



BUFFINGTON HOMES

A photograph of a modern two-story house with light-colored siding and dark brown roof accents. The house features a large garage door on the left and a covered front entrance on the right. The landscaping includes a green lawn, a concrete sidewalk, and various shrubs and trees. A blue banner is overlaid at the bottom of the image.

Homeowner Guide

CONGRATULATIONS!

You're on your way to building a life you'll love in beautiful Northwest Arkansas. We're honored you chose Buffington Homes, and we're excited to start our journey together.

Let's begin with this Homeowners Guide. We designed it to be your go-to guide as you move through the home build process. It covers everything from contract and construction to the closing and care of your new home. Hopefully it will prepare you for each step, answer many of your questions, and allow you to have an enjoyable experience.

Since this booklet includes a number of details, such as construction milestones, maintenance information, and warranty guidelines, we suggest grabbing some popcorn and reading it cover to cover.

As you'll discover, we're big on communication. So, if you ever need clarification or further details on a topic, just give us a call. Your team at Buffington Homes is always here for you!

Best wishes,
Buffington Homes



BUFFINGTON HOMES

CONTENTS

Purchasing Your Home	9
.....	
Construction of Your Home	13
.....	
Design Studio Experience	25
.....	
Homeowner Orientation	33
.....	
Closing on Your Home	39
.....	
Property Owners Association (POA)	49
.....	
Caring for Your Home	61

LET'S BUILD A LIFE YOU'LL LOVE

Welcome to the Buffington Homes family! We've been an award-winning home builder in the beautiful and thriving region of Northwest Arkansas for more than 40 years. As a locally owned and operated company, we live here, too. We take great pride in the homes we build for our neighbors and have become known for our affordable luxury, quality construction, stylish interiors, spacious floor plans, and ideal locations across the region.

As you may have noticed, all of our communities are thoughtfully designed and conveniently located near schools, shopping, and local workplaces. Our floor plans and architectural designs are perfect for all life stages. Whether you're a first-time home buyer, growing family, or active adult, it's easy to build a Buffington Home that's truly personalized. We can't wait to get started on yours.

One of the most common things we hear from homeowners is how easy it is to build with us. We follow a step-by-step process and offer a one-of-a-kind design studio experience that makes your build more relaxed and enjoyable. We also communicate with you every step of the way so you feel confident about where your home stands. Our mission is to help homeowners build a life they'll love, and we're ready to do this for you!

INTRODUCTION

This section provides an overview of the steps in the new home process and includes checklists, agendas, and other materials designed to guide you through the various stages and explain our responsibilities as well as yours. If at any time you have a question, please contact us for assistance.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Purchasing a new home is an exciting experience. The process is also complex, with many details to be decided and arranged. While Buffington Homes is building your new home, you are an active participant by taking care of various important aspects of your purchase, which are listed for you below.

Building a new home is an investment of your money, your emotions, and your time. Many of the tasks involved will require your attention during regular business hours Monday through Friday, usually between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. This will extend to after move-in service as we address any warranty items for your new home.

The chronological list that follows outlines the events that typically occur in the purchase of a new home and provides an overview of the events that will require your time and attention. Where time frames are specified, your close attention helps us deliver your home on schedule.

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

Chapter 1 Purchasing Your Home

The purchase agreement and various addenda constitute the legal understanding regarding the purchase of your new home. Please read the purchase agreement and all attachments carefully. Once all the paperwork is signed, we suggest you insert those documents in Chapter 1 of this guide, "Purchasing Your Home".

Chapter 2 Construction of Your Home

Several tasks need to be completed prior to the start of construction. Some of these are our job (for instance, permitting, schedules, ordering materials), and some are your responsibility (being available for meetings and finalizing selections). Near the beginning of construction, we will offer to meet with you at a Preconstruction Meeting to review plans and specifications one final time. We also invite you to a Pre-Drywall Orientation to view your new home as we complete the rough mechanical stage, just before insulation is installed. Please read Chapter 2, "Construction of Your Home", for safety guidelines, construction site protocols, and quality.

Chapter 3 Design Studio Selections

"Design Studio Selections", Chapter 3 of this guide, will assist you in the exciting process of personalizing your new home with available selections.

Chapter 4 Homeowner Orientation

The homeowner orientation has several purposes. We will demonstrate the features of your home and discuss applicable maintenance and warranty details. Equally important, we want to confirm that we have delivered your new home at the quality level described in our documents and demonstrated in our Model Home and with all your selections correctly installed. For detailed information, please review Chapter 4, "Homeowner Orientation".

Chapter 5 Closing on Your Home

"Closing on Your Home", Chapter 5 of this guide, describes the documents you will sign and other important details about the closing process. We have included reminders to assist you in preparing for closing and move-in.

Chapter 6 Property Owners Association (POA)

The services provided by your community association are vital to your enjoyment of your new home and the long-term value of your investment. Understanding the services provided and knowing how to obtain answers to your questions is covered in Chapter 6.

Chapter 7 Caring for Your Home

Many of your responsibilities as a homeowner and Buffington Homes' responsibility under the terms of our home warranty are discussed in "Caring for Your Home", Chapter 7. Begin to become familiar with the routine home maintenance you should provide and our warranty service commitment to you. Buffington Homes' procedures for your warranty service are described in Chapter 7.

YOUR FEEDBACK AND REFERRALS

Our desire to maintain open communication with you extends through the buying process and after your move-in. In an effort to improve the product and service we provide, we welcome your comments on how we've performed. We survey our customers after design appointment, during construction, upon move-in, and finally during your warranty period. Our goals are to build both an outstanding home and customer relationship. Your feedback helps us reach these goals.

GUILD QUALITY

Approximately 2-4 weeks after your closing, you will receive a survey via email from an independent customer satisfaction survey organization, Guild Quality. The questionnaire covers the new home process. Your candid responses to this are much appreciated by Buffington Homes.

You will receive your final survey during your warranty period with Buffington Homes. This questionnaire focuses on quality and warranty service. Again, your time and thoughts are valuable to us as a means to improve.

Your spontaneous feedback—in person or by phone or email—is invited and welcomed at any time.

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

WHO'S WHO?

Communication Guidelines

Communication is vital to having a positive experience building with Buffington Homes. Understanding what is happening and knowing whom to contact with questions will help to achieve that. We believe that our responsibilities include establishing clear lines of communication. To that end, we have company-wide practices regarding communication which we would like to share with you:

- Our primary methods of communication include phone, text message, and email. There are several points throughout the process which we will meet in person. Though we welcome additional in-person meetings, we find that written communication can help better track questions and outstanding answers within our team.
- We strive to respond to within one workday. If a question requires input from experts outside our company (such as a trade contractor or supplier), we will let you know the expected time frame for an answer. Our goal is to contact you on time, even if it is to say we still need more time.
- Below are the general working hours of the personnel assigned to your home. If you are contacting personnel outside of these hours, there can be a delayed response.
- If you have not received an answer or an acknowledgment from the staff member you contacted within one workday, please alert us to this situation; technology is imperfect, and messages can be missed.
- We understand that you are anxious to get answers to your questions. However, contacting multiple staff members or even the same staff member multiple times in a brief period is unlikely to produce answers more quickly and may have the opposite effect. Duplicated efforts are often inefficient and can result in adding confusion.
- If you have contacted someone whose expertise or authority does not extend to your question, he or she will direct your inquiry to the correct individual or department and let you know that this has occurred. We are here to help you, even if that means simply communicating internally on your behalf.

The professionals listed below are glad to assist you or find the answers to your questions:

Sales Consultant	Field Manager	Lender
Name:	Name:	Name:
Phone:	Phone:	Phone:
Email:	Email:	Email:
Hours:	Hours:	Hours:
Title Company	Warranty Office	HOA Management Company
Name:	Name:	Name:
Phone:	Phone:	Phone:
Email:	Email:	Email:
Hours:	Hours:	Hours:

1 | PURCHASING YOUR HOME

- Purchasing Your Home Overview- purchasing a home is a legal process which involves several documents. These are reviewed alongside your sales consultant.
- Purchase Agreement Meeting Details—for each routine meeting we provide a table summarizing practical matters such as purpose, location, duration, preparation hints, etc.



PURCHASING YOUR HOME

You will use several standard forms when you buy your new home. These include the purchase agreement and several addenda. The purchase agreement becomes binding only when all parties have signed all forms and attachments. If you are new to the United States, Buffington Homes welcomes you and understands that you may be unfamiliar with our business procedures and traditions.

Purchase Agreement

The purchase agreement is the legal document that represents your decision to purchase a home. It describes your home (both a legal description and the street address), financing information, and additional legal provisions. We recommend that you read these documents carefully. Addenda vary by community but the list that follows describes common items.

Addenda

Exhibit A

Buffington Homes New Home Packet- documents providing a basic outline of our process, design studio disclosure, and our included luxury features.

Exhibit B

Buyers Selection Brochure outlines details of your floor plan, elevation, structural options, and so on. This will later be updated upon completion of the design selection process. Please plan to complete these within 21 days of signing your contract. See Chapter 3, "New Home Selections", for more information.

