



TRENDMAKER HOMES

Where the upgrades are *Standard.*

Welcome to Your New Trendmaker Home!

We are as proud of your new home as you are and we sincerely hope it will bring you many years of pleasure.

Every new Trendmaker Home comes with a ten year limited warranty. Please take time to review the warranty booklet you received and become familiar with the coverage that is provided you on your home.

The "Service Request" section of this Homeowner's Manual outlines the procedures to be followed so that your service request will be given prompt attention. Upon receipt of your written request, our Warranty Service Department will process your request for service. Please feel free to mail, fax, call, or e-mail (through www.TrendmakerHomes.com) our Warranty Service Department with any questions you may have.

The care you give your home will, to a great extent, determine the ultimate satisfaction you receive from your new Trendmaker home. We have prepared this manual to guide you in proper care and maintenance of your new home. Normal and routine maintenance of your home is essential and is naturally the responsibility of every homeowner.

Along with this Homeowner's Manual, we extend our genuine wishes for many years of satisfaction in your new Trendmaker home.

Sincerely,

Will Holder
President



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NEW HOMEOWNER'S MANUAL

**Care & Warranty
For Your New Home**

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CLOSING INFORMATION

Utility Change-Over

Before you are scheduled to close, you must call each utility company to transfer services to your name *effective the day following closing*.

Keys

The keys to your new Trendmaker Home will be available after you have completed the closing transaction and all necessary documents have been approved and the loan funded.

Postal Service

Private postal boxes are strategically located in "cluster mailboxes" in most of our neighborhoods. To obtain keys for your personal mailbox you must telephone the Post Office. Inform them of your new address and date on which you would like to secure the keys for your mailbox. Allow at least three days for processing between your telephone call and the actual pick-up date at the post office.

In some neighborhoods, your mailbox is located in front of your home and no key is necessary.

Warranty Packet

See Sections II through VI of this manual.

Security System Permit

An ordinance requiring all homeowners with alarm systems to obtain a permit number is in effect in many areas. You will need to contact the County Sheriff's Department to determine if a permit is required in your area.

TITLE COMPANY INFORMATION

FOR ALL COMMUNITIES:

Name: First American Title Company
Escrow Officer: Debbie Piemonte
Address: 10344 Sam Houston Park Dr., Ste. 110
Houston, Texas 77064
Phone: (281) 671-2720
E-Mail: DPiemonte@firstam.com

Insurance Requirements: Verify with your insurance company prior to your closing date that all necessary papers have been sent to the title company.

Closing Funds: You are required to bring a **CASHIER'S CHECK** in the proper amount. The Title Company will convey the closing amount to you. Your cashier's check must be made payable to the appropriate Title Company.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER I CLOSE???

- When you close with no items remaining on your final walk exception's list, your house is turned over to the Warranty Service Department immediately after closing.
 - In the unlikely event you close with incomplete items, noted on your final walk exception form, your builder is responsible for completing that work. When all exceptions are complete, your house is turned over to the Trendmaker Warranty Service Department.
 - **The Warranty Service Coordinator will be your new contact with Trendmaker.** The Warranty Service Coordinator will assist in answering questions concerning warranty issues that arise or other questions you may have concerning your home.
 - The Warranty Service Department is a separate department from Construction and Sales. The Warranty Department specifically takes care of homeowner questions and concerns. Shortly after closing, you will receive a letter of introduction from your Warranty Service department.
 - The Warranty Service Coordinator's phone number is (281) 675-3235 and the fax number is 1-855-332-4965. The Coordinators are available Monday thru Thursday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Friday 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
 - The Warranty Service Coordinator's Email is available thru the website www.warranty@trendmakerhomes.com.
 - **Sales and Construction cannot accept your repair list.**
 - As a rule, you want to contact the Warranty Service Department when you have enough items on a service request form to make it worth your time to be at your home while work is being performed. Any work on your home will be done Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
 - To maintain an accurate record of work performed on your home the service request form must be submitted in writing. It can be mailed or faxed but we prefer it be e-mailed thru our website www.trendmakerhomes.com to the Warranty Service Department. Within 48 hours of receipt of your request for service you will be contacted and an appropriate course of action will be taken. Typically, a Warranty Service Representative will come out to your house for an inspection or the Warranty Service Coordinator will contact you with the appropriate Trendmaker Subcontractor phone number and have you phone them directly. This will depend upon the nature of your request for service.
 - When a work order is issued for a warrantable repair on your home it is given to a Warranty Field Representative. This Representative is a Trendmaker employee and is responsible for completing all warrantable work orders issued by the Warranty Service Coordinator.
 - One year items must be sent in **before** your one year closing anniversary date. Items sent in after 12 months may be out of warranty.
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CARING FOR YOUR HOME

A home is one of the last hand-built products left in the world. Once we have assembled the natural and manufactured materials, the components interact with each other and the environment. Although quality materials and workmanship have been used in your home, this does not mean that it will require no care or maintenance. A home, like an automobile, requires care and attention from day one. General homeowner maintenance is essential to providing a quality home for a lifetime.

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

We are proud of the homes we build and the neighborhoods in which we build. We strive to create long-lasting value. This cannot be achieved unless you, as the homeowner, properly maintain your home and all of its components. 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.

Many times a minor adjustment or repair done immediately saves a more serious, time-consuming, and sometimes costly repair later. Note also that neglect of routine maintenance can void applicable limited warranty coverage on all or part of your home. By caring for your new home attentively, you ensure your enjoyment of it for years. The attention provided by each homeowner contributes significantly to the overall desirability of the community.

We recognize that it is impossible to anticipate and describe every attention needed for good home care, but we have covered many important details. This manual may discuss some components that are not present in your home.

Please take time to read the literature provided by the manufacturers of consumer products and other items in your home. The information contained in the material is not repeated here. Although much of the information may be familiar to you, some points may differ significantly from homes you have had in the past.

We make every effort to keep our information current and accurate. However, if any detail in our discussion conflicts with the manufacturer's recommendations, you should follow the manufacturer's recommendations. In some cases, manufacturer's warranties may extend beyond the first year and it is in your best interest to be apprised of such coverage's.

SERVICE REQUESTS

Our customer service staff would like to assist you as efficiently as possible. By following the steps below, you will help us be responsive to your needs.

PLEASE DO NOT SUBMIT SERVICE REQUESTS TO YOUR SALESPERSON OR ANY CONSTRUCTION PERSONNEL -- THEY ARE NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR MAINTAINING AND MONITORING YOUR SERVICE NEEDS.

1. During your one year warranty period maintain a list of warranty service needs as they arise and submit them on the following "Request for Service" form by:

On-line at: www.trendmakerhomes.com

Fax: 1-855-332-4965

**Mail: Trendmaker Homes
 16340 Park Ten Place, Suite 250
 Houston, Texas 77084
 Phone: (281) 675-3235**

A customer service representative will contact you soon after your request has been received and answer any questions you may have.

Trendmaker Homes provides our homeowners with a "One Time Maintenance Request for Service". We provide this service as a courtesy to give you the opportunity at one year to observe methods and materials used for the on-going homeowner maintenance of your home. It is the homeowner's responsibility to initiate the "One Time Maintenance Request for Service" Submit this form during your 11th month from date of close.

Your warranty booklet details items covered the first and second year of your warranty, as well as years three through ten.

2. In emergency situations concerning plumbing, electrical, heating/air conditioning or appliances, please telephone the appropriate subcontractor directly as they have their own service departments. You have been given their names and phone #'s by your builder. Please keep these numbers readily available. Also, please keep our office informed of these situations in writing so that we can continually monitor all of your service needs.
 3. Customer service hours are Monday thru Thursday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Friday 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
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HOME CARE AND MAINTENANCE - INTERIOR

AIR CONDITIONING AND HEATING

Your central heating and cooling system is designed to provide many years of comfort and trouble-free operation. In selecting the right size unit for your home, the design considered the area of living space, window opening and their locations, as well as the directional orientation of your home to ensure that it can be heated or cooled to a comfortable temperature. However, many things which cannot be anticipated and over which we have no control affect the efficiency of the unit.

IMPORTANT FACTS

Please always refer to the manufacturer's instructions

1. Central cooling and heating systems are designed to go through a series of audible automatic operations that are not a cause for concern.
 2. Air noise results from air being drawn into the unit through the return air grill and being forced out through the ceiling diffusers in each room.
 3. The fan, motor and other moving parts in your central system are designed to keep noise level at a minimum.
 4. With gas furnaces the starting of the fan will be delayed when heat is turned on, so that warm air is delivered into the room as soon as the blower starts. When cooling is turned on, the blower unit begins and runs the full length of the cooling cycle. The cooling cycle occurs more frequently and runs for a longer period of time than the heating cycle.
 5. The registers in your home help regulate air flow and maintain the desired temperature. The system has been balanced by the installation contractor; however, you can tailor individual room temperature to personal preferences by adjusting (**not closing**) registers to allow more or less air into the room. Adjust the registers gradually until you achieve the desired result.
 6. Your home has one or more return air ducts to provide for the recirculation of air to the air conditioning/heating blower unit. These ducts are usually in a central place in the home (hallway or living room) and may be in a wall or ceiling. Ductwork may make expansion and contraction sounds when the unit is new or the temperature is extremely hot or cold. Do not block the air flow to the return air ducts.
 7. Thermostat "click" may be heard prior to the unit's starting or stopping. The thermostat is the brain of the system, activating its automatic operation. The unit demands the most electricity at the start of the heating/cooling cycle. The electricity used to keep the unit operating once started is comparatively less.
 8. The thermostat helps keep an even temperature in your home; it is located on an inside wall. A two-story home often has a two-zone system with separate thermostat on each floor and two condenser units outside. The thermostats operate independently, allowing you to control the temperature on each floor separately. Never put lamps, radios, TV sets or any other heat-producing appliances near the thermostat, as their heat will create a false reading.
 9. Children should be cautioned against tampering or playing with the thermostat. The thermostat is delicate and contains bulbs of mercury essential to its operation which, if broken, can be dangerous.
 10. Your air conditioning unit removes moisture from the air, and the resulting condensation (water) is piped to the primary condensation drains, which often connect to secondary bath drain lines. Audible dripping inside a drain at the secondary tub or sink is normal. A secondary condensation drain, installed as a safety measure, connects to a drip pan under your blower unit. Over time, the primary drain may get clogged. In this case, condensation will flow in to the drip pan and through a secondary drain line that exits the house through a pipe at the soffit or siding. This secondary drain is in a conspicuous place to help assure that you will notice water dripping from it. **To avoid interior damage, you should call your air conditioning contractor for a primary drain repair when you see water drip or flow from the secondary drain.**
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OPERATION

1. To keep temperature within a comfortable range, the system switch should be set on either "HEAT" or "COOL", depending on need. The fan control may be set on "AUTOMATIC" (intermittent) or "ON" (continuous). Running the fan continuously often helps to keep a more even temperature throughout the house and is recommended, especially in two-story homes. Wide changes in settings should be avoided; one or two degrees at a time is preferable.
2. The maximum temperature differential that can be obtained from your cooling unit is 20 degrees.
3. It is sometimes difficult to maintain temperatures within the comfort range under circumstances such as the following:
 - ⇒ when there is a gathering of a larger group than the size family for which the unit was designed;
 - ⇒ when an above-average amount of cooking is being done;
 - ⇒ when windows and glass doors are not properly draped or shaded for protection from exposure to the sun;
 - ⇒ when windows or doors are left open;
 - ⇒ when the filter is allowed to get dirty.
4. Resist the impulse to turn your air conditioning unit off at night and open the windows. Keep the window closed and let the thermostat determine when your unit will run. You will have a more comfortable home and a lower electric bill.
5. The contractor who installed your heating and cooling system will check the unit and start up the heating and cooling cycles the first time at the construction final.
6. Do not block return air grilles or completely close more than 10% of your supply registers. Single or multi-directional curved blade ceiling registers are not intended to discharge downward; they should be adjusted to discharge horizontally to distribute the air evenly over the room and particularly toward the windows and doors.
7. Low air flow will cause serious damage to your equipment. Low air flow is caused by blocked return air grilles, closed air supply dampers and dirty filters. Frozen evaporator coils and excessive condensation at the coil case are indications of trouble. **Some condensation, both indoors and out, is to be expected in excessively hot, humid weather.**

DO NOT OPERATE THE UNIT WHEN ANY OF THE UNIT COVER PANELS ARE REMOVED.

