



# Stylecraft Builders Homeowner's Manual



Dear Homeowner and Prospective Homeowner,

Welcome to Stylecraft Builders. We understand that the purchase of a new home is a momentous occasion and a huge investment. We are honored that you are considering or have already made the decision to allow Stylecraft Builders to fulfill your dream of owning a new home, and we do not take this responsibility lightly. Our commitment to you is expressed in our company's mission statement. **"Build each home as if you are building it for yourself- treat each customer with the respect they deserve, and make the building process a positive experience with a can-do attitude and integrity."**

Stylecraft Builders has designed this Homeowner's Manual to assist you before, during, and after the purchase of your home. The information presented here will prepare you for each step of the home buying process, helping to make this time an enjoyable experience. You will also find detailed information that will aide you in properly caring for your new home and yard upon move-in. A home, much like a car, requires regular care and maintenance and this manual will help you maintain the value and appearance of your new home.

The warranty section in the manual will help you understand the warranty, its limitations, as well as the easy process of submitting a claim. One of the distinguishing aspects of Stylecraft Builders is our highly regarded warranty department that is solely dedicated to efficiently responding to homeowner's claims. Our relationship with you, our customer, continues after the purchase of your new home and gives you the assurance that your investment is well protected.

If you need clarification or additional details about any topic discussed in the manual, you may speak with a Stylecraft sales representative or superintendent.

We are always delighted to welcome new homeowners to our Stylecraft Builders family and are ready to serve you.

Respectfully,

Randy French and Doug French

President and Vice President

## **Mission Statement**

Simple. Merely follow the Golden Rule. Build each home as if you are building it for yourself – treat each customer with the respect they deserve, and make the building process a positive experience with a can-do attitude and integrity.

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# Builder's Limited Warranty



# Builder's Limited Warranty

## 1. Definitions

- a) **Builder**, for the purposes of this limited warranty, is STYLECRAFT Builders, Inc.
- b) **Consequential damage includes**, but is not limited to, damage to a home that is caused by a warranted defect but is not a warranted defect itself. This includes costs of shelter, transportation, food, moving, storage or other incidental expenses related to repair.
- c) **"Consumer products"** (as such term as defined by the Federal Trade Commission) which are covered by the Magnuson-Moss Warranty Act when sold as part of a home. Such items are covered by manufacturers and/or suppliers warranties, if any. Such items include appliances and mechanical equipment.

## 2. Terms and Conditions

- a) This warranty gives you **specific legal rights**, and you may have other rights, which vary, from state to state.

**STYLECRAFT BUILDERS, INC.:** (hereinafter called "Builder"), warrants Buyer's home on that certain lot, tract or parcel of land lying and being situated in the State of Texas:

warrants against defective materials and workmanship for a period of **one (1) year** following closing or occupancy, whichever comes first. Anything contained in this limited warranty to the contrary notwithstanding, all "Consumer Products" (as such term is used and/or defined by the Federal Trade Commission) which are included in the home covered by said limited warranty and hereby **EXCLUDED** from all rights, obligations, terms and conditions of this limited warranty. All assignable warranties by manufacturers, subcontractors or suppliers of such consumer products, are hereby assigned to the buyer and shall be in force according to their own terms. This warranty does not include ordinary wear and tear, abuse, neglect, or general maintenance connected with home and ownership, and/or Acts of God, nature, war and riot.

Buyer and Builder agree that the duties and obligations imposed by this Limited Home Warranty and the rights and remedies available hereunder shall be in addition to and not a limitation of any duties, obligations, rights and remedies otherwise imposed or available by law.

Builder shall not be responsible or liable for any **consequential or secondary damages** and/or losses which may arise from or out of any and all defects including, but not limited to, personal injury or damage to personal property.

**Unauthorized Options and Upgrades by Buyers:** Builder does not permit the installation of options by anyone other than Builder, its subcontractors, and suppliers prior to the close of escrow. The unauthorized use of independent contractors, other than those who are under contract with Builder, will void any warranty, implied or written with respect to any and all damage caused, directly or indirectly, as a result of the work.

**This limited warranty is non-transferable.** Any obligation under it terminates if the property changes ownership or ceases to be occupied.

- b) Unless noted otherwise, the [“Residential Construction Performance Guidelines, Homeowner Reference” 4<sup>th</sup> Edition](#), published by the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB), shall serve as the determining criteria for warrantable conditions, and appropriate remedies.
- c) **Specific Revisions/Exclusions from NAHB Residential Construction Performance Guidelines.**
- i) Sections 2-1-1 through 2-1-3 are not applicable.  
 Section 2-2-2 is not applicable.  
 Sections 2-3-1 through 2-3-4 are not applicable.  
 Sections 2-4-1 through 2-4-6 are not applicable.  
 Sections 2-5-1 through 2-5-4 are not applicable.  
 Sections 5-2-1 through 5-2-8 are not applicable.  
 Section 10-6-2 excludes “other blemish”.
  - ii) Interior concrete slabs do not include garage.
  - iii) Concrete Flatwork, including drives and patios can be expected to develop temperature and shrinkage cracks as well as separation at control and expansion joints. These conditions are not covered.
  - iv) The concrete foundation is designed to meet or exceed local applicable codes. Unless noted otherwise, it is designed as a floating slab, intended to move as a unit as the existing soils react to changes in moisture level. Some cracking in concrete surfaces, as well as finish surfaces should be expected. These likely do not indicate a structural failure.

The following conditions can impact the severity of movement of your foundation:

- **Consistent moisture maintenance at the perimeter.** It is important to establish a method for maintaining consistent moisture levels around the entire perimeter of your home. If you are unfamiliar with methods to accomplish this, please consult a professional engineer for recommendations. Common methods are soaker hoses and regular yard watering. Any method used should be used consistently throughout the year.
  - **Trees within close proximity of the foundation.** STYLECRAFT Builders will make every effort to save whatever trees you desire. However, by keeping any tree whose drip line encroaches on the foundation line can cause settlement of the foundation. Trees absorb moisture from the soils that would normally keep the soils at a consistent moisture level. **Please weigh the benefits of keeping a tree that is close to the foundation carefully. This is your decision and ultimate responsibility.**
- v) Drywall and wood trim separation at interior walls and ceilings can be anticipated. This can be caused by the natural drying of wood framing and/or the expansive nature of soils in our area. As the soils react to the amount of moisture they receive, the foundation will likewise follow causing minor distress in walls and ceilings. This type of separation and cracking is not structural failure, and is not covered.
  - vi) Heating and Air Conditioning (HVAC) systems are designed using guidelines that will result in a minimum 21°-temperature difference between the ambient outside temperature and the inside temperature (96° outside and 75° inside). This design is based on the most efficient operation for our part of the country. Capacity is calculated based on an average



of 550-600 square feet per ton as indicated by the guidelines. **If you require a different minimum temperature differential between outside and inside temperatures, please notify your sales representative so that your system may be designed accordingly. This difference in design will also cost you more.**

- d) **Owner's obligations in making a claim.** Claims are either normal or emergency in nature. It is the homeowner's responsibility to follow the procedures for making claims as outlined in this manual. Failure to report claims for service in a timely manner could result in limited repairs. It is also the homeowner's responsibility to provide access to your home between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. so repairs can be made to your home. Seldom will work be performed outside of these hours.
- i) **Normal Warranty Claim** is a claim for a defect that does not result in a loss of personal safety, loss of necessary utilities or possible property loss and/or damage. The best way to file claims of this type is to fill out the [online form](#). Please see the section titled "[How to File a Claim](#)" for additional instructions.
- ii) **Emergency Claims** must be made directly to the appropriate subcontractor(s) identified in the Homeowner's Folder provided by your superintendent. A secondary notification using the [online form](#) should be sent to STYLECRAFT within 24 hours of initial notification to subcontractor for follow up.



# Consumer Products Warranties

## Consumer Products Warranties

Warranties for Consumer Products are assigned from the Builder to the Homeowner at closing. Consumer product information concerning registration, terms, maintenance and care of those products will be left in your home. Please verify that you have received this information for each product listed and follow the specific instructions for activating your warranties where applicable.

