



SR HOMES

HOMEOWNER MAINTENANCE



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# CARING FOR YOUR HOME HOMEOWNER USE AND MAINTENANCE GUIDELINES

We strive to create lasting value in our communities which is best achieved when you, as the homeowner, know and perform appropriate maintenance tasks. Periodic maintenance is necessary because of the inherent characteristics of the materials used in home building.

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

## Checklists

You will find several checklists included in this manual. These cover fire prevention reminders, energy and water conservation tips, suggestions for extended absences, appliance service information, home maintenance supplies list, and a maintenance schedule.

## Prompt Attention

In addition to routine care, many times a minor maintenance attention provided immediately saves you a more serious, time-consuming, and sometimes costly repair later. Note also that neglecting routine maintenance can void applicable limited warranty coverage on all or part of your home.

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

## Manufacturer Literature

Please take time to read the literature (warranties and use and care guides) provided by the manufacturers of consumer products and other items in your home. Most of the manufacturer information will be collected from the products installed and presented to you at orientation.

If any detail in our discussion conflicts with the manufacturer's recommendations, follow the manufacturer's recommendations.

Activate specific manufacturer's warranties by completing and mailing any registration cards included with their materials. In some cases, manufacturer's warranties may extend beyond the first year and it is in your best interests to know about such coverage's.

## FIRE PREVENTION CHECKLIST

Fire safety should be practiced by all family members. Awareness of potential dangers and preventive actions are preferable to even the fastest response. Keep these hints in mind and add your own reminders in the space provided on the next page.

### Train Family Members

- ✓ Ensure that all family members know what escape routes exist in your home.
- ✓ Conduct a fire drill with family members.
- ✓ Test the smoke detectors to assure they function, and everyone recognizes the sound. Follow the manufacturer's directions for cleaning and servicing all smoke detectors.
- ✓ As soon as possible, teach young children how and why to dial 911.
- ✓ Have a general use fire extinguisher and instruct all family members in its location and use.
- ✓ Teach children the safe use of appliances such as irons and toasters.

### Practice Prevention

- ✓ Store matches away from children and heat sources.
- ✓ Avoid smoking in bed.
- ✓ Avoid leaving small children home alone, even for a short time.
- ✓ Maintain appliances in clean and safe working condition.
- ✓ Avoid overloading electrical outlets.
- ✓ Ensure that all electrical cords are in good repair.
- ✓ Avoid having any flammable objects or materials near the stove.
- ✓ Keep the range hood filter clean to prevent a buildup of grease.
- ✓ Allow space for cooling around electrical equipment.
- ✓ Unplug the iron when it is not in use. Do not leave an iron that is on unattended.
- ✓ Use electric blankets with care, following manufacturer directions.
- ✓ Store volatile materials (paint, gasoline for the lawn mower, and so on) in appropriate containers, away from flames (such as pilot lights) or heat sources. Many trash collection services offer a means for you to dispose of hazardous items. Check with your service provider for details.
- ✓ Keep the barbeque clear of flammable objects and materials.
- ✓ If your home includes a gas fireplace, follow all directions and do not leave the fireplace unattended when it is on. If you have a wood burning fireplace:
  - Arrange for professional cleaning of the chimney at appropriate intervals.
  - Maintain the spark arrester on the chimney.
  - Never use liquid fire starters (such as for a charcoal barbeque) in an indoor fireplace.
  - Use a screen or glass doors when a fire is burning.
  - Confirm the fire is out before closing the flue.
  - Do not leave the fireplace unattended while a fire is burning.
- ✓ During holidays, ensure that all cords and connections are in good condition and of appropriate capacity for electrical decorations.
- ✓ If you decide to remodel, finish the basement, or add onto your home, obtain a building permit and work with trained professionals. Ensure that all building department inspections occur and that the work complies with all applicable codes. This also applies to installing a gas line for an outdoor barbeque, a gas fireplace, clothes dryer, and so on.

*Your Additional Reminders and Notes:*

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## CARING FOR YOU HOME

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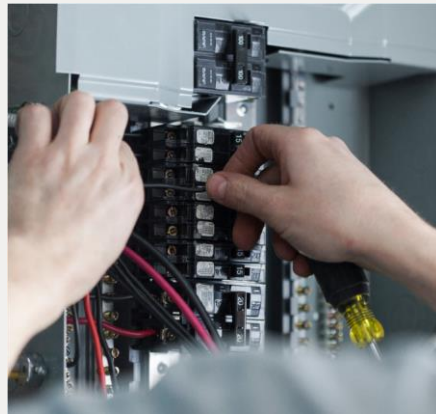
### APPLIANCES



## ESSENTIAL HOME MAINTENANCE TIPS

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### ELECTRICAL



## SIMPLE HOME MAINTENANCE TIPS

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### CABINETS



## TIPS FOR HOME CARE

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### CERAMIC TILE



# EXTENDED ABSENCES CHECKLIST

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

## Plan in Advance

- ✓ Ask a neighbor to keep an eye on the property. If possible, provide them with a way to reach you while you are away.
- ✓ If you will be gone an especially long time (over two weeks) consider arranging for a house sitter.
- ✓ Arrange for someone to mow the lawn or shovel snow.
- ✓ Notify local security personnel or police of the dates you will be away.
- ✓ Stop mail, newspapers, and other deliveries.
- ✓ Use lighting timers.
- ✓ Confirm that all insurance policies that cover your property and belongings are current and provide sufficient coverage.
- ✓ Mark valuable items with identifying information. Consider whether you have irreplaceable items that should be stored in a bank vault or security box.

## As You Leave

- ✓ Forward phone calls to a relative or close friend.
- ✓ Unplug computers and other electronic devices that might be harmed in an electric storm.
- ✓ Leave window coverings in their most typical positions.
- ✓ Confirm that all doors and windows are locked, and the deadbolts are engaged.
- ✓ Shut off the main water supply. Set the thermostat on the water heater to "vacation" to save energy.
- ✓ Store items such as your lawn mower, bicycles, or ladders in the garage.
- ✓ Disengage the garage door opener (pull on the rope that hangs from the mechanism). Use the manufacturer's lock to bolt the overhead door. *Caution:* Attempting to operate the garage door opener when the manufacturer's lock is bolted will damage the motor of your opener. Upon your return, unlock the garage door first, then re-engage the motor (simply push the button to operate the opener and it will reconnect) to restore normal operation.
- ✓ Leave a second car in the drive.
- ✓ Summer: Turn your Air Conditioner fan to automatic and set the thermostat to 78.
- ✓ Winter: Set the thermostat to a minimum of 55. Leave doors on cabinets that contain plumbing lines open. Leave room doors open as well. This allows heat to circulate.
- ✓ Arm your security system, if applicable.

*Your Additional Reminders and Notes:*

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# ENERGY AND WATER CONSERVATION CHECKLIST

Good planning and thoughtful everyday habits can save significant amounts of energy and water. In the process of conserving, you also save money as an additional benefit. Keep these hints in mind as you select and use your home's features:

### Heating and Cooling

- ✓ Maintain all your home's systems in clean and good working order to prevent inconvenience and maximize efficiency. Arrange for a professional to service heat and air conditioning systems a minimum of once every two years.
- ✓ Keep filters clean or replace them regularly.
- ✓ Learn how to use your day/night programmable thermostat for comfort and efficient energy use.
- ✓ If you have a zoned system (more than one furnace and separate controls) think through operating schedules and temperature settings to maximize comfort and minimize energy consumption.
- ✓ During cold days, open window coverings to allow the sun to warm your home. Close them when the sun begins to set.
- ✓ Limit your use of your fireplace in extremely cold or windy weather when the chimney draft will draw room air out at an extreme rate.
- ✓ During the winter season, humidifying the air in your home allows the air to retain more heat and is a general health benefit. Note: If condensation develops on your windows, you have taken a good thing too far and need to lower the setting on the humidifier. Avoid use of the humidifier when you are using your air conditioner.
- ✓ Ceiling fans cost little to operate, and the moving air allows you to feel comfortable at temperatures several degrees higher.
- ✓ On hot days, close all windows and the window coverings on windows facing the sun to minimize solar heating and reduce demands on your air conditioner.
- ✓ Plan landscaping elements that support efficient energy use:
  - Deciduous trees provide shade during the summer and permit solar warming in winter.
  - Evergreen trees and shrubs can create a windbreak and reduce heating costs.
  - Position your trees to shade the roof and still allow good air flow around the home.
  - Plant shrubs and trees to shade the air conditioner without obstructing air flow around the unit.
  - Keep the garage overhead doors closed.

### Water and Water Heater

- ✓ Follow the steps outlined in the manufacturer's directions for draining water from your water heater in order to remove accumulated hard-water scale that builds up inside the tank. Timing will depend on the nature of your water supply.
- ✓ Correct plumbing leaks, running toilets, or dripping faucets ASAP.
- ✓ Keep aerators clean.
- ✓ If you have a swimming pool, consider using solar heating power.

## APPLIANCES CHECKLIST

- ✓ When selecting your home's appliances, compare the information on the (yellow and black) Energy Guide sticker. Sometimes spending a bit more up front can reduce operating costs over the life of the appliance, conserving energy at the same time.
- ✓ Use cold water when operating your disposal. This not only saves hot water you pay to heat, it preserves the disposal motor.
- ✓ When baking, preheat your oven just five minutes before you use it. When possible, bake several items at the same time or at least consecutively. Turn the oven off a few minutes before baking time is done.

- ✓ Microwave rather than using the range, when possible, especially during hot weather.
- ✓ Run the dishwasher when it has a full load and use the air-dry cycle. Avoid regular use of the rinse and hold cycle.
- ✓ Turn electric burners off a few minutes before cooking is complete.

## ELECTRICAL CHECKLIST

- ✓ Use energy efficient lighting where possible. Incandescent bulbs are the least efficient source of light.
- ✓ Turn lights and other electric items off when you finish using them or leave the room.

## GENERAL MAINTENANCE CHECKLIST

- ✓ Caulk in dry weather when temperatures are moderate. Check all locations, such as:
  - Foundation penetrations (electrical, phone, water, cable TV, and gas line entrances).
  - Around fans and vents.
  - Joints between door or window frames and siding.
  - Weather stripping on all exterior doors and adjust as needed. Ensure that door thresholds are a good fit—most are adjustable.
  - After any activity in the attic, make sure the insulation is evenly distributed.