TROUBLESHOOTING

If the unit does not run, try the following first before you call the heating and air conditioning contractor:

Check the circuit breaker box for a tripped circuit. The breaker box is normally located on an inside wall opposite the outside electric meter. If the breaker appears to be at the "ON" position, reset it by turning it to "OFF" firmly and then back to "ON".

If your furnace smokes -- all new furnaces smoke and smell the first time they are started. The smell will clear up after a 10 to 20 minute burn-off period.

If you have no air conditioning, check:

- ⇒ Thermostat for proper setting and "COOL" mode
- ⇒ Power switch at indoor unit
- ⇒ Door switch on the unit
- ⇒ Filter clogged up

If you have no heat, check:

- ⇒ Thermostat for proper setting and "HEAT" mode
- ⇒ Pilot light (for gas furnace-lighting instructions on the unit)
- ⇒ Power switch
- ⇒ Door switch
- ⇒ Filter clogged

MAINTENANCE**FILTERS**

All air conditioning and heating systems are equipped with a filter to help keep the air in your home and in the mechanical system clean. Filters remove dirt and other particles that reduce efficiency and cause damage to your unit. We install a Honeywell F-100 media filter mounted in the attic at the return air duct for each system in the house. This filter requires a change on average every 6-9 months. Of course, your lifestyle may dictate more or less time before a filter change out is required. ***Keeping your filter clean is a Homeowner maintenance responsibility and is not warrantable.***

CHANGING YOUR FILTERS

ALWAYS TURN OFF THE UNIT before removing the filter, and be sure the filter is properly secured when putting it back into position.

Why Clean Filters Are So Important...

A clean filter is a low-cost investment in good maintenance. On the other hand, a dirty filter is the most frequent cause of air-system trouble. It reduces the quantity of air that can pass through the system and causes short cycling of your compressor; this in turn can damage the compressor motor and other components of the system. Continued neglect of a dirty filter causes cooling coils to become coated with grease, dirt, lint and the walls and ceilings around the vents may become soiled. The unit will cease to cool efficiently and your electric bill will be greatly increased.

The Homeowner will be billed for repair and resulting damage at the regular service rate by the air conditioning contractor if inadequate performance or equipment failure is caused by a filter that is dirty, improperly replaced by the Homeowner, or a filter is used that is not recommended by the manufacturer.

CONDENSER COIL

The condenser does the same job as your car radiator. It dissipates the heat absorbed by the cooling system. Like your car radiator, the condenser does not work well clogged with wind-blown leaves, paper or other foreign matter. This can increase your electric bill unnecessarily by causing your air conditioning to work harder. For this reason, condenser coils should be inspected and cleaned periodically. ***The cleaning of coils can only be performed by an air conditioning contractor.***

Seasonal servicing is recommended at the beginning of the heating and cooling seasons. A reputable heating and air conditioning service contractor (preferable a factory-authorized service agent) should be called to inspect and service the unit to assure you of enjoyable, trouble free operation. In most cases, you will find a sticker attached to your unit giving the name, address, office and emergency phone numbers of the air conditioning contractor who installed your equipment.

HOME CARE AND MAINTENANCE - INTERIOR APPLIANCES

Your new electric or gas appliances are accompanied by instruction booklets and other documents. All are covered by detailed factory warranties. Study the various instruction booklets and follow instructions when operating your appliances. This will ensure their long life and enable you to make optimal use of all their features. It's a good idea to keep instruction booklets in a safe place, and note the date of purchase (closing date), serial and model numbers of the appliances in the booklets. Make sure to fill out and mail all warranty cards as soon as you move in. **When calling the manufacturer to arrange service, be prepared to supply your closing date and the unit model and serial numbers of equipment of appliances.**

Note: If the appliance does not turn on, first check the circuit breaker box for a tripped circuit. The breaker box is normally located on an inside wall opposite the outside electric meter. If the breaker appears to be at the "ON" position, reset it by turning it to "OFF" firmly and then back to "ON".

DISHWASHER

Refer to your Owner's manual from the manufacturer for instructions on the proper loading of the dishwasher. To avoid pump damage, be careful not to allow plastic, glass, utensils or other objects to fall to the bottom of the dishwasher. A small amount of water will remain in the bottom of the dishwasher at all times. This is normal and helps to prime the pump for the next use. Minerals found in hard water in some areas may cause interior water stains. **Always turn on the garbage disposal to empty if before running the dishwasher,** since the dishwasher drains through the disposal.

GARBAGE DISPOSAL

You can use your disposal for almost all ordinary food waste. The following **should not** be put in your disposal:

animal fat, corn husks, grease, chicken skin, artichokes, metal, string, rubber bands, oyster or clam shells, glass, bottle caps, plastic bags, cloth or metal foil, fresh herbs, onion skins, potato skins, large amounts of fibrous material, e.g. celery or flowers

Follow these procedures to operate your garbage disposal:

1. Turn on cold water to brisk flow before switching on the unit.
2. Turn on disposal.
3. Scrap food waste into sink and feed into disposal, but do not pack.
4. Continue the flow of water during and for an extra 30 seconds after the grinding operation to keep the unit fresh and clean and to flush out the drain pipes.
5. Your dishwasher drains into disposal; **always clear the disposal of all food waste before operating your dishwasher.**

6. Never use chemical or solvent cleaning compounds in the unit. They can corrode the shredding mechanism.
7. To give the disposal a fresh smell, grind a couple small pieces of lemon or orange

Overloading...

Your disposal is equipped with its own circuit breaker (a button or switch) located on the side or bottom of the unit. This circuit will trip if the unit is overloaded. When overloading occurs, shut the wall switch off, unplug the motor, remove the debris from the unit, plug the unit back in, and reset the circuit breaker by pushing the red overload button. Turn the wall switch on again. If the motor does not restart shut it off and call the plumber for service.

Jammed disposal

Turn off wall switch immediately and unplug motor. Insert a tool with a wooden handle, such as a hammer or a broom, and turn counter-clockwise until free. Remove obstruction causing jamming. Plug in unit and turn on wall switch. If the disposal does not operate, turn off the wall switch, as the circuit breaker has been tripped. Wait two or three minutes, then reset the circuit breaker and turn on the switch for regular operation.

WARNING: Be absolutely certain that the disposal switch is "OFF" and the unit "UNPLUGGED" before attempting to unjam or remove anything from it.

VENT HOOD

The vent hood, which recirculates and does not vent to the outside, includes either a charcoal or aluminum filter designed to remove heat, cooking odors and grease from the air. The charcoal filter traps grease and lint and should be replaced periodically (once or twice a year). The aluminum filter should be cleaned every two weeks (or when dirty) in the same mild detergent used for dishwashing and dried thoroughly before re-installation in the hood. A dishwasher does an excellent job of cleaning the hood filter. **DO NOT OPERATE THE HOOD WITHOUT THE FILTER.**

RANGE COOKTOP, OVEN AND BROILER

Refer to your Owner's manual from the manufacturer for instructions on the proper care and cleaning of the interior and exterior of the range cooktop and oven.

If baking results differ from your previous oven, it's possible the oven thermostat calibration may be different. Follow your recipe closely, and review manufacturer's directions for the new oven before calling for service, since the calibration of your previous oven may have drifted to a too-high or too-low setting and you may have been unaware of or accustomed to these changes.

NOTE: Never use a stove or oven for warming or heating the room. See SAFETY PRECAUTIONS in your Owner's manual from the appliance manufacturer.

Downdraft cooktop...

Beneath the grill of the downdraft cooktop is a small grease jar that collects grease that drops from the grill. This jar should be unscrewed, emptied and replaced regularly (a standard canning or mayonnaise jar can be used as a replacement). The jar can be reached via the cabinet under the cooktop. The aluminum filter in the center of the cooktop (under the grill grate) should be cleaned once a month. Lift the grate and remove the filter for cleaning, just run it through the dishwasher in the top rack.

Gas stove...

If the burners on a gas stove fail to light, check for food buildup clogging the burner. If burners are removable, they can be soaked clean. On a gas stove with an electronic ignition pilot, a clicking sound will be heard when the burner is turned on, this is normal.

WATER HEATER

All water heaters have a control mechanism to govern water temperature. The dial should generally be set at the normal position (about 145° Fahrenheit). Avoid storing anything near the water heater; it could obstruct the airflow and create a fire hazard. Setting the water heater at a lower temperature can save energy dollars, but cooler water may also lower the effectiveness of the dishwasher.

If your water heater is gas-heated and the pilot goes out, follow the instructions printed on the water heater or call your plumbing contractor for service.

If a leak should occur, turn the gas to the heater off and then turn off the water supply. The water supply is controlled by a valve in the water line feeding into the top of the water heater. To avoid water leak damage, it may be necessary to drain the heater. Attach a garden hose to the drain faucet (near the bottom of the heater). Run the other end of the hose to a lower location where hot or rusty water will not cause damage. Open a hot water faucet in the house to allow air to enter the water heater as the water drains and call a plumbing contractor for service.

Flush the water heater at least once a year to remove sediment deposit in the tank. Follow instructions above for draining the tank and see the manufacturer's instruction book for maintenance procedures.

After high winds, check water heater vent stacks for proper clearance. The vent stacks should be a minimum of 2" away from combustibles like plywood, roofing felt, etc.

HOME CARE AND MAINTENANCE - INTERIOR COUNTERTOPS AND TILE

GRANITE COUNTERTOPS

There are a few things that are important for you to know about your granite countertops. You may notice that the color of your granite is different in some areas or that the texture is not perfectly smooth across the stone. This is a natural characteristic of granite. Since granite is a product of nature, your countertop will be unique and no two tops will be exactly alike.

Although no product is impossible to scratch, granite is one of the most highly scratch resistant surfaces available. In addition, granite will withstand normal temperatures used in cooking without fear of scorching or burning your countertops.

Cleaning

Under normal usage, granite is practically carefree. You can wipe up spills easily with a sponge or cloth. Household cleaners as well as scrub sponges can be used to clean the surface.

Foods that would stain most surfaces such as lemon juice, mustard, vinegar, red wines, coffee, grape juice and others wipe up easily without staining when immediately addressed.