Homeowner Guide

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

PURCHASE AGREEMENT

MEETING DETAILS

Appointment Set by	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sales Consultant
Appointments Available	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Monday through Saturday, between 10:00 a.m. and 5:30 p.m.• Sunday between 1:00 p.m. and 5:30 p.m.
Where	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Model Home
Attendees	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Purchasers• Sales Consultant• When applicable, a real estate agent is welcome but not required to attend
Length	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 60-90 minutes, depending on your questions
Purposes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Document your decision to purchase a new home• Provide an overview of the new home process• Discuss any questions you have
Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• List any questions you wish to discuss• Arrive prepared to make your non-refundable deposit



2 | CONSTRUCTION OF YOUR HOME

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

- You have more opportunity for input into the design and finish details of a new home than for most other products. Our success in personalizing your home depends on effective and timely communication of your choices.
- Because of the time required for construction, you have many opportunities to view your home as it is built, ask questions, and discuss details.
- As a consumer, you rarely have the opportunity to watch as the products you purchase are created. Unlike other products that are created in a setting where mistakes can be corrected before the product leaves the factory, you will be able to watch as mistakes are made and corrected along the way.



START OF CONSTRUCTION

Before construction of your home can begin, Buffington Homes has several important tasks to accomplish that involve outside people and entities.

For example, your selections or change requests may necessitate an update to house plans, elevations, trade contractor schedules, and material orders. Several of these tasks must be completed prior to applying for a building permit and must be completed prior to starting construction on your home.

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

PRECONSTRUCTION MEETING

You will have the opportunity to meet with your builder several times throughout this process, and we would be happy to schedule additional site visits to address concerns as needed. The first of these is a preconstruction meeting. Your sales consultant schedules this appointment once all of your selections are completed and just as we are preparing to start construction. This meeting takes approximately 60 to 90 minutes.

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

PRECONSTRUCTION CONFERENCE

MEETING DETAILS

Appointment Set by	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sales Consultant
Appointments Available	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Monday through Thursday, between 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.
Where	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Model Home
Attendees	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Purchasers• Field Manager• New Home Specialist
Length	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 60-90 minutes, depending on your questions
Purposes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review plans, specifications, selections, and any questions you may have regarding those items• Discuss what you should expect during the construction process• Outline construction site safety, site visit protocols, and how to handle questions
Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• List any questions you wish to discuss• Bring your selection materials and this homeowner guide

SAFETY

We understand that you may want to visit your new home between your construction meetings. A new home construction site is exciting, but it can also be dangerous. Your safety is of prime importance to us. Therefore, we must require that you contact Buffington Homes before visiting your homesite. We reserve the right to require that you wear a hard hat and that a member of our staff accompany you during your visit. Please always observe commonsense safety procedures when visiting:

- Please leave children at home when planning to visit your new homesite. A construction site may present dangers that are particularly dangerous for children.
- Do not walk backward, even one step. Look in the direction you are moving at all times.
- Watch for boards, cords, tools, nails, or other construction materials that might cause tripping, puncture wounds, or other injury.
- Do not enter any level of a home that is not yet equipped with stairs and rails.
- Stay a minimum of six feet from all excavations.
- Give large, noisy equipment or delivery vehicles plenty of room. Assume that the driver can neither see nor hear you.
- Wear suitable shoes that protect your feet during your visit.
- In addition to safety considerations, be aware that mud, paint, drywall compound, and other construction materials are in use and can get onto your shoes or clothing.

PRE-DRYWALL TOUR

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

Although the time to make changes has passed, this meeting provides all of us with an opportunity to confirm that we are correctly installing your selections.

As with the preconstruction meeting, your pre-drywall tour is scheduled by your Buffington Homes sales consultant. You will meet your builder at your new home. Pre-Drywall meetings usually take about 45 minutes. Please remember to bring this homeowner guide, selection sheets, and any approved change requests.

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

PRE-DRYWALL TOUR

MEETING DETAILS

Appointment Set by • Sales Consultant

Appointments Available • Monday through Thursday, between 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.

Where • Model Home

Attendees • Purchasers
• Field Manager

Length • Approximately 30 minutes, depending on your questions

Purposes • Review exterior and interior quality
• Confirm installation of selections up to this point
• Update the delivery date target

Preparation • List any questions you wish to discuss
• Bring your selection materials and this homeowner guide
• Wear shoes and clothing appropriate to an active construction site
• We will provide hard hats

LOCKS AND KEYS

Once exterior doors and locks are installed, we will access your home with a construction master key. Company policy prohibits staff members from loaning these keys to purchasers or their agents. When you take possession, using your permanent key in the locks for the first time will reposition the lock tumblers and the construction master keys will no longer open the doors of your new home.

PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS

The building department of the municipality where your home is to be located must review and approve the plans and specifications for your home. We then construct your home to comply with these approved plans and specifications. They become part of our agreements with trade contractors and suppliers. Only written instructions from Buffington Homes can change these contracts. Even with this detailed documentation, each home is still unique. Many factors can cause variations between the model home you viewed and the home we deliver to you.

Regulatory Changes

From time to time, municipal agencies adopt new codes or regulations that can affect your home. Such changes are usually adopted in the interest of safety and are legal requirements with which Buffington Homes must comply. Therefore, our superintendents may construct the same floor plan slightly differently in two different jurisdictions or at two different times within the same jurisdiction.

Topography and Home Site Conditions

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

Existing Trees

Buffington Homes identifies any existing trees on your home site that must be removed to create room for your home, driveway, and so on. Our construction practices include steps intended to preserve other trees in a healthy condition. However, because the reaction of trees to construction activities and your new home are outside our control, we are unable to guarantee the health or survival of any existing trees.

Utilities and Mailboxes

The location of meters, phone and electrical junction boxes, and mailboxes are examples of items outside the control of Buffington Homes. The authority of the utility companies and the postal service to designate the placement of these items is well established. All utilities, easements, and setbacks will be pointed out at your pre-construction meeting.

Changes in Materials, Products, and Methods

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

In all instances, any substitution of method or product that we make will be of equal or better quality than that shown in our model homes or that you have selected. Since such substitutions or changes may become necessary because of matters outside our control, we reserve the right to make them without notification.

Model Homes

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

Measurements

Because finish sizes can vary slightly, you should measure for window coverings in your home rather than in any model home. We are happy to allow access to the home to take these measurements, but only during the finishing stages of construction.

Television and the Internet

You may be aware of various home construction methods and materials from watching television programs or exploring the Internet. Buffington Homes routinely reviews new approaches with a focus on building homes with materials and methods that perform predictably and to our standards. We take a conservative approach to utilizing new methods or products until they have been proven over time. In addition, what is appropriate for a home in one area may be inappropriate for your new home because of soil, climate, and other conditions.

Construction Variations

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

QUALITY

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

Errors and Omissions

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

Your Questions

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

- Bring your concern up at the frame stage tour.
- Contact your sales consultant, in writing, with your question. We will note the date and time it was received and will do our best to respond within two business days unless we notify you that additional time is needed.

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

- Your concern may involve a detail Buffington Homes has already noticed and appreciates that you point it out. Still, correction may not occur immediately, and we may schedule the correction for the next routine trade visit. Also, a particular trade may be unavailable on short notice.
- Work may simply be incomplete; an early stage can look wrong and be correct when the work is finished.
- Methods and materials vary from region to region and change over time. When you are familiar with one method, you naturally question a different one. That does not make the new method wrong. Ask questions as necessary; we are happy to talk to you about these details.

Ugly Duckling Stages

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

SINGLE SOURCE

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

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

TRADE CONTRACTORS

Your home is built through the combined efforts of specialists in many trades—from foundation, through framing, mechanicals, and insulation, to drywall, trim, and finish work. In order to ensure you Buffington Homes’ standard of construction, only authorized suppliers, trade contractors, and Buffington Homes’

employees are permitted to perform work in your home.

Each trade contractor works on a limited portion of the home; they are unaware of all the details that affect the home and are therefore unable to offer accurate judgments.

Suppliers and trade contractors have no authority to enter into agreements for Buffington Homes. For your protection and theirs, the terms of our trade contractor agreements prohibit alterations without written authorization from Buffington Homes. Their failure to comply with this procedure can result in termination of their contract. All questions or requests for changes should go through Buffington Homes. We will obtain input from trades when that is appropriate.

CONSTRUCTION SCHEDULE

The delivery date for your new home begins as an estimate. Until the roof is on and the structure is enclosed, weather can dramatically affect the delivery date. Even after the home itself is past the potential for weather-related delays, weather can severely impact installation of utility services, grading, and concrete flatwork, to mention a few examples. Extended periods of wet weather or freezing temperatures bring work to a stop in an entire region.

When favorable conditions return, the trades go back to work, picking up where they left off. Please understand that they are as eager as you are to get caught up and to see progress on your home.

“Nothing’s Happening”

Expect several days during construction of your home when it appears that nothing is happening. This can occur for a number of reasons.

Lead Time

Each trade is scheduled days or weeks in advance of the actual work. This period is referred to as “lead time.” Time is allotted for completing each trade’s work on your home. Sometimes, one trade completes its work a bit ahead of schedule. The next trade already has an assigned time slot which usually cannot be changed on short notice.

Building Department Inspections

Progress also pauses while the home awaits building department inspections. This is part of the planned sequence of the construction steps and occurs at several points in every home.

Detail Work

Additionally, throughout construction of a home, work progresses rapidly at times as highly visible stages are completed (such as installing large expanses of walls) and more slowly at others (such as detail work to frame soffits and closets). If you have questions about the pace of work, please contact your sales consultant

Delivery Date Updates

Buffington Homes recognizes that timing is critical to planning your move. Although a guaranteed date is unrealistic in the early stages of construction, we can provide regular updates. We will give you an estimated delivery date at each of our construction meetings. You are also welcome to check with your sales consultant between meetings for the most current target date.