**IF APPLICABLE, Consumer Product Warranty/Operation Manuals will be given to the owners in the following manner:**

- **Dishwasher** – Left in kitchen drawer beside range.
- **Disposal** – Left in kitchen drawer beside range.
- **Fireplace** – Left in kitchen drawer beside range.
- **Garage Door/Openers** – Left in kitchen drawer beside range.
- **HVAC (Air Conditioning & Heating)/Thermostats** – Left in kitchen drawer beside range.
- **Water Heater** – Attached to Water Heater.
- **Irrigation** – Left in kitchen drawer beside range.
- **Microwave/Venthood** – Left in kitchen drawer beside range.
- **Range/Oven** – Left in kitchen drawer beside range.
- **Septic** - Left in kitchen drawer beside range.
- **Smoke Detectors** – Left in kitchen drawer beside range.

**The following is located in your pre-closing orientation folder provided by your superintendent:**

- **Pest Treatment Certification and Service Record**



# How to File a Claim

## How to File a Claim

### 1) Normal Claims: *(For emergency claims, see below.)*

1. Fill out the warranty claim online: <http://www.stylecraftbuilders.com/warrantyrequest/>  
**\*\*THIS IS THE PREFERRED METHOD FOR FILING A CLAIM\*\***

You may also submit a warranty request in the following ways:

- E-Mail request to: [service@stylecraftbuilders.com](mailto:service@stylecraftbuilders.com).
- Hand Deliver Request to STYLECRAFT Builders office, at 4090 SH 6 South, College Station, Texas ATTN: Customer Service Manager
- **Verbal Requests will not be accepted.**

### 2) Emergency Claims:

1. **Directly contact the applicable subcontractor** (electrical, plumbing, HVAC, etc.) identified in your Homeowner's Folder provided by your superintendent. These subcontractors may also be found on a sticker inside the cabinet door to the left and above the stove.
2. A secondary notification should be sent to STYLECRAFT Builders (using the normal claims process described above) within 24 hours of initial notification to subcontractor for follow up.

#### What is an Emergency?

Emergency situations, as defined by the limited warranty, include the following:  
(If you have one of the following situations, please also see the section in this manual titled "Troubleshooting," where you will find other instructions that may help resolve the problem.)

- Total loss of heating or air conditioning during extreme weather conditions.
- Total loss of electricity. (Check with the utility company prior to reporting this circumstance to STYLECRAFT Builders or an electrician.)
- Plumbing leak that requires the entire water supply to be shut off or causes damage to the home or its contents.
- Total loss of water. (Again, check with your water company to determine if there is a general outage in your area.)
- Gas leak. (Contact your utility company or a plumber if the leak is at the furnace or water heater supply lines.)
- Electrical problem that is a fire hazard or a source of danger.
- A total stoppage of the plumbing drain system (e.g., the main sewer line is clogged making it impossible to utilize the plumbing system in your home).
- Any other problem that, without immediate correction and precautionary measures, creates a potential for bodily harm that cannot be reasonably avoided.



### 3) Warranty Claim Basics:

- When we receive your request for service, your request will be assessed for eligibility of coverage.
- All warranty requests are handled on a first in/first out basis. **You will be contacted within 48 hours of receipt of your claim to notify you of our course of action.**
- Typically, we will inspect the problem so that we have a complete understanding of the request, before we set an appointment to begin work. Appointments will be made **Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.**
- Warranty repairs will be scheduled for **completion within thirty (30) days** upon receipt of your written request. Occasionally, due to circumstances beyond our control, this process may take more than thirty (30) days. Delays can be caused by shortages of materials, back ordered parts, labor problems, weather and/or scheduling conflicts.





# NAHB Performance Guidelines

**Performance Guidelines-**  
**NAHB Performance Guidelines, 4th Edition, 2010**  
**See Separate Document**



# Routine Care and Maintenance

# Routine Care & Maintenance

## Introduction

A home is one of the last hand-built products left in the world. Home building is part art, part science and part hard labor. No two homes, even of the same plan, will be constructed exactly alike. Once the natural and man-made materials have been assembled, the components interact with each other and the environment. Although quality materials and workmanship have been used in your home, this does not mean that it will be free from care and maintenance. A home, like an automobile, requires care and regular maintenance.

We are proud of the product we build and the neighborhoods in which we build. We strive to create long lasting affordability. This cannot be achieved unless you, as the homeowner, properly maintain your home and all of its components. Periodic maintenance is necessary because of a number of factors such as normal wear and tear, the inherent characteristics of the materials used in your home, and normal service required by the mechanical systems. Natural fluctuations in temperature and humidity can also impact your home.

Many times a minor adjustment or repair done immediately by you saves a more serious, time consuming and sometimes costly repair later. Note also that negligence of routine maintenance can void applicable limited warranty coverage on all or part of your home.

We recognize that it is impossible to anticipate and describe every aspect that may be needed for good home care; however, we have covered many important details. The subjects covered include components of homes we build, listed in alphabetical order. Each topic includes suggestions for use and care. Some components may be discussed here which are not present in your home.

Please take time to read the literature provided by the manufacturers of consumer products and other items in your home. Although much of the information may be familiar to you, some points may be significantly different from homes you have owned in the past. The information contained in the manufacturers' material is not repeated in this manual. Make sure to activate specific manufacturer warranties by completing and mailing the registration cards included with their materials. In some cases, manufacturer warranties may extend beyond the first year; it is in your best interests to be familiar with such coverage.

By caring for your home attentively, you insure your enjoyment of it for years to come. The attention provided by each homeowner contributes significantly to the overall desirability of the community.



## 1. Appliances

**Read and follow all manufacturer requirements for each appliance in your home.**

- a) **Dishwasher** – Your dishwasher and disposal share the same drain. Make sure the garbage disposal drain is empty before starting the dishwasher.
- b) **Dryer Vent** - Remove the dryer hose from the dryer vent stack. Check for lint build up or blockage. This will help increase the life expectancy of the dryer.
- c) **Electric Stove** – An electric stove will usually have a separate circuit. If your range should fail to work, check the circuit breaker for its circuit. (See #9-A, Breakers).
- d) **Garbage Disposal** - Do not load the disposal unit with food items before turning it on. For proper operation, turn on the cold water and start the disposal unit. Then, drop the food items slowly into the unit. When the unit sounds clear, turn it off and leave the water running for several seconds. This allows the food waste to be carried into your sewer lines. Only foods that are non-fibrous and easily pulverized should be placed into the disposal unit. Examples of foods not to place in the disposal unit are cornhusks, celery, onion skins, olive pits, bones and solid or liquid grease. These items may cause your unit to overload or jam. If this happens, follow these corrective measures. Turn off the disposal unit and the cold water. Wait three minutes for the disposal unit to cool, then press the reset button usually located on the bottom of the unit. If this does not correct the problem, your disposal unit is probably obstructed. In that case, follow manufacturer instructions for clearing it.
  - **Clogs** - Many plumbing clogs are caused by improper garbage disposal usage. Always use plenty of cold water when running the disposal. Allow the water to run a minimum of 15 seconds after shutting off the disposal. Clogged traps (P-traps) can usually be cleared with a “plumber’s helper” (plunger). If you use chemical agents, follow directions carefully to avoid personal injury or damage to the fixtures.
- e) **Gas Stove** – If the burners on your stove, oven or broiler fail to light, check your burners for clogs and clean. If clogs are encountered consult the manufacturers recommendations for cleaning them.
- f) **Range Hood** - Remove and clean the filter. Clean accumulated grease deposits from the fan housing.
- g) **Ranges, Ovens and Broilers** – The outside of your stove, oven or broiler can be cleaned with a non-abrasive cleaner such as baking soda sprinkled on a damp cloth or sponge. Never use harsh abrasive cleaners on the outside of stoves, ovens or broilers.
- h) **Stainless Steel Sinks**- Stainless steel sinks should be cleaned with soap and water to preserve their luster. Avoid abrasive cleaners; these will damage the finish. An occasional cleaning with a good stainless steel cleaner will enhance the finish. Avoid leaving produce on a stainless steel surface since prolonged contact with product can stain the finish.

## 2. Attic Access & Care

The attic space is not intended for storage (excessive weight could jeopardize the integrity of the trusses and void your warranty). Access is provided for purposes of maintaining mechanical equipment that may traverse the attic space. When performing any needed tasks in the attic, caution should be used not to step off wooden members onto the drywall. This can result in personal injury and/or damage to the ceiling below. Such injury or damage is not covered by your limited warranty.

### 3. Brick and Masonry

Brick is one of the most durable and lowest maintenance finishes for a home's exterior. All building materials are subject to expansion and contraction caused by changes in temperature and humidity. Dissimilar materials expand or contract at different rates. This movement results in separation between materials, particularly dissimilar ones. This type of expansion and contraction is also applicable to the masonry and concrete portions of your home.