Cleaning Procedures

Granite surfaces should be wiped or scrubbed down with a daily cleaner (dish soap or any neutral pH balanced, general household cleaner) and a sponge, and then rinsed/wiped with a sponge and clean water. For stains, apply appropriate cleaner with a paper towel, and wipe. If necessary, the area may be soaked with paper towel pads for 2-5 minutes. Scrub the spot. Rinse the spot thoroughly. Let it dry.

For adhered materials such as gum, paint, nail polish, or dried foods scrape the spot with a sharp razor blade, if necessary. Treat the spot with an appropriate cleaner. Let the cleaner sit for 2-5 minutes. Scrub the spot. Rinse the spot thoroughly.

Sealant

The surface is very dense and only needs to be sealed about once a year using a silicone based penetrating sealer.

SOLID SURFACE COUNTERTOPS

Natural stone requires a different maintenance routine than traditional man-made ceramic tile. Many of the cleaners acceptable for use on ceramic tile can stain, damage, or dull stone. Natural stone should be cleaned with neutral cleaners specifically designed for stone. Stone cleaners should never contain acid or bleach. Acids, even a light solution of vinegar and water, will etch and eventually damage many varieties of natural stone.

Travertine Countertops

Travertine is often used in kitchens and bathrooms, but special care must be taken to preserve and maintain these elegant countertops. While travertine is a strong material, it is not impervious. Recommendations for care if you have travertine countertops: Use hot pads to protect the surface from hot pans that may burn the counters, utilize coaster to avoid leaving glass rings on counters, clean counters with hot water and a sponge or clean cloth, wipe up spills immediately with a clean soft cloth or sponge (some things such as tomato juice and lemon are acidic and can etch the stone even if it has been sealed), use baskets and trays to protect bathroom counters from harmful chemicals in toothpastes, lotions, perfumes and liquid soaps.

Marble Countertops

Marble is softer and more porous than granite. This makes it susceptible to scratches, pitting, cracks, stains, and even dulling of the shine. It may take a little more maintenance and upkeep to have your marble looking nice.

Cleaning

Dust at least once a week with a soft microfiber cloth. For wet cleaning, use a damp cloth and a pH neutral cleaner designer for stone. Do not use regular cleaning products that can etch the stone surface over time. Never use abrasive cleaners that will damage and dull the finish. Acidic foods like tomatoes, citrus fruits, and even vinegar will damage marble.

Sealant

Seal the countertops regularly. Be sure to reseal when water fails to bead up when splashed on the surface. Sealing will prevent stains and damage and keep the marble countertops looking beautiful.

ENGINEERED STONE COUNTERTOPS

"Silestone" is an engineered stone material. Quartz and silica are bonded together with polyester resins and colorfast pigments under extreme heat and pressure.

This material can withstand limited exposure to normal cooking temperatures from pots, pans, and dishes without fear of scorching or burning.

Routine care...

As any surface, this material can be damaged by exposure to strong chemicals and solvents. Do not use products containing trichlorethane or methylene chloride, such as paint removers or furniture strippers.

Avoid abrasive cleansers containing high alkaline/PH levels. Bleach, liquid bluing, nail polish remover and oil soaps also can damage your countertop.

In the event of accidental exposure to any of these damaging products, thoroughly rinse with water as soon as possible.

Cleaning

To clean use a damp cloth or paper towel is usually all you need. To clean up sticky spots, a little liquid detergent can help.

For stubborn or dried spills, Bar Keeper's Friend is an effective cleanser. You can use it daily without damaging your countertops. Other recommended cleaning products include Zud Cleanser, Lysol, and Whirl. For extremely stubborn spills, a green scrub pad such as Scotch-Brite can be used without damaging your countertop. Be sure to rinse thoroughly to remove any hazy residue that will diminish the shine and beauty of your countertop. Note: Avoid using cleansers that contain bleach.

Always follow the manufacturer's instructions and exercise proper care when handling and storing any cleaning products.

Spot Removal

For spot removal (food, grease, gum, nail polish, paint, etc.), first gently scrape away the excess with a razor blade or putty knife. However, engineered stone is much harder than a steel blade, so excessive scraping on the surface may leave a gray metal mark on the countertop. But not to worry, just clean the area with a recommended cleaner. Any residue from the spot and any metal marks should both quickly disappear.

For heavier or more stubborn spots, soak a pad of paper towels in water and cleanser. Apply to the spot and let soak for two to five minutes. Scour with a green scrub pad and cleanser. Rinse thoroughly.

Polishing

Because this material is nonporous, you don't need to worry about using sealants or waxes as you would with ordinary stone. This top will keep its lustrous gloss and ultra-smooth surface without polishing.

However, some people like to polish their countertops every few weeks for a shine that's even more brilliant. Regular polishing cannot harm the surface. In fact, occasional polishing can enhance stain resistance and ease of cleaning,

CULTURED MARBLE VANITY TOPS

Cultured marble vanity tops are easily maintained, with a few simple precautions; steel wool and abrasive cleansers scratch and dull the finish and should never be used. Do not let burning cigarettes fall onto the countertop. Although the marble will not burn, the heat will discolor it and leave unsightly stains. Routine home maintenance may include recaulking the joint between the vanity top and wall surface.

CERAMIC TILE

Ceramic tile is durable, and with proper care, will provide years of good service. Although ceramic tile itself is glazed and difficult to stain, the grout in the joint will accept stains from food, water and cleaning solutions.

As a preventive measure, you may want to apply a grout sealer to reduce the chance of discoloration. This sealant product is available at most hardware stores and should be applied soon after move-in.

We do not warrant the grout against staining or discoloration, whether a sealant has been used or not.

Ceramic tile can be damaged by sudden impacts, such as a dropped pan or knife. Ceramic tile can crack if exposed to high heat, such as a pot placed directly from a burner onto the tile surface.

LAMINATE COUNTERTOPS

The laminated plastic surfaces on your laundry room provide an excellent work surface which requires little maintenance. Although laminated plastics are tough, there are limits to the abuse they can take. It is possible for the surface to be burned or cut. For best results in maintaining the long life built into the product, follow these simple steps:

1. Use a trivet or hot pad to protect counter tops from hot vessels, especially those that are dry
 2. Laminates, like glass, can be cut by sharp blades. Never clean the surface with a sharp object such as a razor blade or knife.
 3. Wipe up strong solutions immediately. Prolonged contact with bleaches, mineral acids, lye, copper cleaners, bluing, iodine or dye can stain the surface. Use all-purpose spray cleaner (i.e., Fantastik or Formula 409) or mild abrasive. Clean up any stain at once.
 4. Do not pound laminated plastic counters. The softer core material can shatter, endangering the surface.
 5. Wax it occasionally to prevent damage from sliding objects, using a liquid wax product.
 6. Wash it with soap and water to prevent build-up of grease and dust which dulls colors.
 7. Harsh or abrasive cleansers should be avoided as repeated use will scratch or mar the surface. A limited use of such cleansers for stubborn spots or lacquer thinner for removing paint or glue spots will not damage the surface.
-

HOME CARE AND MAINTENANCE - INTERIOR INTERIOR AND EXTERIOR DOORS

All doors, interior and exterior, will require routine maintenance. The sun and rain are your door's greatest enemies. Proper maintenance will help your doors stay new looking and in good condition. Use only the best products and follow the manufacturer's instructions.

FRONT DOORS

A new door should be refinished for the first time between six and nine months after the installation, then once a year thereafter. Depending on the extent of exposure of your door to the weather, you may need to refinish it more frequently or apply additional coats when you refinish. This is a Homeowner maintenance item and is not warrantable.

A clean door will last longer. Periodically clean your door using soap and water, preferable soap intended for use on wood. Do not use abrasive cleaners or steel wool.

Some homes have raised-panel front doors. The panels may dry at different rates causing slight shrinkage. It may appear as though the panel is pulling away from the balance of the door. This condition can be easily repaired by re-caulking and refinishing the newly exposed wood with a fine paintbrush to match the rest of the door. The structural strength of the door is not impaired by the shrinkage, but this maintenance should be performed by the homeowner for long-term protection. Exterior doors may swell and shrink with the temperature and moisture content of the air.

Changes of this nature will require homeowner maintenance.

EXTERIOR / INTERIOR DOORS

Sticking and warping

Swelling in damp weather can cause sticking. Fold sandpaper around a wooden block and sand the edge that binds. Never force a door to open or close, as forcing may cause the wood surfaces to pull apart. If sticking is the result of uneven alignment, check to see that the hinge screws are set tightly in the hinge. Always seal any area that has been sanded or planed with paint or varnish to protect the wood from absorbing moisture and causing future problems.

Locks

Occasionally it will be necessary to re-tighten the screws that attached door locks and handle sets to the door. This is easily accomplished with the use of a screwdriver. If the door will not close because of misalignment of the door lock, first tighten the screws in the strike plate on the door jamb. If the door still will not stay closed, it may be necessary to reset the strike plate one way or the other to compensate for the minor settling that occurs in every home. A squirt of lubricant, available at grocery stores, hardware stores and auto parts dealers will keep the inner parts of door

locks working smoothly. Graphite should be used to lubricate "keyed" locks.

NOTE: If someone gets locked in a bathroom, the lock can be opened from the outside by using the bathroom key, usually above the door casing, or by inserting a thin flathead screwdriver into the hole in the knob and turning it.

Bifold Doors...

Bifold closet door tracks require occasional lubrication. Silicone spray lubricant or a similar type of dry lubricant is recommended instead of oil, which collects dust and gets sticky. Take care not to force the doors shut, as this will cause them to fall out of alignment. Doors can be readjusted with the use of a Phillips screwdriver and a small adjustable wrench.

Sliding Wardrobe Doors...

To maintain smooth-sliding operation, keep tracks free of dirt and grit. Occasional lubrication of the tracks with a silicone spray or dry lubricant is recommended. Should a door become dislodged from the track, simply lift up the door panel and place it back into the proper track. Be careful not to bind or force a mirrored surface sliding door, as it may crack.

Double Doors with Bullet Catches...

Should the latching of these doors become loose or stiff, unscrew the "bullet" unit from the top of the door and adjust the bullet in a clockwise or counter clockwise direction.

HOME CARE AND MAINTENANCE - INTERIOR ELECTRICAL

Your new home has been wired to meet the code of requirements and safety standards for the normal use of electrical appliances. Ordinarily, small appliances that require your personal attendance for their operation may be plugged into any electrical receptacle without fear of overloading a circuit. The use of large appliances on the same circuit, however, may cause an overload of the circuit and trip a circuit breaker. For example, using a 12-amp vacuum cleaner on the same circuit as other electrical items might overload the 15-amp circuit and trip the circuit breaker. Only a licensed electrical contractor should be allowed to make any repair or modifications to your electrical system. Never attempt to make a repair yourself. However, there are simple steps you can follow in diagnosing a problem that may expedite the return of electrical service.

ELECTRICAL SYSTEM SAFETY TIPS

1. Do not overload any one circuit by using too many appliances at the same time.
2. If your portable power tools are equipped with three-wire cords, the third wire should be grounded.
3. Water conducts electricity -- ***always remove appliance plugs before touching a water faucet while holding the appliance.***
4. Metal sockets on pull-chain fixtures, especially in damp places, should never be touched with wet hands.
5. Never touch a fan, hairdryer, or any other appliance while in a bathtub or shower.
6. Always disconnect electricity when replacing a switch or receptacle.
7. Never touch an electrical device at the same time you touch part of the plumbing system.
8. Be sure to specify approved weatherproof fittings and wiring for any outdoor lighting you may have added to your home.