As completion nears, more factors come under our control and we can be more precise about your delivery date. Expect delivery appointments to be set several weeks before delivery. We suggest that, until you receive this commitment, you avoid finalizing arrangements for your move. Until then, flexibility is the key to comfort, sanity, and convenience. We want you to enjoy this process and avoid stress caused by ambiguity that is unavoidable. Please take note of the following caution:

Keep in mind that your belongings may be brought into the home and garage only after closing because of insurance and building department regulations. In addition, unexpected delays in details addressed by your lender, the building department, utilities, or the title company to name but a few, can delay us in delivering your keys. Planning to move in two or more days after closing is a logical response to such uncertainty.

CONSTRUCTION SEQUENCE

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

Construction Start

*Preconstruction Conference**

Foundation

- ☐ Excavation
- ☐ Footer installation
- ☐ Foundation block set, or basement walls formed and poured.
- ☐ Perimeter drain, if applicable
- ☐ Waterproof (basement walls if applicable)
- ☐ Insulation, if applicable
- ☐ Underslab plumbing, electric (if applicable) installed

Municipal Inspection

Pour slab

Framing

- ☐ First floor
- ☐ Second floor
- ☐ Roof trusses
- ☐ Roof sheathing
- ☐ Windows and Doors

Roofing

- ☐ Felt or paper
- ☐ Valley flashing
- ☐ Shingles

Exterior

Exterior trim

- ☐ Fascia (boards at ends of rafters)
- ☐ Windows and doors
- ☐ Finish materials
- ☐ Trim
- ☐ Deck, if applicable
- ☐ Gutters and downspouts, if applicable
- ☐ Exterior painting or staining
- ☐ Concrete or asphalt
- ☐ Fine grading

- ☐ Landscaping, if applicable

Interior

Mechanical systems rough-in

HVAC (heating, ventilating, and air conditioning)

- ☐ Plumbing
- ☐ Electrical
- ☐ Rough inspections

Pre-Drywall Tour*

Insulation

Drywall

- ☐ Hang
- ☐ Inspection (if applicable)
- ☐ Tape and texture

Interior trim

- ☐ Doors, baseboards, casings

Install Built-ins if applicable

Buffington Quality Standards Inspection

Certificate of occupancy

Homeowner Orientation*

Closing*

Move-in

Warranty Visits*

****Meetings scheduled with you***



3 | DESIGN STUDIO EXPERIENCE

Part of the fun of buying a new home is selecting features, finish materials, and colors. You will select your floor plan and structural options with your Sales Professional at your community model home. All other selections will be made in your Design Studio appointments.

- Plans and Specifications—confirm your understanding of included and available features for your new home
- Design Studio Process & Paperwork—reminders to guide you through the selection process
- Preparation— We will provide you with virtual design books and decor tips that you will find helpful in preparing for your design appointments
- Design Studio Appointment Details



PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS

Take as much time as you need to visit the model homes with your New Home Specialist to become familiar with all our included features. In addition, notice the variety of selected features displayed in each model for your consideration. Because we realize it can be difficult to make choices from a printed list, we have designed our models so that you can see many of the actual items in person. Some selections in the model home may no longer be available, but we will show you comparable replacements.

If you visited one of our other communities to see an example of a floor plan not shown as a model in the community where your new home will be built, take special care to study the specifications as they often vary from community to community. Your sales professional will assist you in clarifying what items are included and which are available as optional upgrades.

Included Features

Each floor plan includes a substantial number of luxury items and materials as listed on the luxury included items sheet available from your sales professional. Please review this information carefully to prevent any misunderstandings about which features are included in the base price of your new home. These features are subject to change overtime based on availability. Our model home may not always reflect the same features listed on the Included Luxury Items sheet. If you have any questions, your New Home Specialist will be able to assist you.

Optional Features

Buffington Homes values our customers' feedback. Based on that feedback, we have selected offerings that accommodate a wide variety of up-to-date design choices. Pricing for the design selections is available through your New Home Specialist and design consultant.

SELECTION PROCESS & PAPERWORK

Buffington Homes provides you with a virtual Lifestyle and Design Book showing many of the choices available to you prior to your appointments. We recommend that you review these books and begin formulating questions to discuss with your design consultant at your appointment.

Informed Choices

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

Be Thorough

At the end of your appointment, you will be asked to finalize and approve your selections. It is important to review all selections to ensure that they are correct. All selections are installed based on what is on the selections sheet, so if an item is incorrect on the selection sheet it will be installed incorrectly. Once all your selections have been made a visual design board will be created for your reference. It is important to review this board to make sure it is in line with the selections that you chose.

Colors

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

Exterior Choices

Our Design Team is committed to keep the streetscape of your community visually diversified and beautiful. This means the exterior selections on either side of your home will not be repeated. At the time of your Design Studio appointment our design team will evaluate the exteriors previously selected on either side of your home to guide you to the options available for your homesite. This protects the value of your home by elevating the look and feel of your Community.

Availability

If a selection you make turns out to be unavailable, we will contact you and request that you make a different selection within five business days. Because so many choices are offered, Buffington Homes is unable to predict when a particular manufacturer or supplier may discontinue any particular item. We regret any inconvenience this causes. Similarly, materials readily available when your home is built may be unavailable in years to come if replacements are needed.

Record of Selections

Please retain your selection sheets and virtual design boards for future reference. They are useful for typical home maintenance when matching items such as paint colors, tile grout, or replacement of items in your home.

PREPARATION

The process of purchasing your home, along with making numerous selections can seem overwhelming. In preparing to make selections for your new home, the following suggestions may help make the most of your time with our design consultant and create more enjoyable process.

Preferences

The first step is to start collecting pictures, samples, or anything you feel will help your Buffington Homes designer learn about you and how you envision your home.

- We encourage you to share inspiration photos and ideas with our design consultants to help them guide you towards the best design for your home
- Visit our model homes—they offer potential ideas that were coordinated by professionals. Watch for color combinations, selections, and ideas that appeal to you. Feel free to visit model homes in any of our communities, just keep in mind that included features may vary.

Using any (or all!) of these methods, you will soon have a substantial collection that reflects your personal style.

Lifestyle

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

- What hobbies or other activities do you want to accommodate?
- How do you celebrate holidays?

- Do any family members have special needs?
- Do you frequently have overnight guests?
- Will you have pets in the home?
- Do you spend a lot of time outside? How do you use your outdoor space?

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

- Will the space be used for long hours or brief periods of time?
- Who will use the space most often and at what time of day?
- What is the focal point (one element that draws your attention when you enter) of the room or space? Perhaps a staircase, fireplace, built-ins, or the view? Once you identify the focal point, you can sometimes easily decide on how the rest of the space should look.
- With these details in mind, ask yourself what atmosphere you want to achieve—room by room. The room's purpose may influence your answer.

Color

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

- Warm colors (red, orange, and so on) work well in spaces where high energy activities take place. Warm colors appear to advance (for instance, a red or yellow wall seems closer).
- Cool colors (blue or green, for example) work well in quiet areas where a calmer mood is appropriate, such as the bedrooms. Cool colors and neutrals appear to recede. Consequently they can be used to open up a smaller space.
- Sharp color contrasts or bold colors are fun in rooms used occasionally. They can become tiresome in areas used a great deal.
- Paint is likely to look darker on walls with windows. The light from the window will shine on opposite or adjacent walls making them appear lighter and creating a shadow on the wall with the window.
- Light colors typically make a space seem larger while dark colors create a cozy atmosphere.
- Color samples (whether carpet, paint chip, brick, siding, and so on) often look slightly different once the same color or material is applied or installed over a larger area. This can result from the other colors in the area, the type and quality of lighting, and in the case of paint, whether the finish is flat, matte, or glossy.
- As you consider colors, keep lighting in mind. Look at color samples in many different lights to gain an accurate perspective of what it can look like in your home. An ideal time to select colors is between the hours of one and three o'clock in the afternoon when the outside light is close to true white. This allows you to see the true nature of the color you are considering.

Light

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

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

Flooring

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

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

Measurements

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

- Plan for 14 to 18 inches of leg room between a coffee table and sofa.
- The recommended size of the TV (diagonal measurement) is the viewing distance in inches divided by two. For example, if you usually sit 10 feet from the TV, that's 120 inches. The screen size in this room would be 60 inches. ($120/2 = 60$ inches)
- Traffic lanes should typically be 3 feet wide.
- Adult seating at tables requires 20 inches plus 12 to 16 more inches to pull a chair back to get up and down. Therefore, plan for 32-36 inches of clearance between a table and the wall. You are likely to want about 44 inches on the serving side.
- The minimum clearance between the edge of bed and nearest wall should be 24 inches.
- When using an area rug, begin with 8 to 12 inches of exposed floor on all sides. (Ignore this if your goal is to create a special-use space in a large area.)
- For arranging art and other items on your walls, begin with items located 6 to 9 inches above a sofa or at eye level when you are seated in the area. Frames should be approximately 2/3 of the size of the piece of furniture over which an item hangs. When you are placing a smaller piece, you might want to pair it with another of approximately the same size.