*Your Additional Reminders and Notes:*

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# SEASONAL MAINTENANCE SCHEDULE

## Spring & Summer

### Interior

- ✓ Prior to needing it, turn on your air conditioner for a trial run/replace filter.
- ✓ Close chimney damper.
- ✓ Clean cabinets.
- ✓ Inspect and repair bath tile grouting and shower door caulking as needed.
- ✓ Lubricate locks, hinges, and latches.
- ✓ Check window locks and weather stripping.
- ✓ Adjust registers for cooling.
- ✓ Lubricate garage door rollers, tighten bolts.
- ✓ Check drawers and hinges for proper alignment; tighten and adjust as necessary.
- ✓ Check and tighten all dead bolts.
- ✓ Clean dryer vent duct to remove any lint or obstruction.
- ✓ Free up sticking windows with paste wax.
- ✓ Clean Aerators at all interior plumbing fixtures.

### Exterior

- ✓ Check and repair caulking as needed: windows, siding, cornice, and exterior doors.
- ✓ Check exterior paint of siding, cornice, and doors.
- ✓ Check and repair or replace weather stripping on exterior doors as necessary.
- ✓ Clean and remove debris from gutters.
- ✓ Fill dirt in areas that have settled around foundation, water should way from foundation.
- ✓ Seal deck with preservative if necessary.
- ✓ Reseed the fescue part of your lawn, if not done in the Fall.
- ✓ Apply mulch around tree, shrubs, and flowerbeds.
- ✓ Apply fertilizer to your lawn and establish a year-round program.
- ✓ Inspect roof for loose, warped, torn or missing shingles, unsealed vents, or stacks.
- ✓ Check gutters for any leaves.

## Fall

### Interior:

- ✓ Turn on your furnace for a trial run/replace filter.
- ✓ Check and repair interior caulking as needed-sinks, tubs, showers.
- ✓ Adjust registers for heating.
- ✓ Inspect fireplace.
- ✓ Open chimney damper before starting fire.
- ✓ Program thermostat for temperatures and times.

### Exterior:

- ✓ Clean and remove debris from gutters.
- ✓ Check and repair or replace weather stripping on exterior doors.
- ✓ Check and repair caulking at exterior doors and windows.
- ✓ Check alignment of gutters, downspouts, and splash blocks to ensure that water is properly diverted away from the home.
- ✓ Rake leaves from your lawn to ensure good lawn circulation.
- ✓ Reseed the fescue part of your lawn. Early fall is the best time of the year for this.
- ✓ Protect your plants from approaching winter freeze: give shrubs a good watering and protect your evergreens with screens or covers.

## Winter

### Interior:

- ✓ Keep garage doors closed as much as possible to prevent heat from escaping.
- ✓ Open your bathroom and kitchen cabinets to expose the pipes to heat (in extreme cold)
- ✓ Set heat at a minimum of 55 degrees F - When you're away from your home.





**Exterior:**

- ✓ Clean and remove debris from gutters.
- ✓ Keep shrub and grass watered during dry spells.

## AIR CONDITIONING

### Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

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

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

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

Program your thermostat to “set back temperatures” when you are away from home. Use set back temperatures of as much as 10 degrees warmer than preferred in summer and 10 degrees cooler than preferred in winter. Program the thermostat to return to the preferred temperature 30 minutes prior to your arrival.

For example, if you come home at 6:00 p.m. when the temperature has reached 95 degrees F and set your thermostat to 75 degrees, the air conditioning unit will begin cooling, but will take much longer to reach the desired temperature. During the whole day, the sun has been heating not only the air in the house, but the walls, the carpet, and the furniture. At 6:00 p.m. the air conditioning unit starts cooling the air, but the walls, carpet, and furniture release heat and nullify this cooling. By the time the air conditioning unit has cooled the walls, carpet, and furniture, you may well have lost patience.

If evening cooling is your primary goal, set the thermostat at a moderate temperature in the morning while the house is cooler, allowing the system to maintain the cooler temperature. The temperature setting may then be lowered slightly when you arrive home, with better results. Once the system is operating, setting the thermostat at 60 degrees will *not* cool the home any faster and can result in the unit freezing up and not performing at all. Extended use under these conditions can damage the unit.

### Adjust Vents

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

### Compressor Level

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

See also *Grading and Drainage*.

### Humidifier

If a humidifier is installed on the furnace system, turn it off when you use the air conditioning. The additional moisture can cause a freeze-up of the cooling system.

### Manufacturer's Instructions

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

### Temperature Variations

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

### Troubleshooting Tips: No Air Conditioning

Before calling for service, check to confirm that the:

- ✓ Thermostat is set to "cool" and the temperature is set below the room temperature.
- ✓ Blower panel cover is installed correctly for the furnace blower (fan) to operate. Similar to the way a clothes dryer door operates, this panel pushes in a button that lets the fan motor know it is safe to come on. If that button is not pushed in, the furnace will not operate.
- ✓ Air conditioner and furnace breakers on the main electrical panel are on. (Remember if a breaker trips you must turn it from the tripped position to the off position before you can turn it back on.)
- ✓ 220 switch on the outside wall near the air conditioner is on.
- ✓ Switch on the side of the furnace is on.
- ✓ Fuse in furnace is good. (See manufacturer literature for size and location.)
- ✓ Filter is clean to allow air flow.
- ✓ Vents in individual rooms are open.
- ✓ Air returns are unobstructed.
- ✓ Air conditioner has not frozen from overuse.
- ✓ Even if the troubleshooting tips do not identify a solution, the information you gather will be useful to the service provider you call.

## ALARM SYSTEM

### Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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



NURTURING YOUR  
HUMBLE ABODE!

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CARPET



CREATING A COZY  
HOME ENVIRONMENT

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BRICK



MASTERING THE ART OF  
HOME UPKEEP

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COUNTERTOPS



PROTECTING YOUR  
HOME SWEET HOME

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DOORS AND LOCKS



# APPLIANCES

## Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Please refer to your *Appliance Service* information sheet.

### *Appliance Service Records*

This sheet is for your convenience. For warranty service on an appliance, contact the appropriate manufacturer directly at the service number provided in the appliance literature. You will need to supply the model and serial number (usually located on a small metal plate or seal attached to the appliance in an inconspicuous location), and the date of purchase (your closing date).

Closing Date \_\_\_\_\_

<i>Appliance</i>	<i>Manufacturer</i>	<i>Model #</i>	<i>Serial #</i>	<i>Service Phone #</i>
Range				
Range Hood				
Cooktop				
Oven				
Microwave				
Dishwasher				
Disposal				
Compacter				
Washer				
Dryer				
Refrigerator				

## ATTIC ACCESS

### Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

The attic space is neither designed nor intended for storage. We provide access to this area for maintenance of mechanical equipment that may traverse the attic space or for fire safety requirements. When you perform needed tasks in the attic, use caution and avoid stepping off wood members onto the drywall. This can result in personal injury or damage to the ceiling below. Your limited warranty does not cover such injury or damage.

## BRICK

### Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Brick is one of the most durable and lowest maintenance finishes for a home's exterior. Please contact SR Warranty for your brick color.

#### *Efflorescence*

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

#### *Tuck-Pointing*

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

#### *Weep Holes*

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

## CABINETS

### Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

#### *Cleaning*

Products such as lemon oil or polishes that include scratch cover are suggested for wood cabinet care. Follow container directions. Use such products a maximum of once every 3 to 6 months to avoid excessive build-up. Avoid paraffin-based spray waxes and washing cabinets with water, as both will damage the luster of the finish.

#### *Hinges*

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

#### *Moisture*

Damage to cabinet surfaces and warping can result from operating appliances that generate large amounts of moisture (such as a crock pot) too near the cabinet. When operating such appliances, place them in a location that is not directly under a cabinet.

## CARPET

## Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

### *Burns*

Take care of any kind of burn immediately. If you don't have Berber carpeting, first snip off the darkened fibers. Then use a soap less cleaner and sponge with water. If you have Berber carpet or the burn is extensive, talk with a professional about replacing the damaged area.

### *Cleaning*

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

Heavy traffic areas may require more frequent cleaning. A light vacuuming is three passes; a thorough job may need seven passes. A vacuum cleaner with a beater-bar agitates the pile and is more effective in bringing dirt to the surface for easy removal.

Vacuuming high-traffic areas daily helps keep them clean and maintains the upright position of the nap. Wipe spills and clean stains immediately. For best results, blot or dab any spill or stain; avoid rubbing. Test stain removers on an out-of-the-way area of the carpet, such as in a closet, to check for any undesirable effects.

Have your carpet professionally cleaned regularly, usually after 18 months in your home and then once a year after that.

### *Crushing*

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

### *Fading*

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

### *Filtration*

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

### *Fuzzing*

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

### *Pilling*

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

### *Rippling*

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

### *Seams*

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

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

### *Shading*

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

### *Shedding*

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

### *Snags*

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

### *Sprouting*

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

### *Stains*

No carpet is stain-proof. Although your carpet manufacturer designates your carpet as stain-resistant, some substances may still cause permanent staining. These include hair dyes, shoe polish, paints, and India ink. Some substances destroy or change the color of carpets, including bleaches, acne medications, drain cleaners, plant food, insecticides, and food or beverages with strongly colored natural dyes as found in some brands of mustard and herbal tea. Refer to your care and maintenance brochures for recommended cleaning procedures for your particular fiber. Pretest any spot-removal solution in an inconspicuous area before using it in a large area. Apply several drops of the solution, hold a white tissue on the area, and count to ten. Examine both tissue and carpet for dye transfer and check for carpet damage.

## CAULKING

### Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Time and weather will shrink and dry caulking so that it no longer provides a good seal. As routine maintenance, check the caulking and make needed repairs. Caulking compounds and dispenser guns are available at hardware stores. Read the manufacturer's instructions carefully to be certain that you select an appropriate caulk for the intended purpose.



### *Colored Caulk*

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

### *Latex Caulk*

Latex caulking is appropriate for an area that requires painting, such as along the stair stringer or where wood trim meets the wall.