CIRCUIT BREAKERS

Your home's main circuit breaker controls the electrical current to your home. The main circuit breaker is in the electrical service panel box, along with other smaller circuit breakers. On the inside cover of the breaker box will appear a diagram of circuit breakers and the names/locations of the circuits they control.

The electrical wiring and equipment in your home is protected by circuit breakers, which are the safety valves of your home's electrical system. Circuit breakers that have "tripped" should be reset by first switching the breaker to "FULL OFF" and then back to "FULL ON". There will be an audible click. The panel box containing the circuit breakers will be located on an inside wall opposite the outside electric meter.

POWER FAILURES

In the event of complete power failure, first check to see if your neighbor has power -- if so, the power failure has occurred only in your home. Check the main circuit breaker in the panel box to determine if it has been tripped. If resetting the main breaker fails to correct the problem, flip it to the "OFF" position and call an electrician.

ELECTRICAL SERVICE ENTRANCE

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

If the power feed to your home is installed underground (versus overhead), call the power company to locate the feed before doing any digging or trenching. The service is free from the utility company.

GFCI BREAKER

GFCI = Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter. This breaker is installed as a safety feature to control the electrical current to "wet" areas of your home (such as the outlets in bathrooms, garage, outside and the outlet near the kitchen sink). Its purpose is to sense any extra load on this circuit and to cut power to the circuit to prevent continual electrical shock. There is a reset button on the GFCI outlet itself. Push the button to reconnect power to the outlet. Your appliance should be checked for a possible short or other malfunction if the breaker continues to cut off. ***DO NOT PLUG YOUR FREEZER OR REFRIGERATOR INTO A GFCI SWITCH.***

SMOKE DETECTORS

Smoke detectors are installed in your home per building code requirements. As a homeowner, all that is required of you is to test the unit(s) once a month, and to make sure that dust or debris does not collect inside the unit.

LIGHT FIXTURES AND BULBS

Most of your home's light fixtures (other than recessed "can" lights) are designed to accept 60-watt bulbs as a maximum. Larger bulbs generate too much heat to be dissipated by the fixture. Most recessed "can" light fixtures contain a heat-sensitive thermostat that will automatically turn the light off when it gets too hot.

WALL SWITCH-CONTROLLED OUTLETS

A light switch may control some of the electrical outlets in your home. These outlets have two (2) receptacles, only one of which is connected to the light switch. Before contacting the electrician about an outlet that is not working, please check both receptacles (top and bottom) to the light switch to see if the outlets are installed upside down.

FLUORESCENT TUBES

It is normal for the fluorescent tubes in fluorescent light fixtures to make a slight buzzing sound.

**HEMOCARE AND MAINTENANCE
FOR DIRECT VENT FIREPLACES**

Most manufacturers recommend that a direct vent fireplace receive a "tune-up" annually. This would consist of:














- ▶ Checking and adjusting all settings to factory specifications
 - ▶ Cleaning and inspecting the glass and glass seal
 - ▶ Cleaning the inside of the fireplace
 - ▶ Replacing the glowing embers
 - ▶ Checking for gas and carbon monoxide leaks
 - ▶ Testing gas pressure and system voltage
 - ▶ Checking system venting
-

**HOME CARE AND MAINTENANCE - INTERIOR
FIREPLACE**

Before using your fireplace for the first time, open the damper and visually inspect inside the firebox to be sure the damper is fully open. Some dampers may stick in the close position even though the lever seems to work correctly.

If your fireplace does not have a gas starter, then roll a few pages of newspaper into a loose stick about a foot long and ignite it inside the fireplace. Place the lit end directly in the opening of the damper. As the paper burns, turn it upside down onto the grate, so that the flames lead directly up the flue. Using the best logs you have, start a small fire with appropriate kindling. The first few fires should be short and moderate to avoid cracks in the refractory lining. The light-up of your fireplace is the most critical time to prevent smoking. Dry hardwood split in quarter burns with less smoke and allows for even half-inch airflow space around the logs. Logs that fit too closely to side walls of the fireplace can cause excess smoking too. Starting the fire in the center of the back wall just below the flue allows the fire to concentrate hot airflow straight up the flue, where it will do the most good in establishing an effective draft.

If you maintain the hottest part of your fire against the back wall, you minimize smoking and also maximize radiant heat output. Fire building is a skill that takes practice and patience.

DO ~	DON'T ~
 CHECK THE DAMPER FOR FULL OPEN POSITION	 ATTEMPT TO IGNITE FULL ROUND LOGS COVERED COMPLETELY WITH BARK IN THE LIGHT-UP PHASE
 USE SMALL, DRY KINDLING (OR GAS) TO START SMALL LOGS UNTIL COALS DROP UNDER THE GRATE	 OVERFILL THE GRATE OR BOX WITH LOGS TOO BIG FOR GOOD SPACING
 KEEP LOGS SPACED WITH ROOM FOR AIR AND FLAMES TO CIRCULATE AROUND ALL SIDES	 USE CHEMICAL LOGS OR OIL-DERIVED PRODUCTS IN YOUR FIREPLACE TO START OR BURN A FIRE
 USE ONLY SOLID WOOD MATERIALS AND OTHER APPROPRIATE KINDLING TO BURN A FIRE IN YOUR FIREPLACE	 LEAVE A FIRE UNATTENDED -- JUST COALS ALONE CONSTITUTE A SERIOUS SMOKE HAZARD EVEN BEHIND GLASS DOORS
 KEEP THE SCREENS CLOSED WHILE ANY FIRE EXISTS IN YOUR FIREPLACE	 USE BARE HANDS TO CLOSE THE DAMPER OR MANIPULATE ANYTHING INSIDE THE FIREPLACE
 AVOID UNNECESSARY CONTACT WITH THE FIREBOX AND SURROUNDING PARTS -- THEY RETAIN EXTREME HEAT	 LEAVE THE FIRE TO BURN DOWN OVERNIGHT -- DO NOT LEAVE THE DAMPER OPEN, ALLOWING A BACKDRAFT TO RE-IGNITE A FIRE OR BLOW EMBERS ONTO CARPET
 FULLY EXTINGUISH THE FIRE BEFORE GOING TO BED -- CLOSE THE DAMPER	

HOME CARE AND MAINTENANCE - INTERIOR FLOOR COVERINGS

Please always refer to the manufacturer's instructions

CARPETS

The carpeting in your home was laid by a professional installer as recommended by the manufacturer. Cleaning, normal foot traffic, moving furniture over the carpet, etc. will cause the carpet to stretch. Stretching cannot be prevented by the manufacturer, installer, or builder. ***Our carpet subcontractor will restretch your carpet one time during your one-year warranty period.***

Seams in carpets are unavoidable, as carpet is manufactured in roll widths that are sometimes less than the width of a room. As the carpet wears, its fibers begin to relax somewhat and seams that might be noticeable when new will become less so over time.

It is very important to follow the manufacturer's procedures for treating stains as this procedure varies on different types of carpet.

CARPET CARE

Now that you have installed your new carpet, proper care and maintenance is essential to protect and maintain its beautiful appearance.

Proper maintenance consists of three basic elements:

PREVENTIVE CARE

DAILY CARE

THOROUGH CLEANING

PREVENTIVE CARE:

The prevention of potential problems will go a long way toward prolonging the life of your carpet and keeping it beautiful.

- ⇒ Use walk-off mats at all entrances to absorb soil and moisture and prevent living areas from tracking.
- ⇒ Keep areas next to or near your new carpet free of dirt and substances which could be tracked onto it.
- ⇒ When moving heavy, wheeled furniture, prevent damage to the carpet by placing a protective barrier of heavy cardboard or plywood under the wheels. Do not use chairs or appliances with rollers or casters on carpet over pad. Prolonged use can cause pad deterioration.

- ⇒ Remove and clean area rugs used over carpet, and clean and restore the pile of the carpet underneath. This should be done on a regular basis.
- ⇒ To protect your carpet from the possibility of fading due to direct sunlight, use blinds, shades, or awnings.

DAILY CARE:

Vacuuming...

Set up a regular vacuuming schedule based on the factors that affect your carpet's appearance: the air quality where you live, your family's living habits, the color and fabric you selected, the level of appearance you expect to maintain, and the amount and pattern of traffic in your home.

Bright, light, and solid colors tend to show soil more readily than multi-colors and will require more attention. You can expect to vacuum family rooms and other high-traffic areas like halls and entranceways more frequently. Vacuuming high-traffic areas lightly each day maintains the brightness and texture of the pile and removes surface soil and dirt.

Vacuum your carpet thoroughly at least once a week, and more often in high-traffic areas. If particles of soil and dirt become embedded in the pile, your carpet will lose its bright, new appearance. Prolonged friction of sand or other hard particles against the sides of the fiber may cause it to split and break.

Proper Equipment...

A good vacuum cleaner is essential for proper maintenance of your carpet. An inexpensive vacuum may remove surface dirt and leave your carpet looking clean at first, but it is not effective in removing hidden dirt and embedded particles.

A top-loading, upright vacuum with a driven brush or beater bar/brush combination will usually do the best job of removing dirt and soil from your carpet. This kind of vacuum combines consistent, strong suction and a revolving brush that loosens embedded particles without snagging the carpet pile.

Adjust the height of the brush to avoid excessive fraying of the pile.

Carpet Spills and Stains...

As much as you may hate the thought of it, spills are inevitable. But if you give immediate and appropriate attention to the problem, most spills can be easily removed without leaving permanent stains or spots.

In case of any spill:

- ⇒ Always act immediately.
- ⇒ Always clean from the edges of the spill toward the center to avoid spreading.
- ⇒ Do not apply carpet shampoo or dry cleaning fluid directly onto the carpet, as this causes over-wetting and may leave a ring or drive the stain down to the backing.
- ⇒ Always avoid over-wetting the carpet or allowing dry cleaning fluid to contact the padding.
- ⇒ Always test shampoos and cleaners on a sample or inconspicuous area of your carpet before using them on the spot. Some cleaning agents can cause fading or change the color of certain carpet dyes and make the spot even more unsightly.

FOR THOROUGH CLEANING OF YOUR CARPETS

PLEASE REFER TO MANUFACTURER'S INSTRUCTIONS.

TRAVERTINE FLOORING

Travertine is a natural stone that is a member of the limestone family. It typically ranges in colors from light oatmeal beige to soft amber beige.

Care and Maintenance

Travertine is hard but can be chipped, scratched or etched by abuse and improper care. Polishing and sealing can prevent the worst of the damage. Initial sealing should be done immediately after installation.

Clean up any spills immediately, including water, since Travertine is porous and liquid will soak in and cause damage. Do not allow contact with any acidic liquids like vinegar, soda, or fruit juices or harsh cleansers like bleach or ammonia, since they will etch and remove the finish. Use a dust mop or non-abrasive vacuum on floors regularly to avoid scratching from dust and dirt. Keep a non-slip mat in front of any doors and be sure to vacuum the mat and under it when cleaning.