Window Coverings

Window coverings are typically installed for one or more reasons:

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

Buffington Homes offers 2" Faux wood blinds as an optional feature. Because there are numerous window treatments available after closing, you will want to consider details such as –

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

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

SELECTION APPOINTMENT

Meeting Details

Appointment Set by • Design Studio

Appointments Available • Monday-Thursday 8:30 AM and 1:30 PM

Where • Lifestyle Appointment is conducted virtually through Zoom
• Design Appointment- Design Studio located at:
2826 E. Joyce Blvd. In Fayetteville, AR

Attendees • Purchasers
• Design Consultant
• When applicable, a real estate agent is welcome but not required to attend
• Please note that children are not permitted to attend the appointment

Length • Lifestyle Appoint: 1.5-2 hours
• Design Appointment: 3-4 hours

Purposes • Select and document choices for your new home
• Discuss any questions you have about your selections

Preparation • Take time to research designs that you are interested in both interior and exterior selections
• Bring color samples, notes, photos of items that will influence your choices



4 | HOME OWNER ORIENTATION

- Quality—our commitment is to deliver your home at the same overall level of quality as demonstrated in our model homes
- Scheduling—homeowner orientation appointments serve you best when they occur with adequate daylight, so we schedule them Monday through Friday, between 8:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.
- Preparation—hints on how to get the most from your orientation
- Homeowner Orientation Meeting Details



HOME OWNER ORIENTATION

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

- A demonstration of your new home.
- Review of key points about maintenance and limited warranty coverage.
- Confirmation that the overall quality of your home is equal to the overall quality of our model home.
- Buffington Homes installed selections as you ordered them.
- Small parts (such as the kitchen sink strainer) are present.
- Applicable manufacturer documents are included.
- All cosmetic surfaces are in good and acceptable condition.

QUALITY

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

- Incomplete or missing (Cabinet knob missing, left of range)
- Incorrect (Door hardware finish – satin nickel vs. oil rubbed bronze)
- Dysfunctional (Bath fan does not come on)
- Below company standard (Mitered corner rough, top right of kitchen door, hallway side)
- Damaged (Scrape on wall from carpet installation)
- Soiled (Mud on garage floor)

At some point, quality ceases to be scientific and becomes a matter of personal taste. In a few areas, your personal standards may exceed even our high standards. Our commitment to you is that we will deliver what we promised. If you wish to add more personal touches after moving in, we will be happy to assist you with information.

Last Minute Activity

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

Cosmetic Surfaces

Cosmetic surface damage caused during construction is readily noticeable during the orientation. Such damage can also occur during the move-in process or through daily activities. Therefore, during your orientation, we will confirm that all surfaces are in good and acceptable condition. Details that need attention will be listed on your orientation forms.

Repair of cosmetic surface damage that occurs after move-in is your responsibility. Our home warranty specifically excludes repairs for damage caused by moving in or living in the home. If your movers scratch the hardwood entry floor bringing the piano in, notify the moving company. If you slide a packing box across a counter and a staple scratches the surface, repair of the counter is your responsibility. Buffington Homes is always available to assist you with information about cosmetic repairs you may need to make. Additional details appear on the orientation agenda.

Seasonal Work

Any construction tasks that cannot be completed during uncooperative weather are classified as “seasonal,” meaning that they will be completed when weather permits. We maintain a list of all seasonal work that remains on homes delivered under seasonal conditions. We will complete outstanding work as conditions permit - generally in chronological order in which the homes were delivered.

Factors that affect seasonal work include temperature, precipitation, frost penetration, and the inspection process. If your home faces north it may take a lot longer for the ground to thaw versus your neighbor who has a south facing driveway.

SCHEDULING

Our closing coordinator schedules the orientation with you for several weeks before your closing. Appointments are available to begin Monday through Thursday, 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. In winter months, beginning by 2:00 p.m. assures sufficient day light to view all surfaces adequately. We meet at your new home. Expect your orientation to take approximately two hours.

PREPARATION

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

Allow Enough Time

Arrange your schedule so you can use the full amount of time allotted—we plan on two hours. If significantly more time is needed, we will schedule a second appointment.

Bring this Guide

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

Avoid Distractions

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

Review Orientation Agenda

We have included a copy of a typical orientation agenda at the end of this chapter. We document action items just as we have at other meetings.

Bring Your Questions

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

Attire

Wear close-toed, low-heeled shoes that are appropriate for walking around the exterior of the home and convenient to get off and on. We will tour both the exterior and interior of your home. Anticipate that some dust, bending, kneeling, and reaching will be encountered.

Get Involved

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

HOME OWNER ORIENTATION

Meeting Details

Appointment Set by • Closing Coordinator

Appointments Available • Monday through Friday, between 8:00 am and 3:00 pm

Where • Your new home

Attendees • Purchasers
• Field Manager
• Sales Professional

Length • Up to two hours, depending on your questions

Purposes • Demonstrate features of your home
• Review key maintenance points
• Confirm that quality reflects the standards shown in our models
• Confirm installation of selections
• Confirm manufacturer literature and small parts are accounted for
• Confirm the good condition of cosmetic surfaces
• Confirm your Confirmation Tour appointment
• Discuss planned warranty visits and reporting procedures

Preparation • List any questions you wish to discuss.
• Bring your selection materials and this homeowner guide.
• Wear shoes and clothing appropriate for an active construction site.
• Attend alone—we would like your undivided attention.
• Plan to participate in a hands-on way.
• Plan to turn your cell phone off if possible.
• Take time to enjoy a preview visit to become familiar with the Design Studio and the choices available
• Bring color samples, notes, photos of items that will influence your choices

5 | CLOSING ON YOUR HOME

- Confirming Your Closing Date— This occurs after your brick installation has been completed and your flooring has been installed. Until you receive written notice, many factors can influence the schedule
- Confirmation Tour—a brief meeting just prior to closing to confirm completion of items that may have been listed during your homeowner orientation and document any remaining attention that is needed for our mutual files and your protection
- Confirmation Tour Meeting Details and Sample Agenda
- Closing Location—we confirm the location for your closing in the 45-day confirmation notice
- The Closing Disclosure: The “Final Number”—financial details that comprise the final payment you will make at closing can be determined only once your closing date is set. This is something commonly provided by your lender or title company.
- Documents—finalizing your home purchase involves signing several documents
- Preparation—several tasks need your attention in the weeks just prior to the closing
- Closing Appointment Meeting Details
- Moving Hints—some reminders and checklists to make moving easier



CLOSING ON YOUR HOME

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

CONFIRMING YOUR CLOSING DATE

Buffington Homes recognizes that timing is vitally important in planning your move. We can specify an exact delivery date when construction reaches a point at which weather and other factors are unlikely to affect completion of your home. This occurs after your brick installation has been completed and your flooring has been installed. Until you receive written notice, many factors can influence the schedule. Until you receive the notice, many factors can influence the schedule:

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

Confirmation Tour

Your confirmation tour occurs after your Homeowner Orientation and typically is the day before or day of closing. This is a time to confirm all items identified in the HOO have been completed or a timeline is established for all outstanding items. In addition to confirming the homes completion, this is also a time to be introduced to our Customer Care Department who is responsible for handling warranty requests.

Our Construction Team is responsible for resolving items noted during the orientation. Many of these can be completed before you move in. Sometimes parts need to be ordered or assistance from speciality trades may be required. Under these circumstances you can expect us to resolve all items within 30 days unless we inform you of other scheduling. Any items still outstanding at your confirmation tour are documented on a post-close punch list.

If work does need to be performed in your new home after your move-in, construction personnel are available for appointments Monday through Thursday, 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. or Friday 8:00 a.m. until 12:00 noon. Gaining access to occupied homes to complete orientation items is a concern to homeowners and builders alike. Buffington Homes asks that you make appointments so that someone over 18 is present for repairs. Working around your busy schedule may result in service taking longer than anyone wants. Your cooperation is essential.

CONFIRMATION TOUR

Meeting Details

Appointment Set by • Your New Home Specialist will set this at the time the closing date is confirmed

Appointments Available • Monday through Thursday, between 8:00 am and 3:00 pm

Where • Your new home

Attendees • Purchasers
• Sales Professional
• Customer Care Manager
• Construction Field Manager

When • 15-20 minutes

Purposes • Tour your home's exterior if weather prevented that at the orientation
• Review completed work performed on orientation items
• Document any remaining items and discuss expected scheduling
• Introduction to our Customer Care Team for warranty

Preparation • Bring any questions you have about operation of your new home or warranty service

CLOSING LOCATION

Closing appointments take place at the title company's office.

CLOSING DISCLOSURE: THE "FINAL NUMBER"

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

The final cost figure is available near to the actual closing, which will be provided by your lender or the title company. Although a reasonably close estimate may be determined before the date of closing, the proration of several items included is affected by the closing date and cannot be calculated until that date is known.

Please check with your title company on how they would like to receive the funds that you are required to bring to closing, which could include wiring the funds or receiving a cashier's check from your personal bank. This may require advanced planning, so please plan accordingly.

The Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act (RESPA) provides you with many protections. Under this law, you can review the settlement page that lists costs you will be paying at closing at least three business days before the closing appointment.

DOCUMENTS

The materials involved in a closing include such items as mortgage loan documents, disclosures, property owner association items, a statement of closing costs and adjustments, and the limited warranty agreement. You will also receive items in the mail in the weeks following your closing. For example, some mortgage lenders forward coupon booklets for payments. You can also expect correspondence from your title company and your Property Owner's Association.

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

General Warranty Deed

The general warranty deed conveys the home and lot to you, subject only to permitted exceptions.

Title Commitment

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

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

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

Buffington Homes Limited Warranty

A signed and dated copy of the Buffington Homes Limited Warranty is included with your closing documents.

Promissory Note

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

Mortgage

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

Property Owners Association (POA) Documents

You can request a copy of your Property Owners Association covenants, conditions, and restrictions; the association bylaws; and articles of incorporation from your sales professional. Buffington Homes recommends that you read these carefully. The provisions they contain will be enforced. Further details about the Property Owners Association can be found in Chapter 7, POA.