- a) **Color Variations** - If any repairs or changes are made to your brick, variations in the color of the brick and/or mortar may result.
- b) **Settlement Cracks** - Settlement cracks are common and should be expected within certain tolerances in bricks and mortar joints.
- c) **Tuck-pointing** - After several years, face brick may require tuck-pointing (repairing the mortar between the bricks). Otherwise, no regular maintenance is required.
- d) **Weep Holes** - You may notice small holes in the mortar along the lower row of bricks or over the door and window openings. This allows moisture to escape if any has accumulated behind the brick. Do not fill these weep holes or permit landscaping materials to cover them.
- e) **Efflorescence** - The white, powdery substance that sometimes accumulates on stucco, masonry, concrete and brick. It is the growth of salt crystals on a surface caused by evaporation of salt-laden water. Excessive efflorescence can be removed by scrubbing with a recommended product.

### 4. Cabinets

- a) **Cleaning** - Products such as lemon oil, Liquid Gold, Old English Furniture Polish and Scratch Cover are suggested for caring for **wood** finish cabinets. Follow the container directions. Use such products a maximum of once a month so as to avoid excessive build-up. Stay away using from paraffin-based spray waxes or washing cabinets with water as both of these items will damage the luster of the finish.
- b) **Hinges** - If hinges catch or drawer glides become sluggish, a small amount of silicone lubricant will improve their performance.
- c) **Moisture** - Damage to cabinet surfaces and warping can be caused by operating appliances that generate large amounts of moisture -- such as a crock pot. When operating such appliances, place them in a location that is not directly under a cabinet. While cooking food on your stove, be sure to turn on the vent hood.
- d) **Separations** - Gaps which develop between cabinets and the ceiling, or cabinets and walls, are normal and may be corrected by caulking (and paint touch up, if applicable).
- e) **Warping** - Exposure to extreme temperature, humidity changes, or moisture may cause warping of cabinet doors and drawer fronts.
- f) **Wood Grain** - Readily noticeable variations in wood grain and color are expected and are normal in all style selections.

### 5. Concrete

**Foundation** - The foundation of your home has been designed and installed in accordance with standard local practices, or by a professional engineer. The city and/or the designing engineer inspect it before it is placed in order to assure conformance. Our area experiences very high plastic soils, which means the soil swells and shrinks greatly with seasonal moisture changes. You should expect to experience movement of your foundation, and



resultant aesthetic effects such as sheet rock and masonry cracking, wood trim separation, and tile grout cracking. However, developing good watering habits around your foundation, which creates consistent moisture levels in the soil year round, can minimize these symptoms. Whatever you do in watering, the goal is to create consistent moisture levels evenly around the perimeter of your home. Symptoms of poor watering include dead grass, the soil pulling away from the foundation, and movements in the wood trim at the top of brick walls.

**a) Garage Floor** - Cleaning of the garage floor by hosing can also cause settling and increase soil movement by allowing water to penetrate any existing cracks. STYLECRAFT Builders will not be responsible for repairs needed due to such action.

**b) Flatwork** - To properly care for your exterior concrete, always be aware of areas where water is collecting adjacent to flatwork and fill these in. Do not allow downspouts to drain in such a way that the water can get under the concrete.

**c) Cracks** - Although we use accepted construction procedures for the installation of concrete flatwork, this does not guarantee there will be no cracking. Due to normal expansion and contraction, some cracking in concrete occurs in almost all homes. Cracks do not mean that your foundation or flatwork is not operating properly. Most cracks are not covered by the limited homeowner warranty. When cracks are covered, the repair provided is sealing the crack. Concrete is not replaced due to cracking.

**d) Drainage** - By maintaining good drainage away from your home, you are protecting your home's foundation. Maintenance of drainage away from all concrete slabs will minimize cracking and other forms of movement.

**e) Heavy Vehicles on Concrete** - Do not permit heavy vehicles (e.g., moving vans, concrete trucks, etc.) to drive on your concrete work. This concrete is not intended to bear the weight of these types of vehicles.

## 6. Countertops

**a) Caulking** - The caulking between the countertop and the wall, along the joint at the backsplash 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 prevent warping.

**b) Cleaning** - Avoid abrasive cleaners that will damage the luster of the surface.

**c) Cleaning Granite Countertops and Ceramic Tile** - The granite countertops and ceramic tile installed in your home may be washed with any non-abrasive soap or detergent. Abrasive cleansers will dull the finish. At a minimum, a yearly application of sealer is necessary to preserve and protect granite countertops. Granite is a natural stone and each piece reacts differently with cleaners, food and beverages, and acidic items. Please use caution. With any natural stone, variation in color is to be expected. Variations in color are not covered under homeowner's warranty.

**d) Cultured Marble Countertops**- Because of mineral deposits and soap scum, it is important to clean your cultured marble regularly. Cultured marble countertops should be cleaned with non-abrasive soap or detergent. Sealer is not necessary for cultured marble products. Marble and man-made marble will not chip as readily as porcelain enamel but can be damaged by a sharp blow. Equal care should be given, however. Avoid abrasive cleansers or razor blades on man-made marble; both will cause certain damage to the surface. Read product labels for safe use on both natural and synthetic marble.

## 7. Doors & Locks

The doors installed in your home are wood products subject to the natural characteristics of wood such as shrinkage and warpage. Due to natural fluctuations of humidity and the use of forced air furnaces, showers, and dishwashers, and so on, interior doors may require minor adjustments. Putty, filler, or latex caulk can be used to fill any minor separations that develop at mitered joints in the door trim. Follow with painting.

- a) **Bi-fold Doors** - Interior bi-folds will sometimes stick or warp due to weather conditions. Applying a silicone lubricant to the tracks can minimize this inconvenience.
- b) **Door Adjustments** - Due to normal settling of the home, doors may require minor adjustments for proper fit. Panels on wood doors will normally expand or shrink due to changes in humidity and temperature. It is a homeowner's responsibility to touch up paint or stain on unfinished areas resulting from such expansion or contraction.
- c) **Exterior Finish** - To insure longer life for your exterior doors, plan to refinish them at least once a year. Stained exterior doors with clear finishes tend to weather faster than a painted door. Treat the finish with a wood preserver quarterly to preserve the varnish and prevent the door from drying and cracking. Reseal the stained exterior doors whenever the finish begins cracking or crazing.
- d) **Failure to Latch** - if a door will not latch due to minor settling, this can be corrected by making a new opening in the jamb for the latch plate (re-mortising) and raising or lowering the plate accordingly.
- e) **Hinges** - A squeaky door hinge can be remedied by removing the hinge pin and applying a silicone lubricant. Do not use oil as it can gum up. Graphite works as a lubricant but can create a gray smudge on the door or floor covering beneath the hinge if too much is applied.
- f) **Locks** - Lubricate door locks with graphite or other waterproof lubricant. Avoid oil as it will gum up.
- g) **Sticking** - The most common cause of a sticking door is the natural expansion of lumber due to changes in humidity. When sticking is due to swelling during a damp season, do not plane the door unless it continues to stick after the weather changes. Use sandpaper to smooth the door. Be certain to repaint the area of the door where it was sanded to seal against moisture.
- h) **Weather Stripping** - Weather stripping and exterior door thresholds occasionally require adjustment or replacement.

## 8. Drywall

Slight cracking, nail "pops" or seams may become visible in walls and ceilings. The normal shrinkage of the wood, foundation movement, and normal deflection of rafters to which the drywall is attached cause these.

- a) **Repairs** - Most drywall repairs can be easily made. This work is best done when the room is to be redecorated. 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 it is dry, sand the surface with fine grain sandpaper, texture and repaint. Indentations caused by sharp objects can be filled with spackle in the same manner. Hairline cracks can be repaired with a coat of paint; slightly larger cracks can be repaired with spackle or caulk and repainting.

## 9. Electrical

The master control panel located by the electric meter contains the electrical breakers for your home. The control panel includes a main shut-off that controls all the electrical power to the home. In addition, there is a subpanel with individual breakers that control the separate circuits. Be certain you are familiar with the location of the master control panel and subpanel. The wiring in your new home meets the code of requirements and safety standards for the normal use of electrical appliances. Ordinarily, small appliances, which require your personal attendance for their operation, may be plugged into any electrical receptacle without fear of overloading a circuit. However, the use of larger appliances or of many small appliances on the same circuit, may cause an overload of the circuit and trip a circuit breaker.