CERAMIC & PORCELAIN TILE FLOORS

Ceramic tile comes in two general types, *glazed*, with a china-like surface, and *unglazed*, with a rugged body color throughout. It is important to regularly sweep or vacuum tile floors, particularly glazed ones, to remove gritty particles that might scratch them. Clean ceramic tiles as follows:

1. *Glazed Tile*: For daily cleaning, simply use a damp cloth or sponge and towel dry. For deeper cleaning, use scouring powders or soapless detergents.
2. *Unglazed Tile*: This colorfast surface may be waxed. Clean it with detergent or scrub with a stiff brush and scouring powder to remove stains.
3. For cleaning needs above and beyond regular maintenance, check the manufacturer's instructions or call your local tile dealer, as certain cleaning agents can harm some tile or erode grout. It is always best to test all cleaning methods on a small, unnoticed area.

MARBLE FLOORS

Marble is a limestone that has been streaked with irregular and colorful patterns of "impurities" during its formations. Because of the imprecise nature of this stone's formation, no two pieces of the same type of marble are ever exactly identical. Therefore, in making your marble selection, **please bear in mind that our samples are merely representative of the color and markings found in certain species of marble, and that the marble that is installed in your home may not exactly resemble the sample. In addition, please understand that there will be natural variations among the pieces used in your own flooring.**

Marble Maintenance...

Fine polished marble is a natural material capable of providing a lifetime of beauty and function if properly protected and maintained. Although dense and durable marble is by no means impervious to staining and surface wear. The degree of susceptibility to staining and wear is directly proportionate to the marble porosity and hardness. To insure the lasting beauty of a fine polished marble installation, one should provide the same care and maintenance considerations as given fine wood.

The Marble Institute of American recommends a breathable penetrating type sealer to help protect polished marble from sub-surface staining, followed by a wax-type surface coating to provide protection from light surface scratching and wear. For routine maintenance they recommend a neutral cleaner that will not adversely affect the marble, sealer or protective wax-type coating. The old adage "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" cannot be over-emphasized when addressing the care and maintenance of polished marble. It is much easier to provide initial protection and maintain a proper level of care than to refurbish marble that has been neglected. Natural marble is alkaline in its compositions and highly susceptible to surface etching by acid based contaminants.

All marble floors are installed over an underlayment that acts as a buffer to help control cracking. Clean marble floors with a damp mop and warm water. If buffing is needed, use only with soft cloth materials and **NO** wax products, or arrange for professional buffing. Never let water stand on marble for an extended time as oxidation can occur, causing discoloration within the marble.

SLATE FLOORING MAINTENANCE

For slate floors sealed with *Cirene Topical Sealer* Regular Cleaning

Dust mop or sweep as needed. Damp mop as needed with water. Slate that has been sealed needs only this type of routine damp mopping.

For more thorough cleaning, use Lavanet pH-balanced cleaner. Spot re-sealing may be required following scrubbing tough stains or in heavy traffic areas.

Re-Sealing Slate Floors:

Your slate floors will eventually need to be resealed. Typically one time per year is sufficient; however, high traffic areas may require more frequent applications. *Cirene Topical Sealer* provides a deep, clear elegant luster that will not discolor with age. Cirene helps prevent dust, dirt, grease and water from entering the floor.

More than one coat may be required depending on the porosity of the floor, and to match luster depending on how many coats of sealer were applied when the floor was originally sealed.

Both the sealing and the cleaning products are available from the Thorntree Showroom @ 4089 Westheimer (713) 963-9890.

HARDWOOD FLOORS

Wood is a natural product and will react the same as a piece of wood furniture that has been subjected to dents, scratches, water, or excessive moisture. Think of your wood floor as a piece of furniture. Don't do anything to your wood floor that you would not do to your furniture.

Wood floors are made from trees and will have distinctive natural characteristics, such as knot holes, dark mineral streaks, and light and dark mixtures of shades, they may vary from the samples. This is what makes wood floors stand out from man-made imitation products that are all alike. The NATURAL COLORS will show more of this color and shade variation because it has not been stained which tones down the natural colors of the tree.

Wood floors are put together piece by piece and there could be several hundred to several thousand pieces of wood floor in your home. Occasionally when the wood's humidity level changes in your home, the wood may slightly expand or contract. This may cause squeaking, splintering, or popping. If this condition occurs, contact warranty.

The wood for your floors is manufactured at the factory and comes pre-finished. The wood is tongue and grooved on the edges to add support and to even the

edges. However, in certain conditions you may notice a slight edge variation in the joints. This is normal. It is not uncommon to have some uneven edges in wood floors. They are pre-made at the factory and installed with tongue and grooved edges to add stability, but not tight enough to restrict expansion and contraction.

As with any floor covering material, a few moments of care and a little common sense can go a long way in keeping your new hardwood floor looking its best. Here are a few suggestions on what to do and what not to do to make caring of your wood floor easier.

- ⇒ **NEVER CLEAN YOUR WOOD FLOOR WITH WATER.** Do not use any wax or cleaner that must be mixed with water. This may result in a loss of warranty. Water can dull the finish, cause a rough surface, splinters, and permanently damage the wood floor.
- ⇒ If your floor abuts exterior doors, put outside mats to prevent dirt and moisture from being tracked in. If you use a mat on top of your wood floor, do not use rubber back, foam back, or plastic, as they may discolor the wood floor.
- ⇒ Sweeping, vacuuming, or dust mopping is all that is required to keep your hardwood floors. **NOTE: Cotton mops tend to hang on edges and are not recommended.**
 - For minor surface scratches, use "Old English" Furniture and Scratch Cover. It comes in light, medium, and dark colors and is sold at grocery and hardware stores. Just wipe a small amount on scratched area and wipe with clean cloth.
- ⇒ Wipe up any spills as soon as possible, before they become sticky or dry. Use a damp rag followed by a dry rag.
- ⇒ Use felt floor protectors on the feet of furniture to avoid scratches.
- ⇒ When moving a heavy piece of furniture, use a blanket or piece of carpet (face down) under each foot and slide carefully. Use extra protection for big heavy pieces.
- ⇒ Certain types of casters on furniture may damage wood flooring. The wide, flat types of casters are best. If your casters start denting or dulling the finish, change them immediately.
- ⇒ Try to maintain a constant humidity level in your home. A humidity level 45% to 55% is ideal. Never air out your home on a rainy day or one with high humidity.
- ⇒ Spike or stiletto high heel shoes will dent wood floors. A 125 lb. person wearing spike high heel shoes exerts over 1,000 lbs. per square inch compression at point of contact.

THE WOOD MANUFACTURERS WILL NOT ACCEPT CLAIMS RESULTING FROM ANY OF THE CONDITIONS LISTED PREVIOUS.

Remember to keep your wood floor looking its best:

-  DO use protection to avoid dents and scratches
-  DO keep dry (except to wipe spills)
-  DO vacuum, sweep, or dust mop
-  DO wipe spills as soon as possible
-  DON'T use water or water related products
-  DON'T allow furniture or casters to dent or scratch
-  DON'T air out on rainy or high humidity days
-  DON'T allow spike or stiletto high heels on floor
-  DON'T use rubber, foam or plastic mats
-  DON'T allow pet nails to scratch and scar the floor
-  DON'T allow pet water and food bowls to spill onto the wood floor

Moving furniture without proper protection, dropping objects, water and pets cause the most damages to hardwood floors. Any scratches, dents, scuffs, gouges, rough surface or surface abrasions are considered the homeowner's responsibility; and are not covered by manufacturer's warranty.

Wood floors are a big part of your investment in your home and these suggestions should help you care for and understand hardwood floors, so they may give you many years of beauty and comfort.

HOME CARE AND MAINTENANCE - INTERIOR WALLS, CEILINGS AND WOODWORK

SHEETROCK

Painted surfaces of interior walls and ceilings of your home are gypsum wallboard (sheetrock). This material was chosen for its stability, even painting surface, and resistance to fire. Although gypsum wallboard has many desirable qualities, it also has limitations.

Normal house settling and shifting may cause small cracks to appear at door and window openings and at some wall and ceiling joints. Such cracks are not serious and do not reflect structural weakness.

Weather changes (temperature and humidity) will cause these small cracks to widen on occasion and almost disappear at other times. Immediate repair of these cracks should be delayed, as further shrinkage may reopen them. ***The best time for repair of hairline cracks is approximately 11 months after occupancy***, when most shrinkage and settling should have occurred. There is no feasible way to prevent the cause of the hairline cracks -- the natural settling and shifting of the house. Nail pops and swelling of sheetrock joints are other conditions that can occur after occupancy. ***Our drywall and paint subcontractors will repair hairline cracks one time during your one-year warranty period, after the one year period they are not warrantable. Submit a service request at 11 months.***

If you choose to fill these cracks for cosmetic purposes, use a latex caulk or spackling compound, available at paint and hardware stores. Touch-up the filled areas using latex paint.

PAINT

Walls and ceilings have been painted with a high quality latex paint. While these surfaces are not washable, they can be cleaned by lightly sponging with warm water and mild detergent, as they will not withstand scrubbing or abrasive cleansers. The wall texture gives a certain amount of added protection. However, scrubbing may break off the texture "bumps", exposing the soluble texture to moisture. As a result, the dissolved texture may wipe off, along with the paint adhering to it.

Interior paint, although more protected than exterior painted surfaces, is exposed to light and other elements that cause fading and discoloration. Touch-up paint will vary from the original paint and will not match a surface exposed to a month of sunlight; therefore, we can be expected to make only a reasonable color match of the affected area when touch-up is required.

Interior doors and trim are latex enameled for durability and easy care. Remove dirt with warm water and mild detergent.

Before repainting, patch any small cracks, chips, gouges, etc. Before applying patching material (latex caulk, spackling compound, etc.) or paint, make sure the surface of the area to be patched is free of dirt, grease and debris. Touch-up paint coupons have been provided to paint over soiled spots, nicks and scrapes.

CABINETS

Never clean cabinets with harsh abrasives. Excessive use of water for cleaning may also damage the finish, a damp cloth will generally be sufficient. Always dry the surface immediately. Avoid spray type polishes that are formulated with wax, petroleum solvents or silicones. The extensive use of wax or silicone polishes can result in a film buildup which may injure your cabinet's finish and void your warranty.

MOLDINGS AND WOOD TRIMMINGS

The trim and molding used around doors and at baseboards may separate at the joints from the normal process of shrinking and settling. These are minor cosmetic problems and are part of homeowner maintenance. Fill the gap with putty or caulking, then smooth and touch-up with paint.

CONDENSATION

Condensation takes place wherever warm moist air inside the house meets a colder surface such as windows A/C vents, toilet tanks, etc. Ventilation helps eliminate condensation, so take care not to obstruct vents such as attic louvers.

Condensation is at its maximum in new homes, because in the construction process many gallons of water are used in the concrete, drywall mud, tilework, and some kinds of paint. This boosts the air moisture content higher than usual.

Whenever possible, aid the normal drying-out process of your new homes by providing steady, even ventilation -- but not by creating artificially high temperatures during the winter.

Condensation in houses is a controversial and complicated issue. Over the last decade, it has taken on new dimensions, due to the changes in building practices. For example, homes are now better insulated, which affects the temperature inside the home and outside the envelope. Houses today are more airtight, which often results in higher humidity levels. This, in turn, may lead to increased surface

condensation, particularly on windows due to increased indoor humidity levels. The following deals with condensation on windows in particular.