### *Silicone Caulk*

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

## CERAMIC TILE

SCAN QR CODE FOR TUTORIAL



### *Cleaning*

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

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

### *Grout Discoloration*

Clean grout that becomes yellowed or stained with a fiber brush, cleanser, and water. Grout cleansers and whiteners are available at most hardware stores.

### *Sealing Grout*

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

### *Separations*

Expect slight separations to occur in the grout between tiles. This grout is for decorative purposes only; it does not hold the tile in place. Cracks in the grout can be filled using premixed grout purchased from flooring or hardware stores. Follow package directions.

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

## CONCRETE FLATWORK

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

By maintaining good drainage, you protect your home's foundation and the concrete flatwork: the basement floor, porch, patio, driveway, garage floor, and sidewalks.

### *Cleaning*

Avoid washing exterior concrete slabs with cold water from an outside faucet when temperatures are high and the sun has been shining on the concrete. The abrupt change in temperature can



damage the surface bond of the concrete. We recommend sweeping for keeping exterior concrete clean. If washing is necessary, do this when temperatures are moderate. Repeated cleaning of the garage floor by hosing can increase soil movement by allowing water to penetrate any existing cracks. We recommend sweeping to clean the garage floor.

### *Cracks*

A concrete slab 10 feet across shrinks approximately 5/8 inch as it cures. Some of this shrinkage shows up as cracks. Cracking of concrete flatwork also results from temperature changes that cause expansion and contraction.

During the summer, moisture finds its way under the concrete along the edges or through cracks in the surface. In winter, this moisture forms frost that can lift the concrete, increasing the cracking. Maintaining drainage away from all concrete slabs will minimize cracking from this cause.

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

### *Expansion Joints*

We install expansion joints to help control expansion. However, as the concrete shrinks during the curing process, moisture can penetrate under the concrete and lift the expansion joint. When this occurs, fill the resulting gap with a gray silicone sealant, which you can purchase at most hardware stores.

### *Heavy Vehicles*

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

### *Ice, Snow, and Chemicals*

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

### *Sealer*

A concrete sealer, available at paint stores, will help you keep an unpainted concrete floor clean. Do not use soap on unpainted concrete. Instead, use plain water and washing soda or, if necessary, a scouring powder.

## CONDENSATION

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

When warm, moist air meets cooler surfaces, the moisture condenses. Outside we see this as dew; inside you may see it as a layer of moisture on glass windows and doors. This condensation comes from high humidity within the home combined with low outside temperatures and inadequate ventilation. Family lifestyle significantly influences two out of three of these conditions.

### *Humidifier Operation*

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

need to experiment to find the correct level for your family's lifestyle.

### *New Construction*

Some experts have estimated that a typical new home contains 200 gallons of water. Water is part of lumber, concrete, drywall texture, paint, caulk, and other materials used in building. Wet weather during construction adds more. This moisture evaporates into the air as you live in your home—adding to the moisture generated by normal living activities. Over time, this source of moisture will diminish.

### *Normal Activities*

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

### *Temperature*

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

### *Ventilation*

Develop the habit of using exhaust fans in bathrooms and over the stove. When weather conditions permit, open windows so fresh air can circulate through your home. Keep the dryer exhaust hose clean and securely connected.

*See also Ventilation.*

## COUNTERTOPS

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

Use a cutting board to protect your counters when you cut or chop. Protect the counter from heat and from extremely hot pans. If you cannot put your hand on it, do not put it on the counter. Do not use countertops as ironing boards and do not set lighted cigarettes on the edge of the counter.

### *Caulking*

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

### *Cleaning*

Avoid abrasive cleaners that will damage the luster of the surface.

*See also Ceramic Tile.*

## DAMP-PROOFING

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

We spray your foundation walls with an asphalt waterproofing material. Although we make every effort to assure a dry basement, during times of excessive moisture, you may notice some dampness. Careful maintenance of positive drainage away from the exterior perimeter of your home will also protect the basement from this condition.

## DECKS

## Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

### *Effects of Exposure*

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

### *Foot Traffic*

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

### *Outdoor Furniture*

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

### *Sealing or Water Repellent*

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

### *Snow and Ice*

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

DOORS AND LOCKS  
SCAN QR CODE FOR TUTORIAL



## Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

The doors installed in your home are wood products subject to such natural characteristics of wood as shrinkage and warpage. Natural fluctuations caused by humidity and the use of forced air furnaces, showers, and dishwashers; interior doors may occasionally require minor adjustments.

### *Exterior Finish*

To ensure longer life for your exterior wood doors, plan to refinish them at least once a year. Stained exterior doors with clear finishes tend to weather faster than painted doors. Treat the finish with a wood preserver every three months to preserve the varnish and prevent the door from drying and cracking. Reseal stained exterior doors whenever the finish begins cracking or crazing.

### *Failure to Latch*

If a door will not latch because of minor settling, you can correct this by making a new opening in the jamb for the latch plate (repositing) and raising or lowering the plate accordingly.

### *Hinges*

You can remedy a squeaky door hinge by removing the hinge pin and applying a silicone lubricant to it. Avoid using oil, as it can gum up or attract dirt. Graphite works well as a lubricant but can

create a gray smudge on the door or floor covering beneath the hinge if too much is applied.

### *Keys*

Keep a duplicate privacy lock key where children cannot reach it in the event a youngster locks him- or herself in a room. The top edge of the door casing is often used as a place to keep the key. A small screwdriver or similarly shaped device can open some types of privacy locks.

### *Locks*

Lubricate door locks with graphite or other waterproof lubricant. Avoid oil, as it will gum up.

### *Shrinkage*

Use putty, filler, or latex caulk to fill any minor separations that develop at mitered joints in door trim. Follow with painting. Panels of wood doors shrink and expand in response to changes in temperature and humidity. Touching up the paint or stain on unfinished exposed areas is your home maintenance responsibility.

### *Slamming*

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

### *Sticking*

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

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

### *Warping*

If a door warps slightly, keeping it closed as much as possible often returns it to normal.

### *Weather Stripping*

Weather stripping and exterior door thresholds occasionally require adjustment or replacement.

## DRYWALL

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

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

### *Ceilings*

The ceilings in your home are easy to maintain periodically remove dust or cobwebs as part of your normal cleaning and repaint as needed.

### *Repairs*

With the exception of the one-time repair service provided by SR Homes, care of drywall is your maintenance responsibility. Most drywall repairs can be easily made. This work is best done when you redecorate the room.

Repair hairline cracks with a coat of paint. You can repair slightly larger cracks with spackle or caulk. To correct a nail pop, reset the nail with a hammer and punch. Cover it with spackle, which is

available at paint and hardware stores. Apply two or three thin coats. When dry, sand the surface with fine-grain sandpaper, and then paint. You can fill indentations caused by sharp objects in the same manner.

## EASEMENTS

### Homeowner Use and Care Guidelines

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

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

Utility companies, the United States Postal Service, and others have the right to install equipment in easements. These might include streetlights, mailboxes, or junction boxes to name a few. Neither SR Homes nor you as the homeowner have the authority to prevent, interfere with, or alter these installations. Plans for the location of such items are subject to change by the various entities involved. Because they have no obligation to keep SR Homes informed of such changes, we are unable to predict specific sites that will include such equipment.

*See also Property Boundaries.*





PRO TIPS FOR ROCKING  
YOUR HOME  
MAINTENANCE GAME

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FENCING



HOME TLC HACKS

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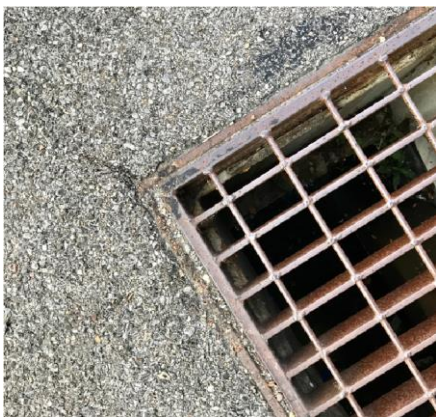
FIREPLACE



NURTURING THE NEST

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FOUNDATION



HOT TIPS FOR HOME  
CARE TO MAKE YOUR  
HOME EVEN SWEETER

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GARAGE DOORS



# ELECTRICAL SYSTEM

## Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

## *Breakers*

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

## *Breakers Tripping*

Breakers trip because of overloads caused by plugging too many appliances into the circuit, a worn cord or defective appliance, or operating an appliance with too high a voltage requirement for the circuit. The starting of an electric motor can also trip a breaker. If any circuit trips repeatedly, unplug all items connected to it and re-set. If it trips when nothing is connected to it, you need an electrician. If the circuit remains on, one of the items you unplugged is defective and will require repair or replacement.

## *Buzzing*

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

## *Fixture Location*

Moving fixtures to accommodate specific furniture arrangements or room use is your responsibility unless you've clarified this with your builder and sales agent, and it has been documented in your contract.

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

GFCI receptacles have a built-in element that senses fluctuations in power. Quite simply, the GFCI is a circuit breaker. Building codes require installation of these receptacles in bathrooms, the kitchen, outside, and the garage (areas where an individual can meet water while holding an electric appliance or tool). Heavy appliances such as freezers or power tools will trip the GFCI breaker.

*Caution: Never plug a refrigerator or food freezer into a GFCI-controlled outlet. The likelihood of the contents being ruined is high and the limited warranty does not cover such damage.*

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

## *Grounded System*

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

## *Light Bulbs*

You are responsible for replacing burned-out bulbs other than those noted during your orientation.

## *Luminous Light Panels*

Translucent panels covering ceiling lights are made of polystyrene plastic. To clean, gently push up,

tilting the panel slightly and remove it from the fixture frame. Wash with a diluted (1 to 2 percent) solution of mild detergent and warm water. Do not rinse; the soap film that remains reduces static electricity that attracts dust.

Over time, the plastic panel may yellow and will become brittle and may need to be replaced if it cracks or breaks. Replacement material can be found at home center and hardware stores. Most suppliers will cut the panel to fit so if you need to purchase a replacement, be sure to note the size you need.

Bulbs for these fixtures can be purchased at home centers or hardware stores. Avoid exceeding the wattage indicated inside the fixture.