Each breaker is marked to help you identify which breaker is connected to which major appliance, outlet or other service. Should a failure occur in any part of your home, always check the breakers in the panel boxes first.

- a) **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 the tripped position to the on position will not restore service.
- b) **Breaker Tripping** - Breakers will often trip due to overloads caused by plugging too many appliances into the circuit, a worn cord, a defective item or operating an appliance with too high of a voltage requirement for the circuit. The starting up of an electric motor can also trip a breaker. If any circuit trips repeatedly, unplug all items connected to it and reset. If it trips when nothing is connected to it, an electrician is needed. If the circuit remains on, one of the items that was unplugged is defective and requires repair or replacement.
- c) **Buzzing** - Fluorescent fixtures use transformer action to operate them. This action sometimes causes a “buzzing” sound.
- d) **GFCI Breakers** - GFCI, stands for Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter. This breaker is designed as a low voltage breaker and installed as a safety feature to control the electrical current to the “wet” areas of your home. The breaker controls the plugs in the baths, garage and any outside plugs. Their function is to sense any extra load on this circuit and to cut power to the circuit to prevent electrical shock. Because of this design, it is unlikely that the circuit will allow the use of power tools or appliances such as freezers. If you are going to place a freezer in your garage it will be necessary for you to add another 110V plug using a Certified Electrician. Test and reset the GFCI outlets monthly by using the test button on the outlet.
- e) **Electrical Modifications** - Do not tamper with or add to your electrical system. For any modification that is needed, contact the electrical contractor that is listed in the Subcontractor Contact Section.
- f) **Electrical Service Entrances** – The electrical services entrance, which provides power to the service panel has been designed for the electrical needs of the house. Do not tamper with the cable.
- g) **Outlets** - If an outlet is not working, check first to see if it is one that is controlled by a wall switch or the ground fault interrupter converter (GFCI).
- h) **Power Failures** – In case of complete power failure, first determine if your neighbors have power. If not, notify the power company. If the power failure has occurred only in your house, check the main circuit breaker.
- i) **Power Surges** - Power surges can result in damages to sensitive electronic equipment such as televisions, alarm systems, computer and the like. STYLECRAFT

Builders, does not warrant against damages caused by power surges and recommends you install surge protectors (available at retail stores) for added protection.

**j) Underground Cables** - In areas with underground utilities, check the location of buried service by contacting your local utility service. 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 this service.

## 10. Fireplace

**a) Ventless Fireplace Units** – The majority of Stylecraft homes that contain fireplaces have a ventless (no chimney) fireplace unit. (If you are unsure whether your fireplace is ventless or wood burning, please check with your superintendent or refer to the fireplace instructions.) Ventless fireplaces are designed for gas logs only. These manufactured logs do not actually burn, but give the appearance of a “real” fire. The heat source of this unit is natural gas. A porcelain log set is provided with your home purchase. Do not, under any circumstances, burn wood in this type of fireplace. This type of unit requires special operation and maintenance procedures that are different from those of wood burning fireplaces. Please refer to the fireplace instructions to determine the proper use of this ventless unit.

**b) Wood Burning Fireplace** – In homes where gas is not available, wood burning fireplaces are used. If you are unsure whether your fireplace is ventless or wood burning, please check with your superintendent or refer to the fireplace instructions. Your objective in building a fire in a traditional wood burning fireplace should be a clean, steady, slow-burning fire. Always begin with a small fire first 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; stack two or three layers of logs with air space between them and place the largest logs to the rear. One sheet of paper burned on top of the stack will help the chimney start to draw. Any logs six inches in diameter or larger should be split. Do not burn trash in the fireplace and never use any type of liquid fire starter. Old ashes and coals should be removed from under the grate when completely cool. A light layer is desirable as an insulator and will help to reflect heat.

- **Fresh Air Vent and Damper**- A fresh air vent has been installed to provide the fire with combustion air and reduce the amount of heated air the fire draws from your home. Open this vent prior to starting the fire as you do the damper. When not in use, the damper and the fresh air vent should be closed. Leaving them open is equivalent to having an open window in your home. If the fire is still burning, but you are finished enjoying it, use glass doors to prevent heated air from being drawn up the chimney until your damper can be closed.

- **Glass Doors** - do not close glass doors over a roaring fire, especially if you are burning hard woods (e.g., oak or hickory) because the fire could break the glass. Also, when closing the doors over a burning fire, open the mesh screens first. This prevents excessive heat build-up on the mesh, which might result in warping or discoloration.

**c) Do not use** - Duraflame, Presto or any type of chemical logs. Their extremely high burning temperatures could cause damage to the firebox. Be sure screens are closed during all operations of fireplace, and open only to load or unload firebox.

**d) Gas Log Lighter** - Please refer to the fireplace instructions to determine the proper use of a gas log lighter.

## 11. Flooring

Read and follow the manufacturer's instructions for ALL types of flooring. The following information is general guidelines as to use and care.

a) **Carpet** - One can add years to the life of carpeting with regular care. A carpet wears out because of foot traffic and dirt particles that become trampled deep into the pile beyond the suction of the vacuum. The dirt particles abrade the fibers like sandpaper and dull the carpet.

- **Carpet Seams** - Carpet seams will be visible. Edges of carpet along moldings and edges of stairs should be held firmly in place. In some areas, metal or other edging material may be used where carpet meets another floor covering.
- **Cleaning** - Refer to the manufacturer's recommendations for additional information on the care of all floor covering products. Color selection sheets provide a record of the color of floor coverings in your home. Please retain this information for future reference.
- **Vacuuming** - Vacuuming high traffic areas frequently helps to keep them clean and helps to maintain the upright position of the carpet nap. Wipe spills and clean stains immediately. For best results, blot or dab the spill or stain; avoid rubbing it. Test stain removers first on an "out of the way" area of the carpet, such as a closet, to check for any undesirable effects. Professional cleaning should be performed regularly.

b) **Vinyl/Resilient Flooring** - Refer to manufacturer's recommendations for additional information on the care of all floor covering products. Color selection sheets provide a record of the color of the floor coverings in the home. Please retain this information for future reference.

Although resilient floors are designed for minimum care, they do vary in maintenance needs. Some resilient floors require regular application of a good floor finish. This assures you of retaining a high gloss. However, no cleaning or finishing agents should be used on the new floor until the adhesive has set thoroughly. This takes about two weeks. Because of its relatively soft texture, vinyl flooring can be damaged by heavy appliances, dropped objects, high-heeled shoes and by rough usage. This damage is permanent and cannot be repaired.

- **Limit Water** - Wipe up spills immediately to avoid staining and vacuum crumbs instead of washing resilient floors frequently with water. Mopping or washing with water should be limited; excessive amounts of water on resilient floors can penetrate seams and get under edges causing the material to lift and curl.
- **Moving Furniture** - Use extreme caution when moving appliances across resilient floor covering. Tears and wrinkles can result. Coasters should be installed under furniture legs to prevent permanent damage. Moving furniture, dropping heavy or sharp objects, and high heels can cause dimples and scratches.
- **Shrinkage or Warping** - Some shrinkage or warping can be expected; especially around heat vents or any heat providing appliances.
- **No Wax** - The resilient flooring installed in your home is the no-wax type. No wax means it is coated with a clear, tough coating which provides both a shiny appearance and a wearing surface. Even this surface will scuff or mark. Follow all manufacturer's specific recommendations for care and cleaning of all your hard surface floors. Do not use abrasive cleaners or full strength bleach on vinyl flooring. Abrasives will dull the finish and can cause permanent damage. Full strength bleach can etch and destroy the surface of the flooring.



- **Ridges** – This applies only to second floor installations. The joints of underlayment (sheets 4' x 8') have been sanded and filled to minimize the possibility of ridges showing through resilient floor coverings. Some ridging is unavoidable, however, and there is no recommended maintenance for this condition.
- **Scrubbing & Buffing** - Frequent scrubbing or electric buffing is harder on floors than regular foot traffic. Use acrylic finishes often if you scrub or buff. Clean vinyl flooring with a solution of warm water and a commercial vinyl floor cleaner.
- **Seam Lifting** - Seams can lift or curl if excessive moisture is allowed on the floor. A special caulking can be used at tub or floor joints to seal seams at those locations. Avoid getting large amounts of water on the floor from baths and showers.
- **Yellowing and Warping** - Be aware that yellowing and warping of the surface can result from rubber backing on area rugs or mats.