Surface condensation is a phenomenon by which moisture condenses on visible surfaces. It occurs on surfaces that are at a temperature below the dew point temperature of the inside air. In the winter time, surface condensation is most common on windows and window frames. When moist air is cooled, the dew point temperature is reached. This is the temperature at which the air becomes saturated with moisture. If the surrounding surfaces continue to cool (the window frame or glass), the moisture in the air condenses on the surfaces as a liquid or if the temperature is below freezing, as a frost.

Condensation on interior surfaces, such as window frames or sills, often occurs during cold weather and is a result of the humidity level in the home, combined with the difference of inside and outside temperatures. Damage to window sills is possible from excessive condensation draining onto finished woodwork. The humidity level within the home is largely influenced and controlled by family lifestyle. Performing the following procedures will help prevent damage to window sills and can reduce the amount of condensation noticed on windows:

1. Turn the fan "on" at the thermostat control in severe cold weather.
2. Raise your blinds 1"-3" off the windowsills to allow air circulation.
3. Open your blinds during the day to facilitate airflow.
4. Run exhaust fans when bathing or cooking.
5. The greater the temperature variance between the inside of the home and the outside of the home, the greater the potential for condensation. If you set the temperature in the home a few degrees lower than normal in severe cold weather, it will help in reducing the amount of condensation.

HOME CARE AND MAINTENANCE - INTERIOR PLUMBING

WATER SHUTOFF VALVES

Proper use of the water shutoff valves inside and outside your home can reduce or eliminate the possibility of water damage in your home.

Main Water Shutoff Valve...

The main water cutoff is located in the house usually in the utility room or the closet closest to the front of the house. The entire water supply to the house may be cut off by closing this valve. The shutoff valve at the street meter box (at the curb) may also be used to cut off the water supply.

Interior Water Shutoff Valves...

Behind commodes and under every sink (bathroom and kitchen) are water shutoff valves that control the water line to that location only. If a leak occurs shut off the valve and call your plumbing contractor. These valves allow you to isolate the problem and still use water elsewhere in the house.

FREEZE PROTECTION

As you know, loss or damage caused by frozen water pipes is excluded from warranty coverage. A few extra precautions will protect water pipes from freezing in winter:

1. Remove all garden hoses from hose bibs. Hoses should be disconnected, drained and stored in a place protected from freezing weather.
2. Insulate or wrap all exterior pipes and hose bibs.
3. Let inside faucets drip slowly to keep water from freezing in the pipes.
4. Keep kitchen and bathroom cabinets doors under sinks open to circulate warm air around pipes.
5. If you are going out of town, turn the water off at the water meter. Drain the water from the house by opening all interior and exterior faucets after turning off the water supply. Set the heating system thermostat "ON" to keep pipes warm inside the house.

IMPORTANT: Should the pipes in your home freeze, make sure you are home when they thaw out, to monitor for leaks. If a pipe burst from the freeze, you will be able to hear or see the water leaking out. It is critical during and after thawing that you spend several hours at home walking the entire house, looking and listening for water leaks. Burst pipes and the damage they cause are not warrantable.

DRAINS

Each plumbing fixture in your home has a drain trap, a pipe section shaped like a "J" that provides a water barrier between your home and the potential of sewer gas. Water held in the trap prevents airborne bacteria and odor of the sewer gas from entering the house.

Infrequently used fixtures should be turned on at regular intervals to replace evaporating water and to ensure that the water barrier stays intact. Because of their shape, traps are also a likely site for clogs.

Unplugging a drain pipe..

When the drain pipe from a tub, sink, or shower stops up, try a plunger. Be sure that the rubber cap of the plunger covers the drain opening and that the water comes well up over the cap edge. Working the plunger up and down rhythmically 10 to 20 times in succession will build up pressure in the pipe and do more good than sporadic, separate plunges. If the plunger doesn't work, try a plumber's snake (available for rent or purchase at a plumbing or hardware store). Be sure to turn the handle of the snake in the same direction when removing it as when inserting it. This will keep any matter attached to the snake from coming loose before it is removed.

If the drain can be partially opened with the plunger or snake, hot water may finish the job. If not, open the trap under the fixture. Put a bucket or pan under the trap to catch the water from it. A piece of wire may help dislodge the blockage. The snake can also be run in at this point. ***Although it is sold commercially as a drain cleaner, never use caustic soda (lye) to open a drain. It may combine with the grease from soap or food wastes to form an insoluble compound.***

SEWER LINE BLOCKAGE

To avoid interior damage due to backup, use the following procedure to relieve pressure on the plumbing system from a blocked drain:

Step A: The sewer clean-out cap (outside the home) should be removed to allow the sewage to flow out on the ground; it can be washed away later. If this does not relieve the pressure, then the blockage is between this point and the place it was first observed in the house. Proceed to Step B.

Step B: You will find clean-out plugs adjacent to the kitchen and some bathrooms extending through the brick, stucco, or siding on the exterior of the home about a foot above slab level. Loosen the cap closest to the blocked area and allow the sewage to spill onto the ground (it can be washed away later with a hose). A plumber's snake can then be inserted into the clean-out to remove the blockage.

CAUTION: *Never flush hair, grease, lint, paper towels, diapers, rubbish, sanitary napkins, etc., down toilet drains. Such materials stop up the toilet and sanitary sewer lines.*

IMPORTANT: *IF STOPPAGE IS THE RESULT OF HOMEOWNER NEGLIGENCE AND A PLUMBER IS CALLED, THERE WILL BE A SERVICE CHARGE.*

TOILET STOPPAGE

Treatment of a stopped-up toilet is the same as a stopped-up drain. The trap, however, is built into the toilet and is therefore less accessible. Instead of a snake, you can use a coil spring-steel auger (available for rent or purchase at a plumbing or hardware store). Insert the auger so that the point goes up into the trap. Turn the handle of the auger to break up the blockage or catch it for removal.

TOILET CONTINUOUSLY RUNNING

If the water level in the tank is higher than the overflow pipe, the water will leak into the bowl continuously. Take the following steps to fix it:

Tighten the set screw on top of the valve. **Be careful - tightening too far will strip the threads.** Flush the

toilet. If the water level is still above the overflow pipe, bend down the rod attached to the ball float so that the float is closer to the bottom of the tank. It is better to bend the rod a little at a time and retest by flushing than to over-bend it the first time.

If the water level in the tank is below the overflow pipe and water is still flowing into the bowl, the black rubber "flapper" (at bottom center of the tank and connected to the flush lever) is not seated correctly. Make sure the flapper is dropping down and completely covering the opening in the bottom of the tank. If the flapper or seat (the ring the flapper rests on when the tank is full) is dirty or rusty, clean it. If the flapper is worn, remove it and replace it.

FAUCETS

Like all fixtures with moving parts, faucets are likely to require repair and maintenance more often with high usage. Leaking faucets generally can be fixed by replacing the washer or washers. Some single-handle hot and cold water controls have no washers, but their cartridges, which last longer, must still be changed periodically. Faucets should never be forced off. Before attempting to repair a faucet, be sure to turn off the water at the water shutoff valves under the sink. Washers and cartridges are available at most hardware stores.

AERATORS

Cleaning the aerators will be the most frequent faucet maintenance task. This faucet attachment adds air to the water as it leaves the faucet, saving water and reducing splashing. To clean an aerator, unscrew it from the mouth of the faucet and remove any debris; next, remove and rinse the washers and screen, replace them in the proper order, and put the aerator back on the faucet. Frequency of cleaning will depend on the water. **NEVER TIGHTEN AERATORS WITH PLIERS OR WRENCHES; HAND TIGHTEN ONLY!**

BATHTUBS, SINKS AND SHOWERS

The bath tubs, sinks and showers in your home are made of one or more of the following: Porcelain, fiberglass, ceramic tile, synthetic marble or stainless steel. All these materials are vulnerable to scraping and dulling and will scratch or chip with a heavy blow.

DO NOT USE ABRASIVE CLEANERS! Many excellent non-abrasive cleaners are available to maintain these surfaces. Beware of cleaners with bleach added to the ingredients. This could discolor certain tubs and sinks that are not pure white in color. Chips that appear after move-in are not warranted.

Rust stains in sinks are often caused by wet utensils left in the sinks. Keep steel wool in an appropriate container; once wet, it will rust and stain.

SAFETY GLASS

This glass, used in shower doors, can scratch easily. Use a squeegee to reduce mineral buildup after each shower use.

PLUMBING FIXTURE CARE & MAINTENANCE

To prolong the life of plumbing fixtures:

- ⇒ Don't allow food wastes to stand in the sink or disposal unit
- ⇒ Don't let water remain on chrome and brass fixtures
- ⇒ Don't use plumbing fixtures to hold paint can, trash or tools
- ⇒ Don't step in a tub with shoes on -- gritty particles from shoe soles can scratch the surface
- ⇒ Don't use plumbing fixtures to hold photographic or developing solutions
- ⇒ Do follow manufacturer's suggestions for cleaning
- ⇒ Avoid scraping or banging metal utensils in the kitchen -- it will gradually scratch and dull the surface, and the porcelain enamel surface may chip. The finish is then susceptible to stains, which become increasingly difficult to remove.
- ⇒ Stainless steel sinks are highly resistant to scratching, chipping and stains. They clean easily with a good detergent. Enhance the luster and remove water spot by wiping with vegetable oil. Never use steel wool or abrasive cleaner on your sink.

- ⇒ The joint between the bottom of the tub and floor tile and top of the tub and tile wainscot was sealed with a silicone caulking compound. House settling or drying of caulk may cause these joints to reopen. Re-caulk them as soon as cracks appear.
- ⇒ The bathtub recess and walls of shower enclosure are ceramic-tiled or faced with cultured marble. Through normal house settling, some separation at the grout (mortar) line may occur. Repair separation around the base of the shower or at the joint between the tile (or marble) and the tub with a silicone caulking compound available from hardware stores. Correct this problem promptly, as cracks can allow water to penetrate gypsum wallboard or under floor tile, causing serious damage. Damage resulting from neglect will not be warranted.
- ⇒ Fiberglass tub units are molded as a single unit, and consequently have no caulking to replace. Fiberglass is easily cleaned with a detergent cleaner (steel wool and abrasive cleansers should never be used on fiberglass). Fiberglass units are resistant to chipping, but if they do chip, repairs can be made with a compound available at hardware stores.

PROCESS FOR CLEANING WHIRLPOOL BATH

To clean the whirlpool system, turn the six (6) jets counter clockwise to loosen and remove. In order for you to remove the suction cover use a phillips head screwdriver. Then put them in soapy warm water to soak for about thirty (30) minutes. Then rinse in cool water and reinstall back on the tub.

Fill the whirlpool bath to a minimum of two (2) inches above the jets with warm water, a half (1/2) cup of Clorox bleach, and three (3) tablespoons of Cascade liquid dishwashing gel. Run the system for twenty (20) minutes. Drain. Fill with cold water only and run for twenty (20) minutes.

This should be used once a month for a normal monthly cleaning process. If bath oils are used you may want to use the cleaning process a little more often.

HOME CARE AND MAINTENANCE – INTERIOR MOLD

There are many different types of indoor environmental contaminants, such as pet dander, dust mites and mold. Molds and other potential contaminants have been a part of our environment for millions of years. Mold is everywhere, indoors and outdoors. It is a type of fungus that occurs naturally in the environment and is found everywhere life can be supported. Residential home construction is not, and cannot be, designed to exclude mold spores. If growing conditions are right, mold can grow in your home. Most homeowners are familiar with mold growth in the form of bread mold, and mold that may grow on bathroom tile.

