrinkage can be expected around heat vents or any heat producing appliances.

Warping

Warping of vinyl flooring can be caused by heat vents or any heat producing appliances or rubber backing on area rugs or mats.

Yellowing

Be aware that yellowing of the surface can result from rubber backing on area rugs or mats.

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

We will confirm that resilient floor covering is in acceptable condition during your Homeowner Orientation. Our limited warranty excludes damage to resilient floors caused by moving furniture or appliances into the home. We can assist you in contacting professionals who can repair such damage if it occurs in your home. We are not responsible for discontinued selections.

Seams or Shrinkage Gaps

Seams will occur and are sealed at the time of installation. We will correct gaps in excess of 1/32 inch when viewed under normal lighting conditions and from a normal viewing position and where dissimilar materials meet, the gaps will not be in excess of 1/16 inch. Note that strong sun light can cause a shadow and call attention to a seam.

Water Heater

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Carefully read and follow the manufacturer's literature for your specific model of water heater. Follow manufacturer directions for relief valve maintenance.

Condensation

Condensation inside your new water heater may drip onto the burner flame. This causes no harm and in most cases will disappear in a short period of time.

Distance from Tank

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.

Drain Pan

Periodically check the drain pan under the heater to ensure it, as well as the drain outlet, are clear.

Leak

If there is a leak in the water heater, turn the shut-off valve on top of the heater to “off.” Turn off the gas if your water heater is powered by gas or the circuit breaker if you have an electric water heater; then drain the water heater. Never operate a water heater with an empty tank.

Safety

Avoid using the top of a heater as a storage shelf. Maintain a clear area around the tank. The area around a gas-fired water heater should be vacuumed as needed to prevent dust from interfering with proper flame combustion.

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.

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.
- Fumes from painting or other activities have not disabled the system. Strong odors can stop the function of the water heater. A sensor may need to be removed when cleaning or painting concrete floors. Consult your manufacturer’s literature for specific details and possibly other troubleshooting tips.

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.

Pilot Light

Never light a gas pilot or turn on electricity when the water heater tank is empty. Always turn off the gas or electric power before shutting off the cold water supply (located at the top of the tank). To light the water heater, read and follow manufacturer’s instructions.

TANKLESS WATER HEATER**Cleaning**

Turn the unit off and disconnect the electrical power supply. Wait for the water and equipment to cool down. Wipe the outside with a wet cloth; use a non-abrasive cleanser to remove any surface stains. Clean the remote controller with a damp cloth using just water. See manufacturer instructions for details on cleaning the cold water inlet filter and the air intake filter on your particular model.

Draining

Follow the manufacturer directions for timing and steps to draining your specific model of water heater.

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

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

See also Plumbing.

Windows, Screens, Sliding Glass Doors**Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines**

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

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. If your home includes a humidifier, closely observe the manufacturer’s directions for its use. Cleaning and repair of damage caused by condensation is your responsibility.

During cold weather in particular, ensure that warm air from 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. Heavy drapes and blinds restrict air movement across these surfaces. Air movement across these surfaces greatly reduces the formation of condensation. Condensation that collects on windows

and frames should be wiped up with a towel to prevent damage.

Door Locks

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

Screen Storage and Maintenance

Many homeowners remove and store screens for the winter to allow more light into the home. To make re-installation more convenient, label each screen as you remove it. Use caution: screens perforate easily and the frames bend if they are not handled with care. Prior to re-installing the screens, clean them with a gentle spray of water.

Sticking Windows

Most sliding windows (both vertical and horizontal) are designed for a ten-pound pull. If sticking occurs or excessive pressure is required to open or close, apply a silicone lubricant. This is available at hardware stores. Avoid oil-based products, as these will attract dust and dirt, eventually causing problems with the operation of the windows.

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.

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

We will confirm that all windows, screens, and sliding glass doors are in acceptable condition during the Homeowner 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 Homeowner Orientation. Minor scratches on windows can result from delivery, handling, and other construction activities. Glass scratches that are visible from 10 feet under normal lighting conditions at the time of the orientation will be repaired.

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.

One Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

During the Homeowner 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.

Fireplace

Wood trim adjacent to any fireplace will suffer drying, warping, and discoloration more extreme than the wood trim in other locations due to the heat from the fireplace.

Separations

We will correct any separation at joints that allows water to enter the home.

Notes

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