### *Modifications*

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

Be sure to verify that a breaker is marked correctly before working on a circuit with a breaker turned to the off position. Breakers are marked for the general area and might not cover every light or receptacle.

### *Outlets*

If an outlet is not working, check first to see if it is controlled by a wall switch or GFCI. Next, check the breaker.

If there are small children in the home, install safety plugs to cover unused outlets. Teach children to never touch electrical outlets, sockets, or fixtures.

### *Underground Cables*

Remember; always call 811 before you start any digging project! In most cases, wires run in a straight line from the service panel to the nearest public utility pad. Maintain positive drainage around the foundation to protect electrical service connections.

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

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

## TROUBLESHOOTING TIPS: NO ELECTRICAL SERVICE

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

Before calling for service, check to confirm that the:

- Service is not out in the entire area. If so, contact the utility company.
- Main breaker and individual breakers are all in the on position.

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

Before calling for service, check to confirm that the:

- Main breaker and individual breakers are all in the on position.
- Applicable wall switch is on.
- GFCI is set (see details on GFCI'S).
- Item you want to use is plugged in.
- Item you want to use works in other outlets.
- Bulb in the lamp is good.



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

## EXPANSION AND CONTRACTION

### Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

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

## FENCING

### Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Depending on the community in which your home is located, fencing may be included with your home, it may be an optional item, or it may be an item you consider adding after your move-in. When SR Homes installs fencing as part of your new home, we confirm its good condition during your orientation. All types of fencing require some routine attention.

#### *Drainage*

In planning, installing, and maintaining fencing, allow existing drainage patterns to function unimpeded. When installing a fence, use caution in distributing soil removed to set posts to avoid blocking drainage swales. Plan enough space under the bottom of a wood fence for water to pass through.

#### *Homeowner Association Design Review*

If you choose to add fencing after moving into your new home, keep in mind the need to obtain approval from the Design Review Committee of your homeowner's association. Specific requirements about style, height and position on the lot are described in the current design review guidelines which you can obtain from a committee member. Special requirements apply to homes on corner lots where drivers must have adequate visibility. Additionally, in some communities, zoning laws may impact private fencing. Your responsibilities include checking on such details.

SR Homes recommends that you engage the services of professionals to install your fence. Be certain to inform a fence installer of all design review requirements.

*See also Property Boundaries.*

#### *Variation*

Height and location of SR Homes installed fences will vary with lot size, topography, and shape. SR Homes must meet the requirements of the Design Review process just as any homeowner would.

#### *Wood Fences*

The lumber used to construct wood fences is rough cedar or pressure treated wood. Over time it will crack, warp, and split. Unless extreme, these conditions require no action on your part. As the wood ages and shrinks, nails may come loose and require attention. Also, check the posts and any gates

twice a year and tighten hardware or make needed adjustments.

### *Wrought Iron or Aluminum Fencing*

Wrought iron is subject to rusting if it is not maintained. Use touch-up paint on any scratches or chips. Inspect the fence twice a year and touch-up as needed, then plan to repaint the entire fence every one to two years to keep it looking its best.

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

FIREPLACE  
SCAN QR CODE FOR TUTORIAL



### Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

*See also Fire Prevention.*

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

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

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

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

Your objective in building a fire should be a clean, steady, slow-burning fire. Begin with a small fire to allow the components of the fireplace to heat up slowly. Failure to do so may damage the fireplace and can void the warranty. Start the fire by burning kindling and newspaper under the grate; two to three layers of logs stacked with air space between, largest logs to the rear, works best. One sheet of paper burned on top of the stack will help the chimney start to draw. Any logs 6 inches in diameter or larger should be split.

*Caution: Do not burn trash in the fireplace and never use any type of liquid fire starter.*

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

### *Chimney Cleaning*

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

### *Spark Arrester*

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

### *Gas Fireplace (DIRECT-VENT)*

SR Homes offers direct-vent gas fireplaces. If you ordered this type of fireplace, it is demonstrated during the orientation. Read and follow all manufacturer's directions.

*Caution: Due to packing oils within unit – direct vent fireplaces may produce enough smoke to trigger smoke alarms. PLEASE OPEN WINDOWS BEFORE FIRST USE AND UNTIL SMOKE CLEARS.*

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

Excessive winds can cause a downdraft, which can blow out the pilot, requiring you to relight it before using the fireplace.

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

## FOUNDATION

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

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

### *Cracks*

Even though an engineer designed the foundation, and we constructed it according to engineering requirements, surface cracks can still develop in the wall. Surface cracks are not detrimental to the structural integrity of your home. If a crack develops in a foundation wall that allows water to come through, follow the procedures for submitting a warranty claim.

### *Dampness*

Due to the amount of water in concrete, basements may be damp. Condensation can form on water lines and drip onto the floor.

### *Future Construction in Basement*

If you decide to perform additional construction in the basement, obtain guidelines from a licensed engineer, obtain a building permit, and comply with all codes and safety requirements. SR Homes does not warrant that you will be able to obtain such a permit because of the possibility that building codes may change.

## GARAGE OVERHEAD DOOR

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

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

### *Light Visible*

Garage overhead doors cannot be airtight. Some light will be visible around the edges and across the top of the door. Weather conditions may result in some precipitation entering around the door as well as some dust especially until most homes in the community have landscaping installed.

### *Lock*

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

### *Lubrication*

Every 6 months, apply a lubricant such as silicone spray to all moving parts: track, rollers, hinges, pulleys, and springs. Avoid over lubricating to prevent drips on vehicles or the concrete floor. At the same time, check to see that all hardware is tight and operating as intended without binding or scraping.

### *Opener*

To prevent damage to a garage door opener, be sure the door is completely unlocked, and the rope-pull has been removed before using the operator. If you have an opener installed after closing on your home, we suggest that you order it from the company that provided and installed the garage door to assure uninterrupted warranty coverage. Be familiar with the steps for manual operation of the door in the event of a power failure.

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

Expect to replace the battery in the garage opener remote controls about once a year.

### *Painting*

Repaint the garage door when you repaint your home, or more often if needed to maintain a satisfactory appearance.

### *Safety*

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

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

## GAS SHUT-OFFS

### Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

You will find shut offs on gas lines near their connection to each item that operates on gas. In addition, there is a main shut-off at the meter. We point these out during the orientation.

### *Gas Leak*

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

## Ghosting

### Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Recent feedback from homeowners (in both old and new homes) regarding black sooty stains which develop on surfaces in homes (on carpet, walls, ceilings, appliances, mirrors, and around area rugs—to list a few examples) have caused much investigation and research.

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

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

*See also Carpet/Filtration.*

## GRADING AND DRAINAGE

### Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

The final grades around your home have been inspected and approved for proper drainage of your lot. Yards drain from one to another. You and your neighbors share an overall drainage plan for the community. Use caution when installing landscaping, fencing, or additions to your home to prevent causing water problems on adjacent lots.

#### *Drainage*

Typically, the grade around your home should slope 6 inches in the first 10 feet, tapering to a 2 percent slope. In most cases, drainage swales do not follow property boundaries. Maintain the slopes around your home to permit the water to drain away from the home as rapidly as possible. This is essential to protect your foundation. Failure to do so can result in major structural damage and will void your warranty.

#### *Exterior Finish Materials*

Maintain soil levels 6 inches below siding and stucco exterior finish materials. Contact with the soil can cause deterioration of the exterior finish material and encourages pest infestations.

#### *Roof Water*

Do not remove the splash blocks or downspout extensions from under the downspouts. Always keep these in place, sloped so the water drains away from your home quickly.

#### *Roto-tilling*

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

#### *Settling*

The area we excavated for your home's foundation was larger than the home to allow room to work. In addition, some trenching is necessary for installation of utility lines. Some settling will occur, especially after prolonged or heavy rainfall or melting of large amounts of snow. Settling can continue for several years. Inspect the perimeter of your home regularly for signs of settling and fill settled areas as needed to maintain positive drainage.

### *Subsurface Drains*

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

## GUTTERS AND DOWNSPOUTS

SCAN QR CODE FOR TUTORIAL



### Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Check gutters periodically and remove leaves or other debris. Materials that accumulate in gutters can slow water drainage from the roof, cause overflows, and clog the downspouts.

### *Extensions or Splash blocks*

Extensions should discharge outside of rock or bark beds so that water is not dammed behind the edging materials that might be used.

### *Ladders*

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

### *Leaks*

If a joint between sections of gutter drips, caulk the inside joint using a commercial gutter caulking compound available at hardware stores.

### *Snow and Ice*

Clear excess snow from downspouts as soon as possible to allow the gutter to drain and to prevent damage. Severe ice or snow build-up can damage gutters, and such damage is not covered by the limited warranty.

## HARDWARE

### Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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





LOVING YOUR HUMBLE  
ABODE

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ROOF



NURTURING THE  
HEARTH AND HOME

---

SHOWER DOORS & TUBS



CARING FOR YOU HOME

---

STAIRS



HOME S.O.S - TIPS AND  
TRICKS!

---

SIDING



# HARDWOOD FLOORS

## Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

In daily care of hardwood floor, preventive maintenance is the primary goal.

### *Cleaning*

Sweep daily or as needed. Never wet mop a hardwood floor. Excessive water causes wood to expand and can possibly damage the floor. When polyurethane finishes become soiled, damp-mop with a mixture of 1 cup vinegar to one gallon of warm water. When damp-mopping, remove all excess water from the mop. Check with the hardwood company if your floor has a water-based finish.

### *Dimples*

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

### *Filmy Appearance*

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

### *Furniture Legs*

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

### *Humidity*

Wood floors respond noticeably to changes in humidity in your home. Especially during winter months, the individual planks or pieces expand and contract as water content changes.

### *Mats and Area Rugs*

Use protective mats at the exterior doors to help prevent sand and grit from getting on the floor. Gritty sand is wood flooring's worst enemy. However, be aware that rubber backing on area rugs or mats can cause yellowing and warping of the floor surface.

### *Recoat*

If your floors have a polyurethane finish, you may want to have an extra coat of polyurethane applied by a qualified contractor. The exact timing will depend on your lifestyle.

### *Separation*

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

*See also Warping.*

### *Shoes*

Keep high heels in good repair. Heels that have lost their protective cap (thus exposing the fastening nail) can exert over 8,000 pounds of pressure per square inch on the floor. That's enough to damage hardened concrete; it will mark your wood floor.