In order to grow, mold requires a food source. This might be supplied by items found in the home, such as fabric, carpet, wallpaper or common building materials such as drywall, and insulation. When excessive moisture or water accumulates indoors, mold growth can and will occur, particularly if the moisture problem remains unaddressed. There is no practical way to eliminate all molds or mold spores in an indoor environment. The key to controlling indoor mold growth is to control moisture. Moisture is the only mold growth factor that can be controlled in a residential setting. By minimizing moisture, a homeowner can substantially reduce mold growth potential.

There are many ways to help control moisture in your home. The following list is not meant to be all-inclusive.

- Fix leaking plumbing and any other source of unwanted water immediately.
 - Maintain proper indoor humidity.
 - Raise the temperature in areas where moisture condenses on surfaces and open doors between rooms to increase air circulation in the home, including doors to closets.
 - Have major appliances, such as furnaces, heat pumps, central air conditioners, window air conditioning units and furnace attached humidifiers inspected, cleaned and serviced regularly by a qualified professional.
 - Clean and dry refrigerator, air conditioner and dehumidifier drip pans and filters regularly and make sure that your refrigerator and freezer doors seal properly.
 - Keep water away from your foundation by maintaining required slopes, drainage and keep plantings and sprinklers the proper distance from your home.
 - It is imperative that you respond promptly when you see signs of moisture or mold.
 - Do not allow moisture to stand or make contact with cellulose-based materials, such as wood, drywall or other non-tile, non-plastic or non-metal materials.
 - Dry all water damaged areas and items immediately to prevent mold growth.
-

HOME CARE AND MAINTENANCE - EXTERIOR

FOUNDATIONS, GRADING, DRAINAGE, SOILS, CONCRETE AND MASONRY

FOUNDATIONS, GRADING, DRAINAGE AND SOILS

Foundation Distress Due to Soil Conditions...

Your foundation was designed and constructed to withstand some movement of the soil underneath. However, some more expansive soils could move 3" - 5" from a dry to wet state. That magnitude of movement could cause foundation distress. The finished grade around the house is intended to provide positive drainage away from the foundation. It must always be maintained this way. If water ponds at the foundation, it could migrate under the exterior beams and cause the foundation to heave.

Heaving is an upward movement of the foundation caused by expanding soil that has become saturated. To avoid this problem, care must be taken to prevent water standing against the foundation.

If the ground at the foundation becomes too dry and large cracks appear in the soil, the soil under exterior beams could shrink and cause settlement. Minor settlement can usually be reversed by providing proper moisture at the foundation.

Surface Cracks...

Small cracks sometimes appear around doors, corners, windows and exterior brick mortar. These cracks, usually less than 1/8" wide, are the result of thermal or moisture changes, not foundation movement; they can be taken care of in your routine maintenance. If the cracks enlarge over time, however, it may indicate settlement or heaving.

Maintaining Your Foundation...

Maintain and keep positive water drainage routed away from your foundation. Often swales (drainage ditches) are provided to make certain water drains away from your home. These swales are sometimes inadvertently filled in by homeowners or by soil erosion. An early effort to get a good stand of grass in the swales will be a worthwhile investment of time and energy and will minimize drainage and erosion problems. These swales must be kept clean and clear. ***Even if you do not install landscaping, you are still responsible for correcting the effects of natural erosion to the grade of your lot. NATURAL EROSION IS NOT A WARRANTABLE ITEM.***

Take into consideration how water will drain from your home before making any modifications or additions. See Section V-B, Landscaping. Homeowners sometimes unintentionally create unequal soil moisture conditions around the foundation by creating water

traps. Often this results from the installation of additional concrete walks, patios, borders, landscape planting area, or metal flowerbed edging.

Some homeowners plant heavily around patios with little or no planting on the side yards. As a consequence, the soil around the patio may become heavily watered, while other parts of the yard receive little or no water. This can create unequal soil expansion, with the potential for wall and concrete cracking. See Section V-B, Landscaping.

Homeowners may wish to water the perimeter of the slab during the hot and dry seasons, especially where flatwork meets the slab, i.e. driveways.

DRIVEWAYS, WALKS, STEPS, AND PATIOS

Stresses on walks, driveway and steps have been anticipated, and expansion and contraction joints (control joints) have been provided. Since concrete is a rigid material placed over a non-rigid material (soil), some cracking is inevitable. Cracking of concrete is ***not a warrantable item.***

MASONRY

Masonry is an extremely low-maintenance material; however, periodic inspection is necessary to check for cracks resulting from normal settling.

Small weep holes were created at regular intervals at the bottom of masonry walls to allow moisture, which accumulates between the interior surface of the masonry and the sheathing material, behind the masonry to escape. ***These holes must be kept open. Never build flowerbeds above weep holes.***

Mortar Repairs...

To repair masonry, thoroughly remove all loose particles of mortar with a wire brush or a thin blade. Moisten the crack.

- ⇒ For Small Cracks: Fill with mortar mix (two parts sand, one part cement, mixed to the consistency of damp earth). Brush off excess with a stiff brush. Let dry. Clean with a mixture of muriatic acid and water.
- ⇒ For Large Cracks: Cut a V-shaped groove into crack not more than 1/2" deep. Fill with mortar mix (one part cement, two parts sand). Brush off excess with a stiff brush. Let dry. Clean with a mixture of muriatic acid and water.

HOME CARE AND MAINTENANCE - EXTERIOR LANDSCAPING AND IMPROVEMENTS

TREES

Trees should be planted no closer than ten feet from the house to minimize potential damage to foundations by tree roots. Avoid fertilizing or watering native trees excessively, because they are not conditioned to it. Prepare the ground for tree or shrub planting carefully to avoid damaging water, sewer, or electrical lines with a pick or shovel. If you are in doubt about the location of buried lines or cables, call the appropriate utility company. They will locate and mark them for you at a minimal charge.

Tree Maintenance...

Maintenance of trees includes, proper watering, feeding and pruning when necessary. ***Maintenance of trees is the sole responsibility of the owner of the establishment where the trees are located.***

Large Yard Trees...

We recommend the following watering schedule for your large yard trees:

- ⇒ **No Rain - Hand water (allow a deep, slow soaking) 20 to 25 gallons of water every other day, approximately 30 minutes for each tree**
- ⇒ Rainy - No watering necessary.

If you fertilize, make certain not to use a harsh or strong fertilizer. A granule type is recommended (13-13-13), spread lightly around the ring of the tree.

No deep root fertilizer should be used during the first year.

Newly planted large trees require more attention than a tree that has been established a while. These trees can go into shock if not properly watered. Too much water is as harmful as too little water. Do not rely on your sprinkler system to supply adequate water for a tree.

Small Curb Trees...

We recommend the following water schedule for your small curb trees (if applicable):

- ⇒ No Rain - Hand watering every other day should be sufficient. Allow the ring around the tree to fill with water slowly. Water no less than three times a week.
- ⇒ Rainy - No watering necessary.

These small container trees require more water than the large trees, because of the conditions they have become accustomed to in the nursery. They are

grown with a drip system and receive a continuous small amount of water all day.

Check the Leaves:

- ⇒ If the leaves are brown and spongy-cut back the watering.
- ⇒ If the leaves are brown and crisp-additional water is needed.

When mulching or planting around trees, take care to keep mulch or top soil away from the base of the tree. A 4" clear diameter is the minimum required to keep the tree from developing "root rot".

A TREE THAT IS PLANTED PROPERLY SHOULD NOT DIE IF MAINTAINED PROPERLY

LAWN CARE

Your home's front yard is planted with durable St. Augustine grass. The following basic facts will help you care for your lawn properly.

Watering...

Immediately after installation, water all sodded areas until water has saturated through the bottom of the sod's dirt pad (critical even during the winter months). If water puddles on the sod before saturation, then turn off the sprinkler in that particular area and allow the water to soak in. Check the sod daily to see if the dirt pad is still moist. If so, watering can be skipped that day. If it is drying out, water the sod again. Reflected heat along buildings and large concrete areas dries sod more quickly, so be sure to check these areas more often. Don't be alarmed if your grass turns yellow or brown for the first few days after planting -- sod sometimes suffer shock.

Continue this watering procedure until the sod has begun to root securely in the soil. In growing season, this is usually in five to ten days. In dormant season, it will vary depending on the temperature. Once the grass has rooted, the watering schedule can be the same as for an established lawn.

Watering should be done once every three days for 15 - 20 minutes. This frequency may need to be increased during extremely hot summer, but during spring and fall months, it will be more than adequate. Watering during the morning hours will eliminate many types of fungus or mold problems.

FENCING AND GATES

Wood Fencing and Wood Gates...

It is the nature of wood fencing and gates to absorb water (swell) and then dry (shrink). This normal process will loosen nails and other attachments over time and will require occasional tightening to maintain firm attachment to supporting members. Some curling and cupping of wood is to be expected. Where wooden gates and fences are painted or sealed with stain, you must maintain these finishes to prevent deterioration.

Iron Fencing and Iron Gates...

It is natural for iron to rust, even if it has been primed with a rust-retardant and then painted. Humidity and irrigation make it impossible to eliminate rust. Therefore, it will be the homeowner's responsibility to touch-up the rust spots as they occur. Eventually, you will need a wire brush or sandpaper to remove the paint and corrosion from the rusting areas before repainting them. You can expect to begin touch-ups within six (6) months after installation -- ***this is normal homeowner maintenance.***

Note: Never allow anyone to swing on gates or jump or climb over them, as this will pull the gates out of alignment.

SPRINKLER SYSTEM

It may be necessary during the winter months to prepare your sprinkler system for freezing temperatures from time to time. Following are the proper steps to take in the event of a freeze:

- 1) Turn off your main sprinkler system valve. If you can't locate, turn off the right hand valve on your backflow device.
- 2) Go to your sprinkler control unit and with the manual button, activate the first zone for approximately 30 seconds. This will de-pressurize the system.
- 3) Turn the sprinkler controller to the OFF position.
- 4) When you are ready to begin using the system, just open the main valve you closed previously, and activate the sprinkler controller by turning to the automatic position.

It is your responsibility to protect your sprinkler system from damage that may occur due to freezing temperatures.

SWIMMING POOLS

If you decide to add a swimming pool, spa or other addition, it is your responsibility to meet all Health Department, Building Department, or any other municipality requirements for safety compliance.

Altered drainage swales from a pool location are your responsibility.

HOME CARE AND MAINTENANCE - EXTERIOR PAINTED AND STAINED FINISHES

PAINT

The overall beauty of your home, as well as its value, will be protected by periodic repainting exterior surfaces. All exterior materials require repainting periodically. Trim boards may pull away from one another or from other materials. Recaulk trim boards and/or siding with a good exterior-grade caulk before repainting to prevent leaks and improve the appearance of your home. Make sure the area to be caulked is free of dirt, grease and debris. **CAULKING IS NORMAL MAINTENANCE.**

In periods of wet weather, a buildup of mold on painted surfaces is not unusual. The homeowner is responsible for eliminating mold or mildew buildup to prevent deterioration. **CAUTION: DO NOT USE A HIGH PRESSURE POWER WASHER.**

Exterior paint is particularly subject to fading or chalking from sun and weather. Wood trim will develop minor cracks and raised grain as it ages and dries. Much of this aging will occur during the first year. Raised grain can result in peeling paint. However, this is not due to a defect in materials or workmanship. **EXTERIOR PAINT IS NOT WARRANTED AFTER CLOSING.**

STAIN

Certain wood finishes are intentionally stained rather than painted. Stain provides a protective finish that penetrates and protects the material, yet allows a natural aging and weathering process that in no way shortens the life of the material. The change in appearance brings out the beauty of the wood and lends a mellow patina as time goes by. If you do not like the weathered look, you may want to restain the material every two or three year. Relatively simple to apply with either a brush or spray, restaining does not require the skill of repainting.