PREPARATION

Several tasks need to be completed prior to your closing appointment. Double check this list several weeks prior to your expected closing date to avoid last minute stress.

We recommend that you plan deliveries of any kind for two or more days after the closing date since unexpected delays can occur which affect the closing date

BEING PRESENT FOR CLOSING

Though there are options to do a 'mail out closing', it is always best to be prepared to be in town for closing. Please keep in mind that if a buyer is married both parties must be present for closing, even if only one partner is on the loan. In the event one partner is unable to attend closing a Power of Attorney can be prepared for the transaction to allow for one person to sign for both. This would need to be done in advance of closing, so it is imperative that this is communicated to the title company ahead of time

Insurance

Your lender and the title company will require proof of a homeowner's policy from your insurance company. Your insurance agent should know exactly what is needed. We suggest that you arrange for this at least three weeks before the expected closing date and confirm that your lender has received it. This proof of insurance must be provided before Buffington Homes is able to deliver the keys to your new home.

Buffington Homes or Lender Issues

Please discuss and resolve any questions, agreements, or other details regarding your home with your sales professional well in advance of closing. Likewise, confirm with your lender that all necessary closing preparations have been addressed.

Keys

Keys and garage door openers are delivered upon closing by the title company. Because it is so important, we repeat our recommendation that you plan deliveries accordingly to avoid stress and inconvenience. Our insurance prohibits us from permitting you to store items in the home prior to closing.

UTILITY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

Buffington Homes will have utility service removed from its name a week after the closing date. You will need to notify all applicable utility companies of your move so that service is provided in your name. We suggest that you contact these companies well ahead of time to avoid any interruption in service. A completed list of the utility companies for your community will be provided to you at the Homeowner Orientation.

COMPANY	PHONE	NOTES

CLOSING ON YOUR HOME

MEETING DETAILS

Appointment Set by • Title Company and/or Lender

Appointments Available • Monday through Friday, between 8:00 am and 5:00 pm

Where • Title Company

Attendees • Closing Agent
• Purchasers

When • 45 minutes to an hour

Purposes • Sign final documents
• Make final payment
• Receive the keys and garage door openers to your new home

Preparation • Arrange for homeowner insurance and have your agent forward evidence of insurance to your lender and the title company
• Transfer utility services into your name as of the date of closing
• Confirm with your lender that financial arrangements are finalized and all documents are ready for closing
• Transfer funds, if necessary, sufficiently in advance to allow for processing
• Obtain a certified check in the amount of the “final number” and made out to the title company
• Please silence your cell phone

MOVING HINTS

Plan your move for two or more days following the date of closing. The many entities involved in the closing process can cause unexpected delays outside of your control or ours. We want you to avoid last minute stress and inconvenience.

As you move into your new home, take precautions to protect vulnerable surfaces such as hardwood floors; cover railings with moving pads or blankets; remove doors where furniture might be a tight fit; and protect carpet with ribbed, plastic runners.

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

Moving Preparation Checklist

- ☐ Compare proposals of professional movers:
 - Costs for services such as packing and unpacking
 - Costs of packing materials and boxes
 - Distance and weight charges
 - Insurance
 - Availability and notice needed
- ☐ Plan a self-move well in advance:
 - Make a truck reservation early (4-5 weeks or more)
 - Include a reservation for a dolly and moving pads
 - Reconfirm one-week prior
- ☐ If you have children, involve them in planning and preparing for the move.
- ☐ Retain receipts for tax purposes. Moving costs may be deductible.
- ☐ Send change-of-address notices subscription services.
- ☐ Contact utilities several weeks prior to your move.
- ☐ Give the forwarding order to your former post office one month prior to assure uninterrupted service.
- ☐ Register children in their new schools.
- ☐ Transfer medical and dental records, if necessary.
- ☐ Confirm homeowner insurance policy has been issued and evidence of it forwarded to the title company and your lender.
- ☐ Order checks with your new address; update financial records.
- ☐ Update your driver's license, vehicle, and voter registration.
- ☐ Properly dispose of flammable or hazardous materials that should not be moved.
- ☐ Donate unwanted items.
- ☐ Return borrowed items.

Packing Materials

- ☐ Boxes of various sizes; cartons for mattresses
- ☐ Packing tape and heavy string
- ☐ Packing paper, bubble wrap (newspaper is inexpensive, but you may have to wash all the dishes when you unpack due to the ink transfer)
- ☐ "Fragile" labels for delicate items
- ☐ Labels to identify rooms, such as den, master bedroom, and so on; include a number on these
- ☐ Markers
- ☐ Master packing list (list each box by number with name/room and brief description of contents)
- ☐ Scissors
- ☐ Furniture pads, blankets, rugs, and/or plastic runner to protect carpet

Moving Day Necessities

- ☐ Children's toys and games
- ☐ Toilet paper
- ☐ Beverages and snacks
- ☐ Paper towels
- ☐ Soap and hand towels
- ☐ Trash bags
- ☐ First aid kit
- ☐ Prescription medication
- ☐ Medical supplies for special needs
- ☐ Pad and pen
- ☐ Shelf liners
- ☐ Small tools: tape measure, scissors, screwdrivers, hammer
- ☐ Dryer vent flex hose
- ☐ Ice maker hook-up kit (if not purchased from Buffington Homes)
- ☐ New hoses for washing machine
- ☐ Picture hangers
- ☐ Plant hooks
- ☐ Phone and charger
- ☐ Furniture protector pads

6 | PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION

- Overview: Who Does What? - your new community includes many services and a lot of participants, each with their own responsibilities.
- Homeowners—we welcome you to the community and intend to ensure your enjoyment of your new home, neighbors, and the services provided by your association.
- Board of Directors—initially staffed with Directors appointed by Buffington Homes. The Board will be staffed by elected homeowners once the Association is transitioned to the Homeowners. The Board of Directors makes decisions for the community.
- POA Meetings—your association Board of Directors meet as deemed necessary. Additionally, an annual membership meeting will be held, to which you will be invited to attend.
- Management Company—much of the daily attention to the community is contracted for and overseen by the appointed management company; you will channel your concerns or questions regarding exterior details through them.
- Committees—we hope you will get involved in a hands-on way to guide the activities and events in your community
- Design Review—changes or additions to exteriors necessitate review and approval by your association
- Community Turnover—when 90 percent of the homes have closed, the process to turn control of common areas and administrative duties from Builder control to the association begins.
- Common Area Use & Care—your community is planned from the beginning with essential services in place. It may also include amenities such as a clubhouse or other facilities which will be maintained by the Association.
- FAQs: Frequently Asked Questions—some questions come up repeatedly so we have collected them here and hope that you will find the information helpful..

OVERVIEW: WHO DOES WHAT?

Additional details follow but this list will provide you with a general perspective on who is responsible for which details of community care and management.

Homeowners

- Enjoy and maintain your home.
- Take advantage of recreational amenities where available.
- Attend community activities that appeal to you.
- Vote in association elections.
- As your interest dictates, serve on a committee or as a board member.
- Observe covenants and community policies.
- Pay dues, fees, and assessments.

Developer/Buffington Homes

- Design the overall community.
- Create and file Declaration of Covenants, Conditions, and Restrictions.
- Establish and participate in the Property Owners' Association.
- Market the community.
- Design, sell, and build new homes.
- Provide warranty services for individual homes.

Community Property Owners' Association

- Elect a Board of Directors and establish committees to direct the business of the association.
- Engage and direct a managing agent to administer day-to-day business.
- Communicate community information to homeowners.
- Enforce covenants.
- Review requests for exterior modifications to residences to be completed after closing.
- Organize and promote social activities.
- Establish dues and fees as appropriate.

Board of Directors

- Prepare an annual budget for the association.
- Perform bookkeeping and accounting functions.
- Oversee architectural control.
- Enforce community covenants.

- Establish appropriate committees to accomplish the goals of the association.
- Hold meetings as deemed necessary.
- Host an annual membership meeting which includes review and approval of the budget for the upcoming year.
- Attend special meetings that may be called by the board president.

Management Company

- Maintain a current membership list.
- Receive and deposit assessment payments from the members.
- Follow up on delinquent accounts.
- Receive, review, and approve invoices for work done for the association.
- Reconcile the association checkbook.
- Present monthly accounting reports to the board.
- Assist with the preparation and distribution of association newsletters and notices.
- Tour the community regularly to confirm compliance with covenants and design review standards.
- Issue correspondence on behalf of the association.
- Work with the association's attorney regarding legal issues or accountants regarding audits or taxes.

Local Municipality

- Emergency medical service
- Fire protection
- Law enforcement
- Road maintenance (after acceptance)
- Snow removal (roadways only)
- Street signs, traffic controls

HOMEOWNERS

Individual homeowners like you make Buffington Homes communities possible. Your commitment to your family, home, and your community helps to create one of our area's most prestigious residential communities. There are ways you can make the experience even better.

New Home Care & Maintenance

We provide you with considerable information to assist you with homeowner maintenance. All interior plus a few exterior items are your responsibility. Taking an active part in home maintenance from the first day will preserve your investment and enjoyment of the new home. Our limited warranty also provides you with procedures for reporting warranty items. Report warranty items directly to Buffington Homes' Warranty Department—see Chapter 7, "Caring for Your Home", for complete details.

Enjoy Your New Community

When you purchased your new home, you bought more than a house - you bought a lifestyle. Make full use of it by taking time out of your busy schedule to relax and get to know the area as well as the people who live in it.