### *Spills*

Clean up food spills immediately with a dry cloth. Use a vinegar-and-warm-water solution for tough food spills.



### *Sun Exposure*

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

### *Traffic Paths*

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

### *Warping*

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

### *Wax*

Waxing and the use of products like oil soap are neither necessary nor recommended. Once you wax a polyurethane finish floor, recoating is difficult because the new finish will not bond to the wax. The preferred maintenance is preventive cleaning and recoating annually or as needed to maintain the desired luster.

## HEATING SYSTEM: GAS FORCED AIR



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

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

### *Adjust Vents*

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

### *Avoid Overheating*

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

### *Blower Panel (Fan Cover)*

You need to position the blower panel cover correctly for the furnace blower (fan) to operate. This panel compresses a button that tells the blower it is safe to operate. Like the way a clothes dryer door operates, this panel pushes in a button that lets the fan motor know it is safe to come on. If that button is not pushed in, the furnace will not operate.

### *Duct Cleaning*

Exercise caution before spending money on professional ductwork cleaning services. A study by the EPA found no proof that ductwork cleaning improves indoor air quality, nor was evidence found that it prevents health problems. For more information contact the EPA and request document EPA-402-K-97-002. Or you can view this information on their Website: [www.epa.gov/iaq/pubs/](http://www.epa.gov/iaq/pubs/).

### *Ductwork Noise*

Some popping or pinging sounds are the natural result of ductwork heating and cooling in response to airflow as the system operates.

### *Filter*

A clean filter will help to keep your home clean and reduce dusting chores. Remember to change or

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

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

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

### *Furnished Home*

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

### *Gas Odor*

If you smell gas, call the gas company immediately.

### *Odor*

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

### *On-Off Switch*

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

### *Registers*

Heat register covers are removable and adjustable. You are responsible for adjusting the dampers in these covers to regulate the heat flow within the home. Registers in the rooms farther away from the furnace will usually need to be opened wider.

### *Return Air Vents*

For maximum comfort and efficient energy use, arrange furniture and draperies to allow unobstructed airflow from registers and to cold air returns.

### *Temperature*

Depending on the style of home, temperatures can normally vary from floor to floor as much as 10 degrees or more on extremely cold days. The furnace blower will typically cycle on and off more frequently and for shorter periods during severe cold spells.

### *Thermostat*

The furnace will come on automatically when the temperature at the thermostat registers below the setting you have selected. Once the furnace is on, setting the thermostat to a higher temperature will not heat the home faster. Thermostats are calibrated to within plus or minus 5 degrees.

### *Trial Run*

Have a trial run early in the fall to test the furnace. (The same applies to air conditioning in the

spring.) If service is needed, it is much better to discover that before the heating season.

## TROUBLESHOOTING TIPS: NO HEAT

Before calling for service, check to confirm that the:

- ✓ Thermostat is set to "heat" and the temperature is set above the room temperature.
- ✓ Blower panel cover is installed correctly for the furnace blower (fan) to operate. This panel compresses a button that tells the blower it is safe to operate. Like the way a clothes dryer door operates, this panel pushes in a button that lets the fan motor know it is safe to come on. If that button is not pushed in, the furnace will not operate.
- ✓ Breaker on the main electrical panel is on. (Remember, if a breaker trips you must turn it from the tripped position to the off position before you can turn it back on).
- ✓ Switch on the side of the furnace is on.
- ✓ Gas line is open at the main meter and at the side of the furnace.
- ✓ Filter is clean to allow airflow.
- ✓ Vents in individual rooms are open.
- ✓ Air returns are unobstructed.
- ✓ Even if the troubleshooting tips do not identify a solution, the information you gather will be useful to the service provider you call.

## HUMIDIFIER

### Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

## INSULATION

### Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Electrical outlets normally emit noticeable amounts of cold air when outside temperatures are low.

## LANDSCAPING

SCAN QR CODE FOR TUTORIAL



### Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Providing complete details on landscape design is beyond the scope of this manual. Many excellent books, videos, and computer software programs are available that offer this information. Local nurseries and landscape professionals can also assist you.

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

Whatever the source of your design, plan to install the basic components of your landscaping as soon after closing, as weather permits. In addition to meeting your homeowner association requirements to landscape in a timely manner, well-designed landscaping prevents erosion and protects the foundation of your home.

However, our landscaping is only a start and will not result in a beautiful yard without professional knowledge and your continued attention and effort. We recommend that you hire a professional maintenance company.

### *Additions*

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

### *Backfill*

We construct the foundation of your home beginning with an excavation into the earth. When the foundation walls are complete, the area surrounding them is backfilled. Water can penetrate through the backfill area to the lower areas of your foundation. This can cause potentially severe problems such as wet basements, cracks in foundation walls, and floor slab movement. Avoid this through proper installation of landscaping and good maintenance of drainage.

Backfill areas will settle and require prompt attention to avoid damage to your home and voiding of the structural warranty.

Keep downspout extensions in the proper position to channel roof runoff away from the foundation area of your home. Routine inspection of downspouts, backfill areas, and other drainage components is an excellent maintenance habit.

*See also Grading and Drainage.*

### *Bark or Rock Beds*

Do not allow edging around decorative rock or bark beds to impede the free flow of water away from the home. You can use a non-woven landscape fabric between the soil and rock or bark to restrict weed growth while still permitting normal evaporation of ground moisture.

### *Erosion*

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

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

### *Hired Contractors*

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

### *Natural Areas*

During construction, we remove construction debris from natural areas. Removing dead wood, tree limbs, fallen trees, or other natural items is your responsibility.

### *Planning*

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

### *Plant Selection*

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

*See also Property Lines.*

### *Requirements*

Check with your local building department and homeowners' association before designing, installing, or changing landscaping for any regulations that they require you to follow.

### *Seeded Lawns*

If lawn seeding is part of your home purchase, consider this just the first step in establishing your yard. Remember that the forces of nature are far stronger than grass seed. You will need to overseed at some point, perhaps more than once. Heavy storms can cause washouts and erosion that you will need to correct. It generally takes at least three growing seasons to establish a good lawn, longer if weather conditions are difficult or if you do not have the time to devote to lawn care.

Before over-seeding, remember to fill any slight depressions with a light layer of topsoil. Minimize traffic of all kinds on newly seeded areas and avoid weed killer for at least 120 days. Keep the seed moist, not wet.

### *Sod*

Newly placed sod requires extra water for several weeks. Water in the cool part of the day (ideally just before sunrise), at regular intervals for the first three weeks. Be aware that new sod and the extra watering it requires can sometimes create drainage concerns (in your yard or your neighbor's) that will disappear when the yard is established and requires normal watering. These slight washes are considered a homeowner maintenance item. Weeds can be a problem the first year, so we recommend that you contact a nursery, landscape company or a professional lawn care service immediately after you move in for information and options regarding weed control. There can be small depressions in sodded front yards. Layers of sand spread to fill any depressed areas can solve this problem. Rake leaves from your lawn to ensure good circulation and light.

Apply appropriate fertilizer and weed and pest controls as needed for optimal growth. Investigate organic compounds for additional protection of the environment.

### *Irrigation System*

If SR Homes included an irrigation system with your home, we will demonstrate the system and the installer will make final adjustments before you move in. The installer will note and correct any deficiencies in the system at the same time. Whether we install your system, or you install it yourself, keep these points in mind.

You are responsible for routine cleaning and adjusting of irrigation heads as well as shutting the system down in the fall. Failure to drain the system before freezing temperatures occur can result in broken lines, which will be your responsibility to repair.

Conduct regular operational checks to ensure proper performance of the system. Direct irrigation heads away from the home. Trickle- or bubbler-type irrigation systems are not recommended for use adjacent to your home.

Automatic timers permit you to water at optimum times whether you are at home, away, awake, or asleep. The amount of water provided to each zone can be accurately and consistently controlled

and easily adjusted with a timed system. Check the system after a power outage and keep a battery in place if your system offers that as a backup.

### *Stones*

The soil in your area may have stones and rocks. Removing these naturally occurring elements are a maintenance activity. If SR Homes installs seed or sod, large rocks will be picked up and surface raking performed. You will need to provide continued attention to this condition as you care for your yard.

### *Tying Yard In With Yard Next Door*

SR Homes reserves the right to re-grade and landscape up to 5 feet of any part of your yard that is adjacent to another lot in order to “tie in” the two yards.

### *Trees*

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

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

Remember to water trees during the summer or during warm dry periods in the winter. Mulch around trees and avoid tilling or planting flower beds around trees.

Trees and other plant materials that exist on the lot when construction begins and are not part of any landscaping installed by SR Homes are excluded from warranty coverage.

During the grading process and the construction period, existing trees will be preserved. No tree located on the home site can be guaranteed against intended or accidental removal. Please let us know if you would like any trees removed before grading; there will be an extra charge for removing trees after the initial clearing.

### *Utility Lines*

A slight depression may develop in the front lawn along the line of the utility trench. To correct this, roll back the sod, spread topsoil underneath to level the area, and then relay the sod.

Before any digging, check the location of buried utility lines by calling the Utility Protection Service. *See also Easements.*

### *Waiting to Landscape*

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

### *Weeds*

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

## **Landscape and Maintenance Program**

Landscape maintenance should be a 12-month effort with primary emphasis on late winter and early spring. Following this checklist will help ensure that your time and expense will show their best results for many years to come.