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

- **Limit Water** - Wipe up spills immediately to avoid damage and vacuum crumbs instead of washing Laminate floors frequently with water. Mopping or washing with water should not be done; excessive amounts of water on laminate floors can penetrate seams and get under edges causing the material to swell.
- Laminate floor is a floating floor and will expand and contract with changes in humidity. Occasionally pieces will separate during this expansion and contraction. Experienced floor installers can repair this fairly easily.
- **Cleaning** – **DO NOT USE** wet mops, wet jets or general mopping on Laminate floors. Please refer to Consumer Product Warranties for the manufacturer websites. Stylecraft Builders recommends Bona products for cleaning and caring for your floors. Bona products are available at most home repair and general merchandise stores.

d) **Ceramic Tile** – Is one of the most durable floors on the market today with many styles and shapes to choose from. Cared for properly, your floor should last for many years to come. Ceramic tile floors are one of the easiest floor coverings to maintain.

- **Cleaning** - The ceramic tile installed on floors, walls or countertops in your home may be washed with any non-abrasive soap or detergent; abrasive cleansers will dull the finish.
- **Grout Discoloration** - Grout that becomes yellowed or stained can be cleaned with a fiber brush, cleanser and water. Grout cleansers and whiteners are available at most hardware stores. Also, be careful what you use to clean the flooring; it may have a tendency to stain the grout since it is not sealed.
- **Separations** - Expect slight separations to occur in the grout between tiles. These slight separations in the grout are commonly due to normal shrinkage conditions. This grout is for decorative purposes only; it does not hold the tile in place. Cracks in the grout can be filled by using “tub caulk” or premixed grout that can be purchased from flooring or hardware stores. Follow package directions. This maintenance is important to protect the underlying surface from water damage.
- **Sealing Grout** - Sealing grout is a homeowner’s decision. Once sealed, ongoing homeowner maintenance of that seal will be necessary. Please be aware that sealing grout will void the warranty coverage on such grout.



- **Vacuum** - as needed. Occasional 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 dishwashing liquid. Rinse thoroughly.
- e) **Hardwood Floors** - In caring for hardwood floors, a routine of preventive maintenance is the primary goal. The homeowner is responsible for this routine maintenance.
  - **Cleaning** - Sweep on a daily basis or as needed. Never wet-mop a hardwood floor. Excessive water causes wood to expand, possibly damaging the floor; it is imperative that water be cleaned up immediately. Do not use water-based detergents, bleach or one-step floor cleaners on hardwood floors.
  - **Humidity** - Wood floors will respond noticeably to changes in the humidity level in the home especially in the winter. A humidifier will help but will not completely eliminate this reaction.
  - **Mats** - Use protective mats at the exterior doors to help prevent sand and grit from getting on the floor. Gritty sand is one of wood flooring's worst enemies.
  - **New Wood Floors** - When new, splinters of wood may appear. Dimples or scratches can be caused by moving furniture, dropping heavy or sharp objects, high heels, etc. Some shrinkage or warping can be expected, especially around heat vents or any heat producing appliances. Warping will occur if the floor becomes wet repeatedly or is thoroughly soaked even one time. A dulling of the finish in heavy traffic areas is likely; a white, filmy appearance is caused by moisture (often from wet shoes or boots).

## 12. Garage Overhead Door

Since the garage door is a large, moving object, periodic maintenance along with following the manufacturer's instructions will insure safe and reliable operation.

- a) **Thirty (30) Weight Oil** - Every six (6) months, apply a thirty (30) weight automobile oil or similar lubricant to all moving parts -- track, rollers, hinges, pulleys and springs. At this same interval, check to see that all hardware is tight and operating as intended without binding or scraping. Avoid over lubricating to prevent dripping on cars and the concrete flooring.
- b) **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.
- c) **Opener** - To prevent damage to the garage door opener, be sure the door is completely unlocked and the rope pull has been removed before using the opener.
- d) **Painting** - The garage door should be repainted when the home is repainted or more often if needed to maintain a satisfactory appearance.
- e) **Safety** - 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 limited 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 service. Have the door inspected by a professional garage door technician after any significant impact to the door.
- f) **Clean safety sensors** periodically to allow proper function

### 13. Grading and Drainage

The final grades around your home have been inspected and approved for proper drainage.

- a) **Positive Drainage** - *IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT YOU MAINTAIN THE SLOPES AROUND YOUR HOME TO PERMIT THE WATER TO DRAIN AWAY FROM THE FOUNDATION. FAILURE TO DO SO CAN RESULT IN MAJOR STRUCTURAL DAMAGE AND WILL VOID ANY WARRANTY.*
- b) **Roof Water** - If you have gutters with downspout extensions, do not remove them from underneath the downspouts. Keep these in place and sloped at all times; this enables the water to drain away from your home quickly.
- c) **Rototilling** - Be cautious when rototilling. This can significantly change drainage swales. If rototilling is done, it should be done parallel to the swales rather than across them.
- d) **Backfill Settlement** - Backfilled or excavated areas around the foundation and at utility trenches should not interfere with the drainage away from your home. If these areas settle, contact STYLECRAFT Builders by using our Warranty Claim Procedure.
- e) **Erosion** - STYLECRAFT Builders is not responsible for weather related damage to yards after the closing date.

### 14. Gutters and Downspouts

Check gutters periodically and remove leaves or other debris (twice a year and after each heavy rain or wind storm). Materials that accumulate in gutters can slow down the draining of water from the roof and cause overflows or clog the downspouts.

- a) **Clean Gutters** - Maintain the gutters and downspouts so that they are free of debris and able to drain precipitation quickly and efficiently from the roof. It is the homeowner's responsibility to check gutters periodically to insure proper functioning.
- b) **Splash blocks** - Extensions should discharge outside of the rock or bark beds so that water is not dammed behind the edging materials that might be used.
- c) **Ladders** - Use caution when leaning ladders against gutters as this may cause dents.
- d) **Leaks** - If a joint between sections of gutters drips, caulk the inside joint using a commercial gutter caulking compound, which is available at hardware stores.
- e) **Overflow** - Gutters are installed with a slight slope so that roof water will flow to the downspouts. Gutters may overflow during periods of excessive heavy rain. Small amounts of water (up to 1 inch) will stand for short periods of time in gutters immediately after rain. No correction is required for these conditions.
- f) **Downspouts** - Downspouts are placed to carry water to the ground and in extensions, which then direct the flow away from the foundation of the home. These extensions are for protection of the foundation and it is the homeowner's responsibility to maintain them. They should discharge water away from the foundation without eroding any of the ground around them.

### 15. HVAC - Air Conditioning & Heating

- a) **Air Conditioning** – (See Specific Revisions/Exclusions from NAHB Guidelines for Design and Expectations of A/C System).

Since the air conditioning is combined with the heating system, the maintenance suggested for your furnace should also be followed.

Air conditioning can add much to the comfort of your home, but it can be used improperly or inefficiently, resulting in wasted energy and frustrations. These hints and suggestions are provided to help you maximize your air conditioning system.

All of our homes are designed with a central air distribution system, which handles both the heating and cooling of your new home. The following information is designed to help you get the maximum performance from this system.