- There are a lot of great people that build with Buffington Homes. Get out and meet your neighbors.
- Explore the common areas; get to know your community.
- If your community includes amenities, become familiar with the hours and policies for their use and enjoy your choice of recreation.
- Join in the various social activities— schedules are included in email blasts.
- To stay informed about news and events in the community, be certain to sign-up at the management company's Website as described under the "Management Company" entry below. Most routine news is shared with homeowners via emails.

Take Advantage of Your Association Membership

As a homeowner, you are automatically a member of the Property Owners Association. Whether or not you choose to participate actively in the social program or in governing the community, the cooperation of all residents is essential for the community to be successful. In practical terms, that cooperation takes the form of observing both the letter and the spirit of the community:

- Read the community covenants and restrictions (CC&Rs) thoroughly. CC&Rs provide both protections and limitations. It is important that you are familiar with them.
- Stay informed regarding policies affecting common areas and amenities.
- Be aware of the issues facing your community and exercise your right to vote in elections.
- Volunteer your time for a committee or run for a board position.
- Share your ideas regarding the community, your concerns, and suggestions with your association representatives—your input is always welcome.
- Pay fees and assessments promptly.
- Your input into budgeting decisions and other community choices is invited. While participating in the budgeting process is optional, being informed about all the reasons behind decisions and costs is often more comforting than wondering where the money is going.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Initially, Buffington Homes oversees association matters. When 90% of the planned homes are sold and closed, the process of ending the Developer Control Period begins as described later in this chapter (see Community Turnover). This is an administrative function and includes an election of the Board of Directors by the homeowners and an audit.

POA MEETINGS

Your community Board of Directors meet as deemed necessary to conduct association business from time to time. Annual Meetings will be held each year in the same month following notice to the members of the Association. These meetings are open to all members, but you are not required to attend. At this meeting, Association budgets will be reviewed for the upcoming year, and you will vote on Board Members' elections, as necessary.

Many services are available to the homeowners within their community. Our challenge is balancing the budget (and monthly dues) with services desired by those of you within the community. Your input into these decisions is expected and welcome.

MANAGEMENT COMPANY

A professional management company handles the daily operations of the association. The duties and responsibilities of the managing agent are carefully detailed in a written contract. The managing agent retained by the board is—

Real Clear Neighborhoods Inc.
4200 Gabel Drive, Fayetteville, AR 72703
Phone: 479-935-8989
www.realclearneighborhoods.com

COMMITTEES

Depending on the size, demographics, and interests of the community, the specific committees that are established after developer control of the Association ends will vary. The list below provides some examples. We invite your participation on the committees of interest to you.

Covenant Committee

- Oversees all covenant matters other than Architectural Control Committee issues
- Establishes standards and procedures for enforcement of the covenants
- Serves as the hearing tribunal of the association

Architectural Control Committee

- Details standards for exterior changes to residences
- Regularly reviews design requests submitted by members
- Enforces standards and requirements for review
- Reports to the board of directors regarding design matters
- Additional details follow in the "Design Review" entry below

Hospitality Committee

- Welcomes new residents to the Community
- Solicits ideas for social activities from members

- Plans and oversees social activities as directed by the membership
- Oversees creation and distribution of community newsletter

Landscape Committee

- Inspects landscaping to take note of details needing attention
- Receives feedback and questions from homeowners regarding landscaping and may make recommendations to the ACC regarding design requests.

DESIGN REVIEW

One of the advantages you enjoy by living in a Buffington Community is the Design Review process. This assures all homeowners that the architectural design and quality of exterior changes and additions will be consistent with the original design.

Pre-Approved Exterior Changes

Some exterior items have been pre-approved. If you are uncertain whether your change requires approval, please contact the design review committee chairperson or management agent for guidance. Others include detailed requirements and considerations. Check the Website at the management company for information on items such as (but not limited to):

- Dog runs (please refer to Fence Guidelines)
- Fence/patio guidelines
- Flag holders (please note the “Flag Etiquette” tips available on the management company Website)
- Potted plants
- Satellite dishes (refer to the Satellite Diagram approved locations)
- Storm doors

Design Request Hints

We recommend that you familiarize yourself with the architectural standards that apply to the subject of your request before making design choices. The steps listed below offer guidance with this process.

- Submit a Design Request form from the management company website.
- Complete all applicable blank fields and submit for approval.
- Secure signatures from neighbors where applicable.
- Attach additional information in the form of drawings, paint samples, etc., to clarify the request.
- Provide clear and complete information to the design review committee.
- Forms can be found on the Real Clear Neighborhoods website.

COMMUNITY TURNOVER

As mentioned above (see Board of Directors), the developer control of the POA Board expires after 90% of the homes in the community have been closed. The exact timing of the transition to a homeowner board depends on how quickly homes are sold, completed, and closed. The process described in the Covenants and Restrictions generally occurs as follows.

- The Association will call a meeting of all members eligible to vote and will elect a new homeowner-controlled board.
- Where applicable, manufacturer's warranties and trade contractor information are assigned to the association. Common area lots are transferred from the Developer to the Association.
- From that point on, maintenance is provided by the association working through the management company with the various contracts for service in place

COMMON AREA USE & CARE

Complete details about community operation can be found in the Covenants and Restrictions or the Rules & Regulations for the community. These are subject to change by your Board of Directors after turnover, and you will want to stay informed about such adjustments.

The following list provides an overview that answers the most frequent questions we hear from homeowners.

Clubhouse

Maintenance

If your community includes a pool and/or clubhouse, until common area turnover, Buffington Homes will provide normal maintenance for the clubhouse. After turnover, the association will assume responsibility for the clubhouse operation and maintenance

Ownership

The clubhouse is owned by the association.

Turnover

The turnover of the clubhouse to association control occurs as part of the turnover process described earlier.

Use by Homeowners

Initial practices regarding homeowner use of the clubhouse are established by Buffington Homes. As with other community details, these can be changed by the association after turnover.

Concrete

Curbs & Sidewalks

Depending on where your community is located, curbs and sidewalks may be installed by Buffington Homes. Either way, whether the POA or the city maintains them varies by location. The management company can provide further details.

Driveways

Driveways are installed and warranted by Buffington Homes.

Porches & Patios

Your porch (or patio) is for your use and enjoyment. As with other exterior details, design review practices may apply to furnishings and displays.

Exterior Lights

Exterior lighting is maintained in accordance with a contract similar to landscaping and snow removal. Inspection and needed adjustments or repairs occur on a specific timetable. You can report any issues to the community management company. In turn, they will contact the appropriate people for assistance.

You are responsible for replacing burned out bulbs in light fixtures attached directly to your home.

Landscaping

Attention to your community's common area landscaping, once it is installed and completed, occurs in accordance with a contract between the association and a landscape maintenance company. This contract can include attention to items such as those listed below. The details can be changed over time as desired after budget considerations are taken into account.

- Common area Fencing & railings
- Mowing
- Pruning
- Shrub care
- Sod
- Trees
- Weeding

Irrigation system(s)

If you notice a sprinkler misbehaving, please call the management company immediately; they will contact the appropriate people to address this. Malfunctioning or broken sprinkler heads can waste large amounts of water.

Parking

Policies regarding open parking for guests, and the storage of recreation vehicles, boats, and the like will be found in your "Bill of Assurance/Exhibit 1, Rules and Regulations".

Snow Removal

Snow removal is not performed by the Association. Removal of snow from driveways and sidewalks are the individual homeowner's responsibility. Details can be changed by the Board of Directors within consideration of the impact on the community's budget and homeowner dues.

Streets

As with some of the other community details, street installation and maintenance depends on the municipality involved. Your management company can advise you on the particulars of this topic if you have any questions.

Swimming Pool – (If applicable)

Buffington Homes establishes initial hours and an open swim policy in setting up the community. These hours can be changed, and times can be put in place for lap swim and so on after turnover. Such changes would be made by the Board of Directors through an adjustment to the Rules & Regulations of the community. It is there you can review complete details regarding pool operations.

Trash Collection

This is another detail that is impacted by the municipality. Some cities provide this service, some associations mandate it, and still others leave it to homeowners to make their own decisions. The main goal is to have one company and one date for trash collection. Details will be provided to you as part of the delivery and closing processes. Channel any questions through your management company. Refer to the Bill of Assurance/Rules and Regulations for further details about trash and recyclables.

FAQS: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is a “covenant protected” community?

When Buffington Homes developed the concept for your community, a specific set of standards were identified as desirable. These were written into the Declaration of Covenants and Restrictions(C&Rs) that were filed with your county prior to the sale of any home site to home buyers. They encumbered every home site, and each is sold with the understanding that the purchaser acknowledges and agrees to all of the covenants, conditions, and restrictions.

How is a property owner association formed?

Buffington Homes (called the “Declarant” since it “declared” the C&Rs) establishes an association by recording a Declaration of Covenants and Restrictions with the County. Articles of Incorporation (affectionately known as “the Articles”) are filed with the Secretary of State.

These two actions create the association in a legal sense. At that point, Buffington Homes is the only member and has all the votes—one for each lot. Homes are marketed, constructed, and closed. Once the developer control period ends, each homeowner has one vote for the home they own.

Who is responsible for enforcement of covenants?

Everyone. In practical terms, the association’s management agent handles many routine matters. One of the managing agent’s duties is to inspect the community on a regular basis, notify those who have violated a covenant of their error, and request compliance (this is done by letter). While it would be naive to think such routine inspections would discover every violation, many are noted in this way. Any association member can report covenant violation by contacting the managing agent.