MAINTAINING THE  
COMFORT OF YOUR  
HOME

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LANDSCAPING



PRACTICAL ADVICE FOR  
HOME MAINTENANCE

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PAINT



TIPS TO TAKE GOOD  
CARE OF YOUR HOME

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HARDWOODS



KEEPING YOUR HOME IN  
TOP SHAPE

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HEATING SYSTEM





### January - February

- ✓ Organize and develop a plan for the growing season
- ✓ Prune all ornamental trees to shape for coming growing season. Prune unsightly deadwood. Pruning shears should be used to achieve natural appearance
- ✓ Prune fall flowering shrubs
- ✓ Remove leaves from turf areas
- ✓ Spray weeds in turf areas and plant beds
- ✓ Straw plant beds for the coming year

### March

- ✓ Apply pre-emergence weed control to turf areas, warm season grasses only. (Note: after Forsythia bloom and before Crabapples bloom)
- ✓ Plant or replant trees and shrubs as needed
- ✓ Fertilize and seed any Fescue area as needed
- ✓ Prune broadleaf evergreens as needed

### April

- ✓ Fertilize warm season grasses with slow-release fertilizer
- ✓ Fertilize plants and trees with exception of spring flowering plants
- ✓ Replace pine straw as needed
- ✓ Implement summer bedding schedule
- ✓ Begin mowing and edging lawn

### May - June

- ✓ Follow normal grounds maintenance procedures
  - ✓ Insecticide application
  - ✓ Fertilize spring flowering shrubs
  - ✓ MAY - Aerate and fertilize Bermuda/Zoysia (Warm season grasses)
  - ✓ JUNE - Add sand to low spots, or uneven spots to help level yard
- \*\*Warm season grasses need at least 1" (ONE INCH) of water per Week. Water yard if it is not raining

### July

- ✓ Second application of slow-release fertilizer to Bermuda and Zoysia
- ✓ Maintain active spray schedule for insect prevention
- ✓ Look for signs of dryness on plants that have been installed six months or less
- ✓ Prune screen type shrubs as needed
- ✓ Watch for fungus on warm season grasses and treat as needed

### August

- ✓ Third application of slow-release fertilizer on Bermuda only

### September - October

- ✓ Fertilize cool season grasses (Fescue)
- ✓ Seed cool season grasses if needed
- ✓ Aeration (for Fescue/cool season grasses) should be carried out on compacted areas before sowing grass seed
- ✓ Pruning of evergreen shrubs may begin late October
- ✓ Rest raw beds where needed for Winter protection
- ✓ Treat Camellias and Euonymus species for Scale

## November

- ✓ Fertilize Azaleas at half strength application
- ✓ Remove leaves from turf areas
- ✓ Implement planting program for flower bulbs

## December

- ✓ Begin general clean-up of areas
- ✓ Begin pruning non-flowering ornamental trees
- ✓ Clear out natural areas under trees

# LANDSCAPING/SHRUBBERY POLICY

SR Homes has planted shrubbery and/or seed in all areas around your home affected by construction. We guarantee that all shrubbery is alive when planted and all seeding and /or sod has been properly planted. However, because these items are out of our control and subjected to the various weather conditions, **we will be unable to warranty these items beyond the closing.**

To ensure proper growth, it will be very important to give contact attention to these items in the early stage (as soon as you move into your new home.)

One problem that may experience is erosion. This is a direct result of not having grass established to hold the soil in place. You should take extra care of these sloped areas to hold the soil and seed until proper growth has been established. We will not repair eroded areas.

# TREE POLICY

When construction began on your home, an area of your lot was cleared to place the foundation on the site. In an effort to save as many trees as possible, we remove only the trees necessary to construct your home.

Occasionally, existing trees may be affected by the construction process and die. If the tree is dead prior to closing on your home, SR Homes will remove it at no expense to you providing you have listed it on your **"Pre-Closing Inspection and Orientation"** form. However, if a tree dies after closing, it will be your responsibility to have the affected tree removed.

Because many factors affect trees, we will not warranty or take any responsibility for dead trees after closing.

# MILDEW

## Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Mold is a fungus that spreads through the air in microscopic spores. Mold loves moisture and feeds on surfaces or dirt. On siding, they look like a layer of dirt. To determine whether you are dealing with

mildew or dirt, wipe the surface with a cloth or sponge dampened with bleach. If the bleach causes the surface to lose its dark appearance, you are most likely seeing mildew.

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

## MIRRORS

### Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

To clean your mirrors, use any reliable liquid glass cleaner or polisher available at most hardware or grocery stores. Avoid acidic cleaners and splashing water under the mirror; either can cause the silvering to deteriorate. Acidic

## PAINT AND STAIN

### Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

#### *Exterior*

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

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

When you repaint the exterior of your home, begin by resetting popped nails and removing blistered or peeling portions of paint with a wire brush or putty knife. Sand, spot with primer, and then paint the entire area. Use a quality exterior paint formulated for local climate conditions. Avoid having sprinklers spray water on the exterior walls of your home. This will cause blistering, peeling, splintering, and other damage to the home.

#### *Severe Weather*

Hail and wind can cause a great deal of damage in a severe storm, so inspect the house after such weather. Promptly report damage caused by severe weather to your insurance company.

#### *Interior Stain*

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

#### *Touch-Up*

When doing paint touch-ups, use a small brush, applying paint only to the damaged spot. Touch-up may not match the surrounding area exactly, even if the same paint mix is used. When it is time to repaint a room, prepare the wall surfaces first by cleaning with a mild soap and water mixture or a

reliable cleaning product.

Any remaining paint will be left in your basement or attic. Store these with the lids tightly in place and in a location where they are not subjected to extreme temperatures.

### *Wall Cracks*

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

*See also Drywall.*

## PESTS AND WILDLIFE

### Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines:

Insects such as ants, spiders, wasps, and bees, and animal life such as woodpeckers, squirrels, mice, and snakes, may fail to recognize that your home belongs to you. Addressing concerns involving these pests and wildlife goes with being a homeowner. Informational resources include, among others, the state wildlife service, animal control authorities, the county extension service, pest control professionals, Internet, and public library.

## PHONE JACKS

### Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Your home is equipped with telephone and cable jacks. Initiating phone and/or cable service and moving phone outlets for decorating purposes or convenience are your responsibility.

## PLUMBING

### Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

### *Aerators*

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

*See also Dripping Faucet.*

### *Basement Construction*

If you perform any construction in your basement, ensure that the plumbing lines in the basement or crawl space are not isolated from the heating source without insulation being added.

### *Cleaning*

Follow manufacturer's directions for cleaning fixtures. Avoid abrasive cleansers. They remove the shiny finish and leave behind a porous surface that is difficult to keep clean. Clean plumbing fixtures with a soft sponge and soapy water (a nonabrasive cleaner or a liquid detergent is usually recommended by manufacturers). Then polish the fixtures with a dry cloth to prevent water spots. Care for brass fixtures with a good-quality brass cleaner, available at most hardware stores.

### *Clogs*

The main causes of toilet clogs are domestic items such as disposable diapers, excessive amounts of toilet paper, sanitary supplies, Q-tips, dental floss, and children's toys. Improper garbage disposal use also causes many plumbing clogs. Always use plenty of cold water when running the disposal. This recommendation also applies to grease; supplied with a steady flow of cold water, the grease congeals and is cut up by the blades. If you use hot water, the grease remains a liquid, then cools and solidifies in the sewer line. Allow the water to run 10 to 15 seconds after shutting off the disposal. You can usually clear clogged traps with a plumber's helper (plunger). If you use chemical agents, follow directions carefully to avoid personal injury or damage to the fixtures.

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

### *Dripping Faucet*

You can repair a dripping faucet by shutting off the water at the valve directly under the sink, then removing the faucet stem, changing the washer, and reinstalling the faucet stem. The shower head is repaired the same way. Replace the washer with another of the same type and size. You can minimize the frequency of this repair by remembering not to turn faucets off with excessive force. (Please note that some manufacturers do not use rubber washers.)

### *Extended Absence*

If you plan to be away for an extended period, you should drain your water supply lines. To do this, shut off the main supply line and open the faucets to relieve pressure in the lines. You may also wish to shut off the water heater. Do this by turning off the cold-water supply valve on top and the gas control at the bottom. Drain the tank by running a hose from the spigot on the bottom to the basement floor drain. If you leave the tank full, keep the pilot on and set the temperature to its lowest or "vacation" setting. Check manufacturer's directions for additional hints and instructions.

*See also Extended Absence checklist.*

### *Fiberglass Fixtures*

For normal cleaning use a nonabrasive bathroom cleanser and sponge or nylon cleaning pad. Avoid steel wool, scrapers, and scouring pads. Auto wax can provide a shine and restore an attractive appearance.

### *Freezing Pipes*

Provided the home is heated at a normal level, pipes should not freeze at temperatures above 0 degrees Fahrenheit. Set the heat at a minimum of 55 degrees F if you are away during winter months. Keep garage doors closed to protect plumbing lines running through this area from freezing temperatures. In unusually frigid weather or if you will be gone more than a day or two, open cabinet doors to allow warm air to circulate around pipes. Use an ordinary hair dryer to thaw pipes that are frozen. Never use an open flame.

### *Gold or Brass Finish*

Avoid using any abrasive cleaners on gold or antique brass fixtures. Use only mild detergent and water or a cleaning product recommended by the manufacturer.

### *Jetted Tubs*

If your home includes a jetted tub, follow manufacturer directions for its use and care. Never operate the jets unless the water level is at least one inch above the jets. Be cautious about using the tub if you are pregnant or have heart disease or high blood pressure; discuss the use of the tub with your doctor. Tie or pin long hair to keep it from away from the jets where it might become tangled—a potentially dangerous event.

Clean and disinfect the system every one to two months, depending on usage. To do this, fill the tub with lukewarm water and add one cup of liquid chlorine bleach. Run the jets for 10 to 15 minutes, drain and fill again. Run for 10 minutes with plain water, drain.

Auto wax will help seal and preserve your tub's surface. Avoid abrasive cleansers.

### *Laundry Tub*

If you have a laundry room tub, the faucet does not have an aerator. This is to allow the laundry tub faucet to accept a hose connection.

### *Leaks*

If a major plumbing leak occurs, the first step is to turn off the supply of water to the area involved. This may mean shutting off the water to the entire home. Then contact the appropriate contractor.

### *Low Flush Toilets*

We want to draw your attention to a water-saving regulation that went into effect in 1993, which prohibits the manufacture of toilets that use more than 1.6 gallons of water per flush. In the search for a balance among comfort, convenience, and sensible use of natural resources, the government conducted several studies. The 1.6-gallon toilet turned out to be the size that overall, consistently saves water.

As a result of implementing this standard, flushing twice is occasionally necessary to completely empty the toilet bowl. Even though you flush twice on occasion, rest assured that overall, you are saving water and we have complied with the law. Similarly, flow restrictors are manufactured into most faucets and all shower heads and cannot be removed. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause.