- **Whole House System** - To fully and efficiently utilize your air conditioning system, you must understand that it is a total, whole-house system. The air conditioner unit is the mechanism in your home that produces cooler air. The air conditioning system involves everything inside your home including, for example, drapes and windows.
- **Zoned System** - Some systems are designed using a zoned system. They use one air conditioning unit and two thermostats to control the system. With this type of operation, a series of dampers control air flow to the zones. You will not feel air out of all registers at the same time as air is directed to various zones for proper operation.
- **Closed System** - 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 in 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. Your air conditioning design also intends for all interior doors to remain open for air circulation.
- **Time** - Time is of paramount importance 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 a thermostat. For example, if you come home at 6:00 p.m. on a day when the temperature has reached 90°F, and then set your thermostat to 75°F, the air conditioning unit will begin cooling, but will take much longer to reach the desired temperature. During the entire day, the sun has been heating not only the air in the home, 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. In order to reach the desired temperature, the air conditioning unit must have time to cool the walls, carpet and furniture in addition to the air in your home.
- **Temperature Differential** – HVAC systems are designed using Energy 2000 Guidelines. These guidelines call for a minimum 21° temperature difference (96° outside and 75° inside) between the ambient outside temperature and the inside temperature. This design is based on the most efficient operation for our part of the country. Tonnage is calculated based on an average of 550-600 square feet per ton as indicated by the Energy 2000 Guidelines. This is only a rough estimate as there are adjustments for ceiling height, window size and placement and direction the house faces.
- **Evening Cooling** - 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 throughout the day. The temperature setting may then be lowered slightly when you arrive home, with better results. Setting the thermostat at 60°F will *not* cool the home any faster and can result in the unit “freezing up” and not performing at all. **Extended usage under these conditions can damage the unit.**
- **Humidifier** - If a humidifier is installed on the furnace system, turn it off when you use the air conditioning; otherwise, the additional moisture can cause a freeze-up of the cooling system.
- **Homeowner General Maintenance** - The following suggestions are intended to assist you in getting the maximum usage and enjoyment from your heating and air conditioning system. We recommend that air filters be changed every thirty (30) days or

as needed. In areas with heavy dust, more frequent changes may be in order. Fresh filters can significantly reduce operating costs and will prolong the life of your system. You must place all panels back securely in their place or the system will not operate properly or not at all. While using your air conditioning system, every sixty (60) days pour one cup of bleach down the condensate line to kill any algae that may grow on the inside of the drain line. This keeps the condensate line free from obstruction and minimizes the chances of it backing into your home. STYLECRAFT Builders recommends an inspection by a heating professional every year.

- **Insulation** – Your home has been designed with the proper insulation for our climate. Open windows, doors, fireplace flues, and clogged filters are often the cause of inadequate cooling (or heating) and these items should be checked prior to making a warranty request.
- **Secondary Drains** - The secondary drain exists as a safety valve and is connected to the drip pan under your furnace. If there is an excess of water from this drain, it is probable that your primary drain is clogged. The secondary drain exits your house from the soffit, or siding, usually over a window. This is done so that you can see if there is an excess of water coming from this drain. If you suspect a clog in your primary drain, call your A/C contractor.
- **Thermostats** –Our homes are designed to provide a comfort range of a minimum of 21° difference from the outside temperature during the air conditioning season. During the winter, if you live in a two story home, the overall ambient temperature will vary 3°-8° between upstairs to downstairs (upstairs being hotter) due to heat rising.
- Check the operation of your system well in advance of peak operating seasons. Notify the appropriate subcontractor of problems before seasonal service demands are the greatest.
- The thermostat for your home is either a digital or a programmable, setback thermostat.

## b) Heating System

The heating system design was planned with a furnished home in mind. For example, draperies, blinds, screens and the like will contribute to the efficiency of your system. If you move in during the cooler part of the year and have not yet acquired all of your draperies and furnishings, the home may seem cooler to you than you would expect.

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

- **Gas Odor** - If you smell gas, **exit your home** and call the gas company immediately.
- **Odor** - The heating system typically emits an odor for a few moments when it is first turned on after an extended period of not being used (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.
- **Furnace Pilot** - The furnace has no pilot light. It is equipped with a Hot Surface Ignition System (electronic ignition) that eliminates the waste of a constantly burning pilot. The radiant sensor ignition control lights the main burners upon a demand for heat from the thermostat. If the unit fails to function, please contact your heating contractor.
- **Return Air Vents** - For maximum comfort and efficient energy use, arrange furniture and draperies to allow unobstructed airflow from registers and cold air returns.

- **Temperature** - Normal temperature variations from floor to floor (depending upon the style of home) can be as much as 10 degrees or more on extremely cold days. The furnace blower will typically cycle on and off more frequently and for shorter periods of time during severe cold spells.
- **Thermostats** - 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 any faster.
- **Avoid Overheating** - Do not overheat your new home. **Overheating can cause excessive shrinkage in framing lumber and may materially damage the home.** In the beginning, use as little heat as possible and increase it gradually.
- **Filters** - Remember to change or clean the filter every month. A clogged filter can slow air flow 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 quantities for the sake of convenience.

## 16. Insulation

The effectiveness of blown insulation is diminished if it is uneven. The last step in any work done in your attic (e.g., the installation of a television antenna) should be to confirm that the insulation lays smoothly and evenly. Do not step on drywall ceilings; personal injury or damage to drywall can result.

- a) **Building Codes** - Insulation installed in your home meets or exceeds the building codes applicable to your home at the time of construction.

## 17. Landscaping

STYLECRAFT Builders recommends careful consideration of landscape design and selection of planting materials to minimize the demands of your yard on water supplies. Landscaping can change the drainage pattern of your lot. Consult a professional landscape contractor in the event you desire to add landscaping to your lot.

- a) **Additions** - Before the installation of patio additions or other personal improvements, review the soils and consider soil conditions in the design or engineering of your addition.
- b) **Downspout extensions** - should be kept in the down position so that roof run-off is channeled well away from the foundation area of the home. These extensions should direct flow a minimum of 5 ft away from the foundation. Rainwater should not be directed to planting beds or other areas around the foundation as this can cause uneven moisture levels. Routine inspection of downspouts, backfill areas and other drainage components is an excellent maintenance habit.
- c) **Bark or Rock Beds** - Do not allow edgings around decorative rock or bark beds to dam the free flow of water away from the home. A non-woven membrane, such as Typar or Mirafi, can be used between the soil and rock or bark to restrict weed growth while still permitting normal evaporation of ground moisture.
- d) **Irrigation** - Make provisions for efficient irrigation. Conduct operational checks on a weekly basis to ensure proper performance of the system.
- e) **Sprinkler heads** - should be directed away from the home. Water may cause mineral deposits to appear on your brick. Drain and service sprinkler systems on a regular basis.
- f) **New Sod** - New sod installation and the extra watering that accompanies it can cause temporary drainage problems, as can unusually severe weather conditions.



- g) Planning** - Locate plants and irrigation heads out of the way of pedestrian and bicycle traffic and car bumpers. Space groves of trees or single trees to allow for efficient mowing and growth. Prune woody plants as needed. Do not plant trees near the home. Group plants with similar water, sun and space requirements together.
- h) Requirements** - Check with your local building department, your Architectural Control Committee and your Homeowners Association, if applicable, prior to designing, installing or changing landscaping for any regulations you may be required to follow.
- i) Swales** – In many cases, drainage swales do follow property boundaries. STYLECRAFT Builders will not alter drainage patterns to suit individual landscape plans. Typically a lot receives water from and/or passes water on to other lots. For this reason, homeowner changes in grade often affect those adjacent or nearby. STYLECRAFT Builders advises against making such changes.
- j) Trees - (See Specific Revisions/Exclusions from NAHB Guidelines for Trees).** Trees planted in close proximity to the foundation can damage the structural integrity of the foundation. Trees planted in close proximity to the foundation can develop a root system that can penetrate beneath the foundation and draw moisture from the soil. Precautionary measures such as the installation of a root shield or root injection system must be taken to maintain moisture equilibrium. These items are not a part of your original contract.
- k) Waiting to Landscape** –The homeowner is responsible for establishing a lawn where no sod is provided to prevent erosion. Correcting erosion that occurs after closing is the homeowner’s responsibility. Damages to neighboring property caused by unlandscaped ground on your lot will be your responsibility.
- l) Watering** - Watering should be done in a uniform systematic manner as equally as possible on all sides of the foundation to keep the soil moist, not saturated. Areas of soil that do not have ground cover may require more moisture as they are more susceptible to evaporation, causing a moisture content imbalance. During extreme hot and dry periods, close observations should be made around the foundation to insure adequate watering is being provided, preventing soil from separating or pulling back from the foundation.

## 18. Lighting

- a) Flickering Lights** - **Any flickering of an individual light other than fluorescent lights should be reported to the electrical contractor. In the event all of your lights are flickering repeatedly, please contact your local utility provider.**
- b) GFCI (Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter)** - GFCI receptacles have a built-in element that senses fluctuations in power. Quite simply, the GFCI is a sensitive indoor circuit breaker. Installation of these receptacles is required by building codes in the bathrooms, kitchen, outside and garage (areas where an individual can come into contact with water while holding an electrical appliance or tool). Heavy appliances such as refrigerators, freezers or power tools will trip the GFCI breaker. **Do not plug a refrigerator or food freezer into a GFIC controlled outlet because it is likely that the GFCI will trip** and ruin the contents. This will not be the responsibility of STYLECRAFT Builders.
- c) Reset Button** - Each GFCI receptacle has a test and reset button. Once each month, press the test button. This will trip the circuit. To return service, press the reset button. If the test button does not trip, **the outlet does not have GFCI protection and must be replaced.** The outlet, however will continue to provide power. If a GFCI breaker trips during normal usage, it may be an indication of a faulty appliance and some investigation is in order. Continued tripping by a faulty appliance will weaken the ability of the outlet



to function normally. Please remember that one GFCI breaker can control up to three or four outlets.