What if I notice a covenant violation?

Take note of the nature of the violation, the identity of the individual, date, time, and place. Contact the association’s managing agent. The more information you can provide, the more effective the managing agent can be in enforcing the covenant. Your report will be kept confidential.

What happens if the offender refuses to cooperate?

After the initial written notification is sent, the association’s managing agent follows up to confirm that the matter has been resolved. If the behavior continues, the matter is reported to the board for further action. Legal means may be used to successfully enforce covenants.

What if I violate a covenant simply because I didn't know about it?

The management agent will send you a letter reminding you about the covenant and ask you to comply. The law assumes you were aware of all terms because they are on file at the County and are a matter of public knowledge. Therefore, it is important that you read the C&Rs carefully when you purchase a home.

What if there is a covenant I don't like?

By deciding to live in a community like this, you have indicated your desire to participate in a particular lifestyle. That lifestyle is one that includes a consideration for others and respect for property—individual and community owned. This respect for each other is detailed in the C&Rs. This is a two-way street; expecting others to follow the rules while ignoring selected covenants yourself can lead to unpleasantness (or worse, up to and including legal action).

Part of your role is staying informed and following the covenants and policies of the community. Those who have chosen to live in this community agree on a lifestyle that promises, for example, that neighbors will not store their cars on blocks in the street or paint their house shutters pink with purple polka-dots. Of course, you cannot do those things either. The covenants are there to protect your investment and those of all of your neighbors. While you may disagree with a particular detail, you are still obligated to comply with it. Therefore, we suggest you read the entire set of “C&Rs” carefully. We do not want you to experience any unpleasant surprises!

What if my neighbors have no objection to my ignoring a covenant?

But what if your neighbors object? Individual neighbors do not have the authority to modify or waive the covenants. If each individual were to negotiate with neighbors regarding which covenants would be observed, your community would cease to be a covenant protected community.

What does a “managing agent” do?

The self-government of services provides a high level of self-control but brings an equally high complexity for seemingly simple services, like having lawn sprinklers run on schedule. Many details demand daily attention and effort.

The Board of Directors determines its objectives and contracts with a professional management agent experienced in carrying out the day-to-day work needed to achieve those objectives. The contract specifies the duties of the agent and fees to be paid in return. In turn, at the direction of the board, the managing agent obtains bids for specialized services (landscape maintenance, pool service, etc.) and contracts with companies selected by the board to obtain the needed service.

The board represents the association members (homeowners, and until the community is complete, the builders and developer as well) and directs activities to carry out its responsibilities. The association contracts with the managing agent for specific duties and management fees to be paid in return.

What determines water and sewer rates?

When an existing service area is expanded, one result can be significant assessments even though the core system and administrative base (records and billing) is already in place. Creating a new district requires an even greater investment because the process includes duplicating these basics. Efficiencies achieved by serving huge numbers of people are often lost when the services are duplicated for a smaller population. The compensating benefits include the advantages of comprehensive planning, protection of lifestyle and property values, and the increased direct control the residents ultimately have.

In addition, all parts of a new system must meet current standards. Regulations affecting these services are changing all the time. Some of the steps required are imposed by higher governmental entities and new construction must comply. We all recognize that good quality water is vital; we all pay for the effort it takes

to provide it. This is your community, and your dollars pay for the services provided. Budgets are always available for review by members.

How are roads within <Community> maintained?

The roads are constructed by the Developer. Upon acceptance of the roads and other improvements (such as basins, storm water facilities, etc) by the municipality, the roads will be maintained and serviced by the City, according to their usual standards. The City will usually accept responsibility for the roadways prior to your home being completed.

What if I have a complaint about a road in the community, who should I contact?

If you have a particular concern about a road, report it to your local municipality. Their records will show the current status of the road.

What if I notice a sprinkler in the common area behaving like Old Faithful or watering the sidewalk instead of the landscaping?

Communal areas are maintained by the POA working through via a landscape company according to the specific terms of a contract. If you notice a problem with a communal area—misadjusted sprinkler, dying tree, lack of water, too much water, and so on—contact the management company to report the item and location. The agent will notify the landscape contractor who in turn will inspect the problem and take appropriate action to correct the problem as called for in their contract.

We want to add a deck, paint our shutters a different color, install a dog run...

What do we do first?

Fill out a Design Review Request form and submit it to Architectural Control Committee (ACC) through the POA website. Include appropriate drawings and all necessary information for the quickest response.

Does everything require Architectural Control committee approval?

Anything that changes the exterior appearance of your home does; for example, paint, decks, pools, raised beds and gardens, room additions, air conditioning units, or basketball backboards. Approval for some items has been requested so often that a list of pre-approved changes may exist. See Exhibit 1/Rules and Regulations, within the Bill of Assurance.

What if I . . . what if my neighbor proceeds with an exterior change without Architectural Control committee approval?

The Architectural Control Committee has the right to require your neighbor's compliance. This would be requested by letter. Litigation is the ultimate means to assure compliance. Your neighbor could end up having to remove or redo the improvement to meet the architectural standards. ***How long does it take to have a request processed and approved?***

The timing of submitting your request can dramatically affect how long you wait for a response. The Architectural Control Committee meets regularly, usually once a month. However, if you submit a request just after a meeting, you will have to wait for the next scheduled meeting for a response.

How can this chapter help?

This network of entities can be confusing if you have a concern but do not know who to call for assistance. This chapter was created to assist you in determining whom to contact for a variety of concerns, and what to expect in response. If you have realistic expectations and good information, you will find life in your community not only simpler, but more fun.

7 | CARING FOR YOUR HOME

- Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines—an introduction to the maintenance information in this homeowner guide
- One-Year Limited Warranty Guidelines—an introduction to the criteria we use to screen one-year limited warranty items
- Warranty Service Requests—information about handling emergencies or appliance issues, standard warranty visits, and interim items
- Warranty Repairs—decisions and scheduling, details about working in your home, completion times, and missed appointments
- Warranty Visit Details—we offer to inspect your home on your behalf to confirm that it is performing to the standards we promised
- Sample Warranty Visit Agenda—although each community is slightly different, the sample agenda illustrates the level of detail we will check in your home
- Air Conditioning through Wood Trim—an alphabetical list of home components with maintenance hints, warranty criteria, and troubleshooting tips where applicable
- Home Care Supplies—create a shopping list of tools and supplies you will need to care for your home
- Maintenance Schedule—a place to make notes about routine maintenance tasks and plan your schedule
- Additional Warranty Coverage—in addition to our one-year limited warranty, your home comes with other warranties
- Appliance Service—a worksheet where you can record serial and model numbers along with manufacturer service phone numbers

CARING FOR YOUR HOME

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

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

HOMEOWNER USE AND MAINTENANCE GUIDELINES

We are proud of the homes we build and the Communities in which we build them. We strive to create lasting value. This is best achieved when you know and perform appropriate maintenance tasks. Periodic maintenance is necessary because of normal wear and tear, the inherent characteristics of the materials used in your home, and normal service required by the mechanical systems. Natural fluctuations in temperature and humidity also affect your home, resulting in maintenance items.

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

Checklists

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

Prompt Attention

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

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

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

Some manufacturer's warranties may extend beyond the first year and it is in your best interest to know about such coverage. Remember to either register online or mail in registration cards you receive with manufacturer materials. Being in the manufacturer's system assures that, in the event of a recall, the company can contact you and arrange to provide the needed correction.

ONE-YEAR LIMITED WARRANTY GUIDELINES

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

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

[See also Additional Warranty Coverage at the end of this chapter](#)

WARRANTY SERVICE REQUESTS

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

- Emergency service (the only service requests we accept by phone)
- Appliance service (direct from the manufacturers, per their request)
- Primary visit (typically 30 to 60 days after your closing depending on the community)
- Anniversary visit (typically 10-11 months after closing)
- Interim warranty service (For your protection between the two planned visits, put all non-emergency service requests in writing and retain a dated copy.)

Emergency Service

While emergency warranty situations are rare, when they occur, prompt response is essential. Begin by checking items you can check. TROUBLESHOOTING tips appear in this homeowner guide for several of your home's components: air conditioning, electrical, heating, plumbing, roof, and water heater.

Please refer to the individual categories to review these hints. An action taken by you may solve the problem immediately or mitigate the situation until a technician arrives. If your efforts do not cure the problem, the information you gather will be useful to the service person you contact.

During business hours, call our warranty office:(479)-251-1106

After hours, or on weekends or holidays, visit the warranty webpage for instructions on contacting our emergency service representative.

Our trade contractors or local utility companies provide emergency responses to the following conditions:

- Total loss of heat during winter months in cold temperatures (typically October to May)
- Total loss of electricity
- Total loss of water
- Plumbing leak that requires shutting off the entire water supply
- Gas leak (If you suspect a gas leak, leave the home immediately and call the gas company from another location to request emergency service.)

Note that if a utility service (electricity, gas, or water) is out in an entire area, attention from the local utility company is needed. Trade contractors are unable to help with such outages.

If you have contacted one of the mechanical trades directly outside our normal business hours, please inform our warranty office on the next business day so that we can document the situation and follow up as appropriate.

Roof Leak

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

Other Emergencies

In addition to emergency situations covered by our limited warranty, be prepared for other kinds of emergencies. Post phone numbers for the fire department, police, paramedics, and poison control near phones in your home. Have companies in mind in the event you need a locksmith, water extraction, glass breakage repair, or sewer router service. If you are new to the area, neighbors may be able to recommend good service providers.