### *Low Pressure*

Occasional cleaning of the aerators on your faucets (normally every three to four months) will allow proper flow of water. Water pressure can be adjusted by a licensed plumber at the service entry.

### *Marble or Manufactured Marble*

Marble and manufactured marble will not chip as readily as porcelain enamel but can be damaged by a sharp blow. Avoid abrasive cleansers or razor blades on manufactured marble, both damage the surface. Always mix hot and cold water at manufactured marble sinks; running only hot water can damage the sink.

### *Outside Faucets*

Outside faucets (sillcocks) are freeze-resistant, but for this feature to be effective, you must remove hoses during cold weather, even if the faucet is located in your garage. If a hose is left attached, the water that remains in the hose can freeze and expand back into the pipe, causing a break in the line. Repair of a broken line that feeds an exterior faucet is a maintenance item. Note that SR Homes does not warrant sillcocks against freezing.

### *Porcelain*

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

### *Running Toilet*

To stop running water, check the shut-off float in the tank. You will most likely find it has lifted too high in the tank, preventing the valve from shutting off completely. In this case, gently bend the float rod down until it stops the water at the correct level. The float should be free and not rub the side of

the tank or any other parts. Also check the chain on the flush handle. If it is too tight, it will prevent the rubber stopper at the bottom of the tank from sealing, resulting in running water.



### *Shut-Offs* **SCAN QR CODE FOR TUTORIAL**

You have three main water shut-off locations: at the meter, the gate valve next to the meter, and where the water service enters your home. You can use one of these shut offs for major water emergencies such as a water line break or when you install a sprinkler system or build an addition to your home. Each toilet has a shut-off on the water line under the tank. Hot and cold shutoffs for each sink are on the water lines under the sink.

### *Stainless Steel*

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

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

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

### *Tank Care*

Avoid exposing the toilet to blows from sharp or heavy objects, which can cause chipping or cracking. Avoid abnormal pressures against the sides of the tank. It is possible to crack the tank at the points where it is attached to the bowl.

### *Water Filter or Softener*

If you install either a water filter or a water softener, carefully read the manufacturer's literature and warranty for your specific model.

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

*See also Septic System.*

## Troubleshooting Tips: Plumbing

### *No Water Anywhere in the Home*

Before calling for service, check to confirm that the:

- ✓ Main shut off on the valve inside your home is open
- ✓ Main shut offs at the street are open
- ✓ Individual shutoffs for each water-using item are open

### *No Hot Water*

See Water Heater

### *Leak Involving One Sink, Tub, or Toilet*

- ✓ Check caulking and grout
- ✓ Confirm shower door or tub enclosure was properly closed



- ✓ Turn water supply off to that item
- ✓ Use other facilities in your home and report problem on next business day

#### *Leak Involving a Main Line*

- ✓ Turn water off at the meter in your home
- ✓ Call emergency number for service

#### *Back Up at One Toilet*

If only one toilet is affected, corrections occur during normal business hours.

Before calling for service, check to confirm that the:

- ✓ Shut off the water supply to the toilet involved
- ✓ Use a plunger to clear the blockage
- ✓ Use a snake to clear the blockage
- ✓ If you've been in your home fewer than 30 days, contact SR Homes or the plumber listed on your Emergency Phone Numbers sheet
- ✓ If you've been in your home over 30 days, contact a router service

#### *Sewer Back Up Affecting Entire Home*

If you've been in your home fewer than 30 days, contact SR Homes or the plumber listed on your Emergency Phone Numbers sheet. If you've been in your home over 30 days, contact a router service. Remove personal belongings to a safe location. If items are soiled, contact your homeowner insurance company.

## PROPERTY BOUNDARIES

### Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

To construct the home SR Homes established the property boundaries and corners. During construction, some of the monuments that mark the lot corners may be affected or covered up by grading, excavation, installation of utility lines and other typical construction activities. If you wish to install a fence, swimming pool, add a deck or patio to your home, or otherwise establish a permanent structure, we advise that you have professional surveyors locate and mark property boundaries to be certain they are accurate, and you have found all corners.

*See also Easements.*

## RAILINGS

### Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Railings in your home require little maintenance beyond occasional dusting or polishing. Protect railings from sharp objects or moisture. Cover them during move-in so large pieces of furniture do not cause dents or scratches.

Stained railings will show variation in the way the wood grain took the stain. Some designs show seams where pieces of wood came together to form the railing.

## RESILIENT FLOORING

### Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

any manufacturer's specific recommendations for care and cleaning. Some resilient floors require regular application of a good floor finish. This assures you of retaining a high gloss. However, avoid using cleaning or finishing agents on the new floor until the adhesive has thoroughly set. This will take about two weeks.

#### *Limit Water*

Wipe up spills and vacuum crumbs instead of washing resilient floors frequently with water. Limit mopping or washing with water; excessive amounts of water on resilient floors can penetrate seams and get under edges, causing the material to lift and curl.

#### *Moving Furniture*

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

#### *No-Wax Flooring*

The resilient flooring installed in your home is the no-wax type. No-wax means a clear, tough coating that provides both a shiny appearance and a durable surface. However, even this surface will scuff or mark. Follow the manufacturer's recommendations for maintaining the finish.

#### *Raised Nail Heads*

Raised nail heads are the result of movements of the floor joist caused by natural shrinkage and deflection. We have used special nails and glued the underlayment to help minimize this movement. If a nail head becomes visible through resilient flooring, place a block of wood over it and hit the block with a hammer to reset the nail.

### *Scrubbing and Buffing*

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

### *Seams*

Any brand or type of resilient flooring may separate slightly due to shrinkage. Seams can lift or curl if excessive moisture is allowed to penetrate them. You can use a special caulking at tub or floor joints to seal seams at those locations. Avoid getting large amounts of water on the floor from baths and showers.

## ROOF

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

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

### *Clean Gutters*

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

### *Ice Dam*

On occasion, depending on conditions and exposure, as rising heat from inside your home melts snow on the roof, the water runs down and when it reaches the cold eaves, it may freeze. An accumulation of this type of ice dams the subsequent runoff and the water begins to back up, sometimes working its way up and under shingles, ultimately leading into you home through windows or ceilings.

If your home design or orientation makes it vulnerable to this occurrence, you may want to install an electric gutter heater strip in the susceptible areas.

### *Leaks*

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

### *Limit Walking*

Limit walking on your roof. Your weight and movement can loosen the roofing material and in turn result in leaks. Never walk on the roof of your home when the shingles are wet—they are slippery.

### *Severe Weather*

After severe storms, do a visual inspection of the roof for damages. Notify your insurance company if you find pieces of shingle in the yard or shingle edges lifted on the roof.

### **Troubleshooting Tips: Roof Leak**

Please keep in mind that roof leaks cannot be repaired while the roof is wet. However, you can get on the schedule to be in line when conditions dry out, so do call in your roof leak.

Confirm the source of the water is from the roof rather than from a:

- Plumbing leak
- Open window on a higher floor
- Ice dam
- Clogged gutter or downspout

- Blowing rain or snow coming in through code required roof vents
- Gap in caulking
- Condensation from attic mounted air conditioner

Where practical, place a container under dripping water. If a ceiling is involved, use a screwdriver to poke a small hole in the drywall to release the water. Even if the troubleshooting tips do not identify a solution, the information you gather will be useful to the service provider you call. Remove personal belongings to prevent damage to them. If damage occurs, contact your homeowner insurance company to submit a claim. Report the leak to SR Homes during first available business hours during the first year. After the first year, contact a roofing contractor for repair.

## SEPTIC SYSTEM

### Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

A septic system consists of two basic parts. First, a septic tank, and second an underground disposal field. Bacteria break down solids forming a sludge that is moved by incoming water out to the disposal field where is filtered out into the soil. To help preserve the effectiveness of the system, keep these points in mind:

- ✓ Avoid disposing of chemicals, such as solvents, oils, points, and so on, through the septic system.
- ✓ Avoid using commercial drain cleaners. They can kill the bacteria that are working to break down the solid waste matter.
- ✓ Food from disposal decomposes more slowly and adds to the solids in the tank. Coffee grounds may clog the system.
- ✓ Avoid disposing of any paper product (diapers, sanitary supplies, paper towels, and so on) other than toilet paper through the system.
- ✓ Do not rely on yeast or chemical additive to digest sludge. They are not an alternative to regular pumping and may harm the system.
- ✓ Drain surface water away from the disposal field. Eliminate unnecessary sources of water in the area of the disposal field. Plant only sod over the disposal field. Avoid fertilizers in this area.
- ✓ Conserve indoor water use to put less strain on the system.
- ✓ Correct leaky faucets or running toilets promptly.
- ✓ Keep in mind that a water softener will generate 30 to 85 gallons of water every regeneration cycle.
- ✓ Do not drive on the disposal field or build over it.

### *Pumping the System*

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

### *System Failure*

Signs that your septic system is failing include:

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

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

### *Water Softener*

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

## SHOWER DOORS OR TUB ENCLOSURES

### Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Shower doors and tub enclosures require minimal care. Using a squeegee to remove water after a bath or shower will keep mineral residue and soap film to a minimum. A coating of wax can also help prevent build-up of minerals and soap.

Use cleaning products suggested by the manufacturer to avoid any damage to the trim and hardware. Avoid hanging wet towels on corners of doors; the weight can pull the door out of alignment and cause it to leak.

Check and touch-up caulking on an as needed basis.

During your orientation we will confirm the good condition of all shower doors and tub enclosures. SR Homes warrants that shower doors and tub enclosures will function according to manufacturer specifications.

## SIDING

### Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Siding expands and contracts in response to changes in humidity and temperature. Slight waves are visible in siding under moist weather conditions; shrinkage and separations will be more noticeable under dry conditions. These behaviors cannot be eliminated.

Need to check joint caulking yearly and re-caulk as needed.

### *Wood and Wood Products*

Wood or wood-product siding will require routine refinishing. The timing will vary with climatic conditions. Maintain caulking to minimize moisture entry into the siding. Note that some paint colors will require more maintenance than others and some sides of the home may show signs of wear sooner based on their exposure to the elements. Some wood siding, such as cedar, is subject to more cracking and will require more maintenance attention.