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

**e) Light Bulbs** - You are responsible for replacing any burned out bulbs other than those noted on the walk through list.

**f) Light Fixtures** - Some fixtures have an on/off switch located on the fixture. If a hanging light fixture does not work, make sure the switch is on. If your fixture does not have a switch, reset any tripped circuit breakers. If a luminous light fixture does not work, make sure all fluorescent bulbs are installed properly. Adjust any tubes that are flickering or buzzing. Check wall switches, circuit breakers and GFCI breakers. Fluorescent fixtures will emit a buzzing sound which is normal. Fluorescent bulbs that are darkening at one or both ends should be replaced for optimum lighting.

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

## 19. Mirrors

To clean your mirrors, use any reliable liquid glass cleaner or polisher available at most hardware or grocery stores. Avoid splashing water under the mirror. The moisture will cause the silvering to deteriorate. Also, avoid pushing or leaning on your mirrors. This can cause chips or cracks at the mounting brackets.

## 20. Paint and Stain

**Expansion and Contraction** - All building materials are subject to expansion and contraction caused by changes in temperature and humidity. Dissimilar materials expand or contract at different rates. This movement results in separation between materials, particularly dissimilar ones. The effects can be seen in small cracks in drywall and paint, especially where moldings meet drywall, at mitered corners, where tile grout meets the tub or sink and so on. This can be alarming to an uninformed homeowner, but, in fact, it is very normal, especially in the Central Texas area known for extreme fluctuations in temperature and humidity. Shrinkage of the wooden members of your home is also 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, paint and caulking is all that is needed to conceal this minor evidence of a natural occurrence. Properly installed caulking will shrink and must be maintained by the homeowner. **Caulking is not permanent and must be maintained by the homeowner.**

### a) Paint

The walls in your new home have been painted with latex paint, unless specifically requested otherwise. They should give you long service if cared for properly. **DO NOT** scrub walls painted with flat latex paint. **Only walls painted with “scrubbable” paint may be cleaned with warm soapy water.** Gently rub the area to be cleaned instead of hard scrubbing. Excessive force will tend to remove the paint.

- **Interior** - The interior woodwork has been painted with latex enamel that can be cleaned with a wet sponge. Walls have been painted with a flat latex paint and should be touched up with matching paint rather than being wiped with a wet sponge. Spackle may be used to cover any small defect prior to paint touch-up. It is recommended that you wait a minimum of thirty days prior to washing any enameled surface. Do not use soaps, abrasive cleansers, scouring pads or brushes.
- **Exterior** - Regular painting and repair will preserve the beauty of and add value to your home. Check the painted/stained surfaces of your home's exterior annually. Repaint before much chipping or wearing away of the original finish occurs; this saves the cost of extensive surface preparation. Plan to refinish the exterior surface of your home approximately every three years or as needed. The chemical structure of the paint used on the exterior is governed by the climatic conditions. Over a period of time, this finish will fade and dull a bit.
- **Fading** - Fading due to sun and weather is normal. Periodic repainting will be required.
- **Maintenance** - When you wish to repaint exterior woodwork on your home, popped nails should be reset; the blistered or peeling portions should be wire-brushed or scraped with a putty knife, sanded and spotted with primer. The entire area can then be repainted. Be certain to apply a top quality exterior paint that has been formulated for local climate conditions. Do not allow sprinklers to spray water on the exterior walls of your home. This will cause blistering, peeling, splintering and other types of damage to the home. Trim painted white or light colors will more readily show grain and cracks and, therefore, requires additional maintenance.
- **Severe Weather** - Hail and wind can cause a great deal of damage in a severe storm, and your home should be inspected after such weather. Report damage caused by severe weather to your insurance company promptly.

#### b) **Stain**

For interior stain touch-ups, Old English Furniture Polish and Scratch Cover is inexpensive, easy to use and blends in with the wood grain. Follow directions on the bottle when using.

## **21. Plumbing**

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

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

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

### a) Plumbing Fixtures

- **Bathtubs, Sinks and Showers** – The tubs, sinks and showers in your new home are composed of one or more of the following materials: porcelain, fiberglass, ceramic tile, cultured marble and/or glass. All of these materials are vulnerable to scraping, scratching and dulling if they are not cleaned with the proper materials. **DO NOT** use an abrasive cleaner such as Comet on any of the surfaces. There are many non-abrasive cleaners on the market that will do an excellent job of maintaining these surfaces. These surfaces can also be chipped, so be careful not to drop any heavy or sharp objects on them.
- **Care and Cleaning of Fixtures (Faucets)** - Follow manufacturers' directions for cleaning fixtures. Avoid abrasive cleansers as they remove the protective finish leaving behind a porous surface that is difficult to keep clean. Clean plumbing fixtures with a soft sponge and soapy water, (a non-abrasive cleanser such as Spic-N-Span or a liquid detergent is usually recommended by manufacturers) then polish with a dry cloth to prevent water spots.
- **Porcelain** - Porcelain enamel can be damaged by a sharp blow from a heavy object. It can also be scratched. Do not stand in the bathtub wearing shoes unless you have placed a protective layer of newspaper over the bottom of the tub. If paint is splattered onto the porcelain enamel surfaces during redecorating, it should be wiped up immediately. If some spots are dry before being noticed, use a recommended solvent. Clean porcelain finishes with a non-abrasive cleanser designed for bathroom usage.
- **Stoppages** – When the drainpipe from a tub, sink or shower stops up, first use a plunger. Be sure the rubber cup of the plunger covers the drain opening and that the water comes well up over the cup edge. Working the plunger up and down rhythmically 10 or 20 times in succession will build up pressure in the pipe and do more good than sporadic, separate plunges.
- **Toilet Tank/Bowl Care** - Toilets are made of vitreous china, a glasslike material that is almost impervious to staining. Clean your toilets with a toilet bowl cleaner and a brush or cloth. Vitreous china is brittle and will easily break or shatter if hit with a hard object. Do not stand on your toilets. Uneven pressure applied to the toilet can break the wax seal at the base of the toilet, thereby causing a leak. Toilets which are designed to use less water, approximately 1.6 gallons, have been installed in your home in an effort to reduce the amount of water used and the amount of wastewater treated and returned to our water sources. This has been required under Federal law since 1992. All of this results in a lower utility cost for you and an improvement to our environment. Since these toilets use approximately 50% of the water that older, traditional toilets use, you need to be aware of a few inconveniences you may experience. The toilets have a tendency to become clogged more frequently than traditional toilets because of the newer toilet's reduced water flush capacity. On the occasions where one needs to dispose of a large amount of tissue, it is advisable to flush the toilet prior to the disposal of all tissue. Educating your family members as to the capacity of the toilet will help avoid unnecessary stoppages. Do not place objects other than toilet paper in the toilet. Always keep a plumber's plunger on hand to use in the event of a stoppage of a toilet. Usually a few vigorous pumps with the plunger will free the obstruction. **Stoppages that are not construction related are the homeowner's responsibility.** If you are unable to clear the obstruction yourself, we suggest that you call a plumber.
- **Do not use drain cleaners in toilets. The harsh chemicals in drain cleaners can damage the toilet seals and cause a leak.**
- **Flush Valve** - The flush valve in your toilet should last for many years. If it fails or begins to leak, a new flush valve can be purchased at a home center or hardware store. If

you are not entirely comfortable with this do-it-yourself project, a plumber can perform this task.

- **Toilet Seat Lid** - Do not stand on the toilet seat lid. It is not designed for this purpose and may crack.
- **Toilet Clogs** - The main causes of toilet clogs are various domestic items such as disposable diapers, excessive amounts of toilet paper, sanitary supplies, Q-tips, dental floss, toys, etc.

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

- **If your pipes should freeze** - do not turn your water back on. When pipes freeze, they usually burst. When they thaw, if the water is on, they will cause an enormous amount of damage to your home.
- **Exterior Faucets** - Outside faucets are not freeze proof. Hose bibs should be protected with insulated coverings that can be found in most home improvement stores. Repair of a broken line that supplies an exterior faucet is a homeowner maintenance item. STYLECRAFT Builders does not warrant exterior faucets against freezing.