All stained surfaces will eventually need to be restained and sealed. Naturally-finished doors will require more frequent recoating than painted doors.

Varnish applied over the stain protects a stained finish, but may crack or peel as a result of weather conditions, especially on a door exposed to the sun for long period of time. Varnish may need sanding and resealing several times a year, **this is normal homeowner maintenance.**

To Restain Wood Doors...

- ⇒ Lightly brush on varnish/stain remover (wood stripper), following manufacturer's instructions, to remove varnish and stain.
 - ⇒ Lightly sand area to smooth finish.
 - ⇒ Reapply stain, going with grain for even color and appearance. Let dry thoroughly.
 - ⇒ Reapply exterior polyurethane varnish in even, equal strokes. Let dry.
-

HOME CARE AND MAINTENANCE - EXTERIOR ROOFING, WINDOWS, WOODWORK AND DOORS

ROOFING

Your home's roof will give you years of service if maintained properly. To provide long roof life, we used shingles with "seal-tab" edges. The underside of each shingle has spots of adhesive around the edge. Warm temperature melts the adhesive and seals each shingle to the one underneath. This sealing reduces wind damage and helps prevent roof leaks in driving rains. Flashings seal places where the roof abuts walls, chimneys, or valleys, and where two roof slopes meet. Plumbing roof vents are made of plastic pipe that expands and contracts with temperature changes. These expansions and contractions may break the seal at the roof jack (the flashing around vent pipes). They should be resealed periodically to prevent leaks.

Occasionally, an exposed shingle will hump up and stick to the shingle underneath. This can be corrected easily by pulling the exposed end of the humped shingle loose and flattening it.

Note: Serious injury can result from climbing onto the roof. It is easy to slip off and fall to the ground. We recommend allowing only an experienced roofer on your roof.

Rain gutters and downspouts should be cleaned yearly -- more often in heavily wooded areas.

Leaks...

Leaks are most likely to occur where the roof joins the chimney, roof jacks, or vent pipes. These areas are protected by metal flashing that prevents water from leaking into the house. Flashing should be inspected for signs of rust at least once a year. If rust appears, remove it with a wire brush, then paint with a metal primer coat and suitable top coat. If inspection shows the flashing to be cracked at the edges, repair the crack with flashing cement or similar compound from your local hardware store.

Debris should be removed from the roof to avoid possible discoloration and deterioration. As stated in Section II, Warranty Exclusions of this manual, roof trusses will sometimes be visible, depending on the time of year and angle of the sun. **This is common and is not warrantable.**

WINDOWS

Your windows are vinyl framed low-E windows. Clean windows with a non-abrasive, mild cleaner and soft cloth. Do NOT wash windows with a high pressure spray. To ensure smooth sliding, vacuum window tracks regularly to remove dirt accumulation and keep drain holes at the base of the window frame open. Then apply silicone spray or other dry lubricant to the track.

The double paned low E windows should not be tinted since this will void the manufacturer warranty. The tinting can cause heat build-up which can damage the seal that separates the two glass panes. Cracks in the glass can occur when this happens.

Windowscreens...

Screens are inspected during the buyer walk-through. **After closing, screens will not be warranted.**

HARDIPLANK

With the exception of door trim molding, Hardiplank has been used for the siding and exterior trim of your home. Following is general and warranty information:

James Hardie fiber-cement building products are autoclaved, will not rot and are immune to permanent water damage and salt spray. They can withstand termite attacks.

Hardiplank sidings are non-combustible and show no flame support or loss of integrity when tested in accordance with ASTM test method E-136.

James Hardie exterior siding products are protected by a 50-Year Limited, transferable, product warranty. Copies are available by calling 1-800-9-HARDIE.

GARAGE DOORS

The moving parts of garage doors should be lubricated about once every three months. Use a non-silicone lubricant on hinges, springs and bearings. In addition, make sure to oil the springs, rollers, cable drum and side bearings of metal doors. Do not oil the tracks, or else the door might become unbalanced.

Springs may rust or break. Replacements can be found at many local hardware stores.

WEATHERSTRIPPING

The weatherstripping on your exterior doors will occasionally require adjustment to maintain a good seal. ***Our doors are friction weather-stripped, therefore a well sealed door should be somewhat hard to open and close.*** A slight air crack around a door, however, is normal.

HOME OWNERSHIP

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS, FIRE PREVENTION, VACATING YOUR HOME

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Be prepared for possible emergencies by keeping these items in a readily accessible place:

- ⇒ A small screwdriver or ice pick that can be inserted into the bathroom door lock to free small children who lock themselves in.
- ⇒ Fire Extinguisher - Every home should have at least one. Your family should know its location and operation. Have it checked regularly to ensure its reliability.
- ⇒ First Aid Kit - Keep a small first aid kit in your medicine cabinet for quick treatment of cuts, burns or other injuries.
- ⇒ Emergency Phone Numbers - To avoid needless delay in an emergency, keep important phone numbers affixed to your telephone. Quick calls to the right numbers can save life and property. Know how to call your doctor or hospital, report a fire, or reach the police. It's also a good idea to include the numbers of mechanical contractors for your home's plumbing, electrical, heating and air conditioning.

FIRE PREVENTION

Over half a million accidental fires damage American homes each year. Following are a few ways to reduce the risk of fire:

- ⇒ Regularly discard trash. Do not let clothing, old mattresses, curtains, furniture, papers and rags accumulate.
- ⇒ Keep oily rags in closed metal containers.
- ⇒ Be sure tools, machinery, motors and appliances are serviced and clean.
- ⇒ Keep the area surrounding your home free of weeds, trash, dried brush and dead grass.
- ⇒ Always replace worn electric cords.
- ⇒ Keep matches in a safe place and out of reach of children.
- ⇒ Provide a supply of ashtrays, even if you do not smoke.
- ⇒ Be careful not to overload your electrical circuits.
- ⇒ Provide one or more fire extinguishers of a type approved or recommended by your fire department or insurance carrier.

TEMPORARILY VACATING YOUR HOME

Precautionary measures should be taken to prevent or minimize problems before you leave your home unoccupied for an extended time.

Following is a "to-do" list before you leave. You may have many additional items for this list. Let its suggestions help you get ready to depart, and help you remember services and utilities to restore when you return home.

- ⇒ **Roof** - Prevent overflow by clearing downspouts and gutter of leaves, bird nest or rubbish.
 - ⇒ **Water** - Shut off the main water valve and drain all water lines to prevent frozen pipes. During cold weather, unprepared plumbing fixtures could cause serious damage.
 - ⇒ **Keys** - After departing, you may think of an overlooked but necessary item left undone. Friends or neighbors can be of great help in such a situation if you leave a key with them and a phone number where you can be reached. You might also ask them to make an occasional inspection of the premises to see that everything is all right, or permit them to gain entrance in case of an emergency.
 - ⇒ **Newspaper** - Have your newspaper stopped until you return.
 - ⇒ **Mail** - Have your mail held at the post office until you return.
-

HOME OWNERSHIP

SAFETY, BOUNDARIES, EASEMENTS AND ARCHITECTURAL CONTROL

SAFETY

Construction sites are dangerous. Every year, youngsters are seriously injured while playing around new construction areas. Parents are responsible for keeping their children away from the construction area and out of unoccupied houses. In Texas, parents are also held responsible for damages resulting from the acts of their children up to a maximum set by law.

BOUNDARIES AND EASEMENTS

A licensed surveyor surveyed your lot after your home was built. A copy of the survey was given to you by the title company when you closed your loan. Your survey shows lot size and location of lot boundaries.

The survey will also show by dotted or broken lines if there are any easements affecting your property. The most common type of easement is the utility easement, usually located parallel with the rear or side lot lines. The homeowner retains title to the property, subject to the rights of persons or firms to whom the easement has been granted. The homeowner is responsible for maintenance of an easement. Since the utility companies are permitted access across utility easements at any time, an easement must never be obstructed so as to prevent such access. If you have any questions regarding your rights or responsibilities relating to an easement, your title company can answer them.

The surveyors located iron lot pins at each corner of your lot when they made your lot survey. Be sure to check your survey and locate your lot pins whenever you plan additional construction, such as a fence. The tops of the lot pins will be below the surface of the finished lot grading to minimize loss. If you cannot locate them yourself, the firm noted on the survey will locate them for you for a minimum service charge.

ARCHITECTURAL CONTROL AND PERMITS

Before you begin a change or improvement to your property...

Any changes or property improvements must be approved by the Architectural Control Modifications Committee or Homeowners Association before work is begun. This includes, but is not limited to, items such as: exterior paint change, room additions, basketballs goals, gazebos, patio covers, swimming pools, walkways, fountains, statuary, flagpoles, play structures and storage structures.

The following requirements shall be submitted to the Modifications Committee: plans and specifications showing the nature, kind, shape, color size, materials, and location of the modifications, additions or alternations.

The Modifications Committee will approve as to quality of workmanship and design and harmony of external design with existing structures and as to location in relation to surrounding structures. For more specifics, refer to your copy of the Declaration of Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions for your subdivision. You should also refer to your lot survey to be sure any proposed improvements will fit on the lot without encroaching on easements or other restrictions placed on your lot.

Finally, inquire whether a building permit will be required, and, if so, whether your plans will meet City codes. You should not make improvements without first obtaining a permit.

Note: All colors and materials used to decorate the interior and exterior of your home are listed on your copy of the Color Selection Sheet. It is a good idea to keep it for future reference.

**HOME OWNERSHIP
WATER CONSERVATION**

WATER CONSERVATION**Inside...**

Water conservation saves both water and the energy used to heat water and run appliances. The following tips will help you save water:

Every time a toilet is flushed, 1.6 gallons of water go down the sewer. Do not use the toilet as a wastebasket.

A partially-full bathtub uses far less water than a long shower, while a short shower uses less than a full tub. Most shower heads pour out between 5 and 10 gallons of water a minute.

Turn off the water while brushing your teeth or shaving.

Always load your dishwasher to capacity before turning it on. Dishwashers use 15 - 25 gallons per run.

Load your washing machine to the maximum appropriate capacity. A typical washing machine uses 40 or more gallons per load.

Repair all faucet leaks promptly. Just a slow drip can waste 15 - 20 gallons a day down the drain; a 1/16" faucet leak wastes over 100 gallons in 24 hours.

Outside...

Water lawns and shrubbery in the cool of the day to avoid excess evaporation.

Do not let the hose run while washing the car. Use a bucket of car-cleaning solution to clean the car, then rinse with the hose.

Sweep the sidewalk and driveways clean rather than hosing them off.

Immediately repair leaky hose bibs or sprinkler valves.