### *Cement Based Products*

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

*See also Paint and Wood Trim.*

## SMOKE DETECTORS

SCAN QR CODE FOR TUTORIAL



### Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

### *Battery*

If a smoke detector or carbon monoxide detector makes a chirping sound that is a sign that the battery needs to be replaced. Follow manufacturer instructions for installing a new battery. Most detectors use a 9-volt battery.

### *Cleaning*

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

### *Locations*

Smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors are installed in accordance with building codes, which dictate locations. SR Homes cannot omit any smoke detector and you should not remove or disable any smoke detector.

## STAIRS

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

No known method of installation prevents all vibration or squeaks in a staircase. A shrinkage crack will develop where the stairs meet the wall. When this occurs, apply a thin bead of latex caulk and, when dry, touch up with paint.

## STUCCO

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

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

### *Drainage*

To ensure proper drainage, keep dirt and concrete flatwork a minimum of 6 inches below the stucco screed (mesh underneath final coat of stucco). Do not pour concrete or masonry over the stucco screed or right up to the foundation.

### *Efflorescence*

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

### *Irrigation Systems*

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

## TERMITES

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

We provide you with a bait system for your home for termites and provide you with a certificate confirming that treatment. Plan to renew this treatment annually or as directed by the literature that accompanies the certificate. In the State of Georgia, a letter of termite inspection is required to sell your home. If your bond is not renewed annually, you will be required to retreat your home which could be very costly. Treatment for other types of insects or animal infestations is your responsibility.

### *Regular Inspections*

Regularly inspect your home for signs of termites or conditions that would allow their attack.

- ✓ Check for wrinkles or waves in wood trim.
- ✓ Tap wood to see if it sounds or feels hollow.

- ✓ Inspect under the carpet tack strip by lifting the edge of carpet in the corner of a room; the tack strip is untreated and provides a convenient path for termites through your home.
- ✓ Watch for tubes of dirt, called mud tubes that extend from the soil up to your home.
- ✓ Keep soil away from any wood parts of your home.
- ✓ Be certain all roof water and precipitation that moves quickly away from your home's foundation.
- ✓ Avoid storing wood on the ground and against your home.
- ✓ Maintain a safe zone of at least two feet in width around the perimeter of your home. Avoid planting grass or shrubs, installing any sprinkler device, or digging of any kind in this area. If you disturb this area, have it re-treated to restore protection.
- ✓ Before installing steppingstones, river rock, concrete, or so on, against the home, chemically treat the area that will be underneath the new material.
- ✓ If you add onto or change the exterior of your home, be sure to have the areas treated first.

If you believe you see signs of termites or if you have any questions, contact your termite treatment company for guidance.

## VENTILATION

### Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Homes today are built more tightly than ever. This saves energy dollars but creates a potential concern. Condensation, cooking odors, indoor pollutants, radon, and carbon monoxide may all accumulate. We provide mechanical and passive methods for ventilating homes. Your attention to ventilation is important to health and safety. Building codes include requirements for attics and crawl spaces to minimize accumulation of moisture.

#### *Attic Vents*

Attic ventilation occurs through vents in the soffit (the underside of the overhangs) or on gable ends. Driving rain or snow sometimes enters the attic through these vents. Do not cover them to prevent this. Instead, cover the insulation in front of the vent. When you do this, precipitation that blows in safely evaporates and ventilation can still occur.

#### *Crawl Space*

Crawl spaces are best described as "Basements with no floors". They are sealed for moisture control. Check seasonally to confirm no moisture penetration has occurred.

#### *Daily Habits*

Your daily habits can help keep your home well ventilated:

- ✓ Do not cover or interfere in any way with the fresh air supply to your furnace.
- ✓ Develop the habit of running the hood fan when you are cooking.
- ✓ Run the bath fans when bathrooms are in use.
- ✓ Air your house by opening windows for a time when weather permits.
- ✓ Proper ventilation will prevent excessive moisture from forming on the inside of the windows. This helps reduce cleaning chores considerably.

## WATER HEATER: ELECTRIC

### Homeowner Care and Maintenance

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

#### *Drain Tank*

Review and follow the manufacturer's timetable and instructions for draining several gallons of



water from the bottom of the water heater. This reduces build-up of chemical deposits from the water, thereby prolonging the life of the tank as well as saving energy dollars. Also drain the tank if it is being shut down during periods of freezing temperatures. Carefully follow the instructions in the manufacturer's literature.

### *Element Cleaning or Replacement*

The heating elements in the water heater will require periodic cleaning. The frequency is determined in part by the quality of the water in your area. Again, refer to the manufacturer's literature for step-by-step instructions and drawings, or contact an authorized service company.

### *Pressure Relief Valve*

At least once each year, manually operate the pressure relief valve. Stay clear of the discharge line to avoid injury. See manufacturer's literature for diagrams and detailed instructions.

### *Safety*

Keep the area around a water heater clear of stored household items. Never use the top of the water heater as a storage shelf.

The recommended thermostat setting for normal everyday use is "normal." Higher settings can result in wasted energy dollars and increase the danger of injury from scalding. Hot water will take longer to arrive at sinks, tubs, and showers that are farther from the water heater.

### **Trouble Shooting Tips: No Hot Water**

Before calling for service, check to confirm that the Water heater breaker on your main electric panel is in the on position. (Remember if a breaker trips you must turn it from the tripped position to the off position before you can turn it back on.)

- ✓ Temperature setting is not on "vacation" or too low.
- ✓ Water supply valve is open.
- ✓ Refer to the manufacturer's literature for specific locations of these items and possibly other troubleshooting tips.
- ✓ Even if the trouble shooting tips do not identify a solution, the information you gather will be useful to the service provider you call.

## WATER HEATER: GAS

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

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

### *Condensation*

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

### *Drain Tank*

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

### *Pilot*

*Refer to manufacturer directions and guidelines.*

### *Safety*

Vacuum the area around a gas-fired water heater to prevent dust from interfering with proper flame combustion. Avoid using the top of a heater as a storage shelf.

### *Temperature*

The recommended thermostat setting for normal everyday use is “normal.” Higher settings can result in wasted energy dollars and increase the danger of injury from scalding. Hot water will take longer to arrive at sinks, tubs, and showers that are farther from the water heater.

### Troubleshooting Tips: No Hot Water

Before calling for service, check to confirm that the:

- ✓ Pilot is lit (Directions will be found on the side of the tank).
- ✓ Temperature setting is not on “vacation” or too low.
- ✓ Water supply valve is open.

Refer to the manufacturer's literature for specific locations of these items and possibly other troubleshooting tips.

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

## WINDOWS, SCREENS, AND SLIDING GLASS DOORS

### Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Contact a glass company for replacing broken windows. Glass is difficult to install without special tools.

#### *Acrylic Block*

Clean during moderate temperatures with only a mild soap and warm water using a sponge or soft cloth and dry with a towel. Avoid abrasive cleaners, commercial glass cleaner, razors, brushes, or scrubbing devices of any kind. Minor scratches can often be minimized using by rubbing a mild automotive polish.

#### *Aluminum*

Clean aluminum metal surfaces with warm, clear water. Do not use powdered cleaner. After each cleaning, apply a silicone lubricant. Clean glass as needed with vinegar and water, a commercial glass cleaner, or the product recommended by the window manufacturer.

#### *Condensation*

Condensation on interior surfaces of the window and frame is the result of high humidity within the home and low outside temperatures. Your family's lifestyle controls the humidity level within your home. If your home includes a humidifier, closely observe the manufacturer's directions for its use.

#### *Screen Storage and Maintenance*

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

#### *Sills*

Windowsills in your home are made of a wood composite that is resistant to rot. The most common maintenance activity is dusting. Twice a year, check caulking and touch-up as needed. Wax is not necessary but can be used to make sills gleam. Protect wood and wood product sills from moisture. If you arrange plants on a sill, include a plastic tray under the pot.

### *Sliding Glass Doors*

Sliding glass doors are made with tempered glass which is more difficult to break than ordinary glass. If broken, tempered glass breaks into small circular pieces rather than large splinters which can easily cause injury.

Keep sliding door tracks clean for smooth operation and to prevent damage to the door frame. Silicone lubricants work well for these tracks. Acquaint yourself with the operation of sliding door hardware for maximum security.

Under certain lighting conditions, door glass may be hard to see. If you keep the screen fully closed when the glass door is open, your family will be accustomed to opening something before going through. You may want to apply a decal to the glass door to make it readily visible.

### *Sticking Windows*

Most sliding windows (both vertical and horizontal) are designed for a 10-pound pull. If sticking occurs or excessive pressure is required to open or close a window, apply a silicone lubricant. This is available at hardware stores. Avoid petroleum-based products. Apply first to areas where wood touches wood, then to the track if necessary.

### *Tinting*

Applying tinting or foil lining to dual pane windows can result in broken windows due to heat build-up. Some manufacturers void their warranty on the windows if you apply tinting or foil lining. Contact the manufacturer to check on their current policy before you apply such coatings.

### *Weep Holes*

In heavy rains, water may collect in the bottom channel of window frames. Weep holes are provided to allow excess water to escape to the outside. Keep the bottom window channels and weep holes free of dirt and debris for proper operation.

## WOOD TRIM

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

Shrinkage of wood trim occurs during the first two years or longer, depending on temperature and humidity. All lumber is more vulnerable to shrinkage during the heating season. Maintaining a moderate and stable temperature helps to minimize the effects of shrinkage. Wood will shrink less lengthwise than across the grain. Wood shrinkage can result in separation at joints of trim pieces. You can usually correct this with caulking and touch-up painting.

Shrinkage may also cause a piece of trim to pull away from the wall. If this occurs, drive in another nail close to, but not exactly in, the existing nail hole. Fill the old nail hole with putty and touch up with paint as needed. If the base shoe (small trim between base molding and the floor) appears to be lifting from the floor, this is probably due to slight shrinkage of the floor joists below. Again, you can correct this condition by removing the old nails and re-nailing. You may prefer to wait until after the first heating season to make any needed repairs at one time when redecorating.

*See also Expansion and Contraction*



SR Homes is confident that this homeowner maintenance manual will assist you in showing your home the love and care it deserves.



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