**c) Plumbing Maintenance**

- **Bath Caulking** – The grout around your tubs and showers over a period of time will begin to crack because of the settling forces in your home. When this occurs, we recommend that you use a brand name tub and tile caulk to repair the cracks. If this problem is left unattended, the water will seep behind the ceramic tile and cause the tile to become loose. **This is a maintenance item that will require attention.** Any defects that occur from neglect will not be warranted.
- **Debris in Pipes** - Even though your plumbing lines have been flushed to remove dirt and foreign matter, small amounts of minerals may enter the line. Aerators on the faucets strain much of this from your water. However, minerals, etc. caught in these aerators may cause the faucets to drip because washers wear more rapidly when they come in contact with foreign matter.
- **Dripping Faucets** - A dripping faucet may be repaired by shutting off the water at the valve directly under the sink, then removing the faucet stem, changing the washer and reinstalling the faucet stem. The shower head is repaired in the same manner. Replace the washer with another of the same type and size. You can minimize the frequency of this repair by remembering not to turn faucets off with excessive force.
- **Low Pressure** - It will occasionally be necessary to remove and clean the aerators on faucets to allow the proper flow of water; normally every three or four months is sufficient.

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

Carefully read and follow the manufacturer’s literature for your specific model of water heater. Follow manufacturer directions for relief valve maintenance. Periodically check the drain pan under the heater to ensure it, as well as the drain outlet, are clear.

- **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 the manufacturer’s timetable and instructions for draining several gallons of water from the bottom of the water heater.

- **Pilot Light** - Never light a gas pilot or turn on electricity when the water heater tank is empty. Always turn off the gas or electric power before shutting off the cold water supply (located at the top of the tank).
- **To Light the Water Heater** – Read and follow manufacturer’s instructions.
- **Safety** - The area around a gas-fired water heater should be vacuumed as needed to prevent dust from interfering with proper flame combustion. The top of a heater should not be used as a storage shelf.
- **Temperature** - Set the water heater thermostat at the recommended setting; higher settings waste energy and increase the chance of scalding injuries.

## 22. Roofing

Your roof will give you many years of good service if it is properly maintained. Flashing seals places where the roof abuts walls, chimneys, valleys and where two roof slopes meet. If a leak should occur after your warranty period, call a qualified roofer to make the repair. If it is repaired as soon as the roofing material has dried, the cost will be far less than if the job is postponed. If you have to walk on your roof for any reason, be careful not to damage the surface or the flashing. Be particularly careful when installing a TV or radio aerial to your roof; a careless job will cause serious leaks, which STYLECRAFT Builders will not be responsible for, thereby becoming the homeowner’s responsibility.

Limit walking on your roof. The weight and movement can loosen the roofing material and break the integrity of the roofing material, which can, in turn, result in leaks. Never attempt to walk on the roof of your home when the shingles are wet, as they become extremely slippery.

- Severe Weather** - After severe storms, do a visual inspection of the roof for damages. Notify your homeowner insurance company if damage is noted. Even when properly installed, wind driven snow and rain may enter through vents. This is not a defect.
- Leaks** - If a leak occurs, try to detect the exact location; this will greatly simplify locating the area that requires repair when the roof is dry.

## 23. Siding

The siding on your home is cement fiber siding (non-flammable). This product will give you excellent service if proper maintenance is provided.

- Mold on Exterior** - The exterior of your home is painted with an exterior latex paint that includes a mildew/mold retarder. Due to the humidity levels, it is likely that some mildew or mold will appear on the exterior of your home. There are a number of products on the market that kill mildew and mold and are easy to use.
- Paint Fading** - The areas of your home that are directly subjected to sunlight will fade over a period of time. When you decide to touch-up your siding, it is very likely that the paint will not match exactly.
- Re-caulking Joints** - All the joints in exterior wood trim are caulked with a latex caulk. **This material is subject to shrinkage and cracking and will need routine maintenance. All caulking shrinks and replacement is a homeowner’s maintenance item.** Separation at the joints in the exterior trim and between the trim and the surfaces of exterior siding or masonry should not exceed 3/8 of an inch. Siding, trim and masonry must be capable of excluding the elements



## 24. Smoke Detectors

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

- a) **Cleaning** - Once every three months, smoke alarms should be cleaned (vacuumed) to prevent a false alarm or lack of response to smoke. After cleaning, push the test button to test; the alarm should sound. For your safety, it is important that these devices be kept clean and in good operating condition.
- b) **Protection** – STYLECRAFT Builders does not represent that the smoke detection device will provide fire protection. The homeowner is responsible for obtaining insurance.

## 25. Windows & Glass Doors

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.

- a) **Condensation** - on interior surfaces of the windows and frames is normal and results from high humidity within the home and low outside temperatures and inadequate ventilation. These conditions are significantly influenced by family lifestyle. If your home includes a humidifier, closely observe manufacturer's directions, especially during periods of cooler temperatures. Heavy drapes and blinds restrict air movement across these surfaces. Air movement across these surfaces greatly reduces the formation of condensation. Condensation that collects on windows and frames should be wiped up with a towel to prevent damage.
- b) **Door Locks** - Acquaint yourself with the operation of the door hardware for maximum security.
- c) **Sticking Windows** - Most sliding windows (both vertical and horizontal) are designed for a ten-pound pull. If sticking occurs or excessive pressure is required to open or close, apply a silicone lubricant. This is available at hardware stores. Avoid oil-based products, as these will attract dust and dirt, eventually causing problems with the operation of the windows.

## 26. Wood Trim

Due to the normal drying of the natural products used in your home, changes in temperature, humidity, and the movement of your foundation, separations in wood trim can be expected. **This condition is not warrantable**, and is a homeowner maintenance item and can easily be remedied by touch up caulking and painting.

## 27. Septic System

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



# Troubleshooting

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## 1. A/C Not Cooling Properly

- Check breaker to the A/C unit
- Check filter for cleanliness: See “Routine Care and Maintenance” for [filter care](#).
- Review Section II.2.C “Specific Revisions/Exclusions from NAHB Guidelines” for A/C design and expectations to evaluate the performance of your unit.
- Contact the A/C Contractor

## 2. Water Coming from A/C Secondary Condensate Drain Located at Exterior Soffit

- Check the drip pan under the A/C-Heating unit. If full, the primary drain is most likely clogged. Remove any debris from the drain outlet or contact the contractor.

## 3. Heater not Working

- Check breakers to A/C/Heating Unit
- Contact A/C – heating contractor
- *Note: modern units do not have an open flame pilot light*

## 4. Electrical Outlets, Fixtures, or Appliances Not Powered

- Check electrical distribution panel for tripped circuit breakers.
- If outlet is on GFCI Circuit, check and reset all GFCI outlets.
- Check bulbs on light fixtures of affected fixtures.
- Call electrical subcontractor identified in “Subcontractor Contacts” that you received during your final walk through. (There is also a sticker inside the upper cabinet door, just to the left of the stove that contains subcontractor contact information.) It will be helpful to describe the nature of the problem and steps taken by you to remedy the problem.

## 5. Circuit Breakers Trip

- To reset the circuit breaker, flip breaker switch to off and then back to on. See further information on breaker in “Routine Care and Maintenance – [Electrical](#).”

## 6. Water Leak in Plumbing Lines

- If a leak is in a supply line to a sink, toilet, water heater, ice maker, washing machine, or dishwasher, turn off the supply valve to that fixture.
- If a leak is in a supply line at another fixture or an undetermined location, turn off the main water supply valve. This valve is usually located on the house side of the water meter.
- If a leak is in a drain line, discontinue use of the fixture affected.
- If a leak is in a drain line under a sink or lavatory, ensure that the piping connections have not become loose.
- Contact plumbing subcontractor identified in “Subcontractor Contacts” that you received during your final walk through. (There is also a sticker inside the upper cabinet door, just to the left of the stove that contains subcontractor contact information.)

**7. Stopped up Drain**

- See Routine Care and Maintenance, “[Plumbing](#).”

**8. Garbage Disposal Stops Operating**

- Check reset button on unit.
- Check circuit breaker
- See Routine Care and Maintenance, “[Appliances](#).”

**9. Fireplace Flue Will Not Draw Smoke**

- Check damper to make sure it is open.
- See Routine Care and Maintenance, “[Fireplace](#).”

**10. Septic Alarm Sounding**

- Contact your septic service provider immediately.