Appliance Warranty Service

The manufacturers of kitchen appliances have asked to work directly with you if any repairs are needed for their products. They may be able to resolve the issue by talking with you by phone and if they cannot, they prefer to set an appointment directly with you. Please alert us as well so that we can document the item for your file and follow up with you.

Appliance service phone numbers are listed in the use and care materials for each appliance. The manufacturer or their service provider will ask for the model and serial number of the item and the closing date on your home. A form is included at the end of this chapter so you can record these details in one convenient location for future reference.

Appliance warranties are generally for one year but can be longer. Refer to the literature provided by the manufacturer for complete information.

Primary Visit (typically between 30 and 60 days)

We will offer to schedule your primary warranty visit during your Homeowner Orientation. . These appointments are scheduled between our normal warranty hours: 8:00 a.m.to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. You will receive a reminder of this appointment by email or phone. During this appointment we intend to accomplish three purposes:

- Review key maintenance points and answer any questions you have about the care and operation of your home's features.
- Inspect your home, using our checklist as a guide (a sample warranty visit agenda appears later in this chapter) to confirm all the components are performing as we intend them to.
- Review any items you believe require warranty attention to determine appropriate action.

If you have questions or find warranty concerns in your home prior to this visit, please make note of them so we can get you needed information. Please ensure that the person at home for the warranty visit is over the age of 18 and is familiar with any concerns or questions you have.

Anniversary Visit (between 10 and 11 months)

You can repeat this process near the end of your one-year material and workmanship coverage simply by letting us know you want to schedule an anniversary visit.

Anniversary visit appointments are set in several different ways. Some homeowners will pre-book them with us at their Homeowner Orientation, some at the primary visit, and others wait until near the year-end to contact us and set an appointment. In any case, by the end of the eleventh month of your warranty, you should submit a year-end report if you have any items to report.

As with the primary visit, the anniversary visit typically takes less than an hour. Our purposes and procedures are the same with the addition of potential year-end or one-time repair items described in the next entry. Please keep notes about items you wish us to review with you.

One-Time, Year-End Repairs

If needed, we will provide several "one-time repairs." Please refer to individual headings listed below for details on measurements that suggest repairs are appropriate. In most cases, you will benefit by waiting until the anniversary warranty visit to request attention to items that include year-end service.

- Brick and Cultured Stone: masonry cracks
- Caulking: separations or cracks (no interior painting)
- Ceramic Tile: grout cracks
- Concrete Flatwork: cracks
- Countertops: separation from wall or backsplash
- Drywall: separation and nail pops (no interior painting)
- Framing: floor squeaks
- Grading and Drainage: settlement of soil under concrete
- Parging: cracks
- Stairs: squeaks

Interim Warranty Items

If you need to initiate non-emergency warranty service between the primary and anniversary visits, you are welcome to do so by submitting a warranty request via the website or by email. Please include your name, address, phone numbers, and a list of your concerns. We schedule appointments to inspect interim requests on a first come, first served basis.

Put It in Writing!

Written report of items provides you with the maximum protection by documenting each issue for your warranty file. This also allows us to operate efficiently, thereby providing faster service to all homeowners. In each case, retain a copy of what you submitted with the date you reported the items. Or email your request to warranty@buffingtonhomesar.com

Help Us to Serve You

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

- Your name, address, and preferred method of contact during business hours.
- A complete description of the problem, for example, “guest bath—cold water line leaks under sink,” rather than “plumbing problem.”
- Any additional information you think we should know to expedite service. For instance, the best days or times to reach you.

Inspection and Repair Hours

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

- A significant portion of repairs require daylight for proper execution. These include drywall, paint, and exterior work of almost any type.
- We also found that most of the 35 to 50 independent trade contractors who helped us build your home—many of whom operate as small, family-run companies—were unable to work all week and also be available for extended hours. Therefore, the few repairs that could be performed in off-hours failed to eliminate the need for appointments during normal business hours.
- Administrative staff and supervisors would need to be available to answer questions. Having some personnel work extended hours meant being short-staffed during normal business hours.
- Until we discover satisfactory solutions to these challenges, we appreciate your understanding and cooperation with our warranty hours: Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. If these hours change, we will notify you by email.

Access to Your Home

Whether for inspection or repair appointments, we refrain from accepting keys and entering your home in your absence—as do our trade contractors. While we recognize that this means resolving warranty items may take longer, we believe your peace of mind and security should be our first concern.

We conduct warranty visits when an adult is available to accompany our representative and point out the items you have listed. Our in-house service technicians and those of our trades or suppliers will perform repairs only when an adult is available to admit them to your home. An adult is a person 18 or older who has your written authorization to admit service personnel and sign completed work orders.

WARRANTY REPAIRS

Items listed on warranty requests fall into one of three categories:

- Trade contractor item
- In-house item
- Home maintenance item

If a trade contractor or an in-house employee is required to perform repairs, we issue a service order describing the situation that needs to be addressed. If the item is a home maintenance task, we will review the maintenance steps with you and offer whatever informational assistance we can. Occasionally the inspection step is unnecessary. In that case, we issue the needed service orders and notify you that we have done so.

Warranty Decisions

In addition to the information contained in the limited warranty document itself, this homeowner guide includes details about the criteria we will use to evaluate concerns you report. The purpose is to let you know what our warranty commitment is for the typical concerns that can come up in a new home. Descriptions include the corrective action we will take in many common situations.

If a warranty question arises other than those discussed here, we will assess them according to regional practices.

We Sometimes Break Our Own Rules—in Your Favor

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

We Sometimes Say No

With a product as complex as a home, differences of opinion can occur regarding which tasks are homeowner maintenance responsibilities and which are our warranty responsibilities. If you request warranty service on a maintenance item, we will explain the steps you should take to care for the item. We are available to answer your home-care questions during and after your warranty period. Providing normal maintenance for your home is your responsibility.

Trade Day Appointment

Depending on the number and nature of items that need attention, we may ask you to designate a Trade Day Appointment—a date a minimum of 15 business days from the inspection date—for repairs to be made. This time frame allows us to notify appropriate trades people, order any needed materials or parts, and arrange for the majority of repairs to occur on the same day.

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

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

Exterior Items

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

Children

Children are naturally curious about tools and work in progress on your home. However, to protect them from possible injury and to allow repair personnel an uninterrupted opportunity to work, we ask that youngsters be cared for away from ongoing work. This policy is for the protection of your children and our employees and trades' personnel. We have instructed all repair personnel to reschedule the appointment if children are in or around the work area.

Pets

We recognize that many homeowners count their pets as members of their households. To prevent the possibility of a pet becoming injured or lost, or giving in to its natural curiosity about tools and materials used for repairs, we ask that you restrict all pets to a comfortable location during any warranty visit, whether for inspection or warranty work. This policy is also for the protection of our employees and trades personnel. Again, we have instructed all personnel to reschedule the appointment if pets have access to the work area.

Your Belongings

In all work that we perform we are concerned that your furnishings and personal items are protected. When warranty work is needed in your home, we will ask that you remove vulnerable items or items that might make performing the repair difficult. This includes furniture, jewelry, medications, or other personal items in or near the work area. We will reschedule the repair appointment rather than risk damaging your belongings.

Surfaces

We expect all personnel who work in your home to arrive on time, park in the street, and have appropriate materials to cover the work area, protecting your home from damage and catching any dust or scraps from the work being performed. Similarly, all personnel should clean up the work area, removing whatever excess materials they brought in.

Prior to beginning any work, we require that repair personnel check the work area for any existing damage to surfaces. They will document any scratches, chips, or other cosmetic damage with you prior to beginning repairs to avoid any misunderstandings about how and when such damage occurred.

Signatures on Service Orders

Signing a service order acknowledges that a technician worked in your home on the date shown and with regard to the items listed. Your signature on a service order does not negate any of your rights under the warranty nor does it release us from any confirmed warranty obligation.

If you prefer not to sign the service order, the technician will note that, sign the work order and return it to us for our records.

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

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

Completion Time

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

We intend to complete service work orders within 20 workdays of the inspection unless you are unavailable for access. If a back-ordered part or similar circumstance causes a delay, we will let you know. Likewise, when weather conditions prevent the timely completion of exterior items, we track those items and follow up to ensure that they are addressed when conditions are right. This can mean a wait of several months.

Missed Appointments

Good communication is one key to successful completion of warranty items. We strive to keep homeowners informed and to protect them from inconvenience. One of our challenges in this regard is when unexpected events sometimes result in missed appointments. If an employee or a trade person will be late, he or she should contact you as soon as the delay is recognized, offering you a choice of a later time the same day or a completely different appointment.

If you must miss an appointment, we appreciate being alerted as soon as you realize your schedule has changed. We can put service orders on hold for up to 30 days and re-activate them when your schedule offers a better opportunity to arrange access to the home.

Construction Defect Litigation Solicitation

In recent years, some law firms have made a practice of contacting homeowners to initiate a lawsuit against a builder. Often these firms have never visited the community or seen any of the homes involved. If you receive any such solicitation, whether by mail, phone, or through the efforts of a neighbor engaged by the law firm, we suggest you contact us immediately.

Regardless of the status of your warranty, Buffington Homes stands ready to investigate any claim of a construction defect. This is not merely fair but more importantly, our company integrity demands it. Should an actual construction defect be discovered, we will correct it. If the condition falls under your maintenance responsibilities, we will assist you with information. In either case, a lawsuit is simply unnecessary.

On the other hand, legal actions such as those described require your time for depositions, take years to settle, and seldom net homeowners involved significant amounts after the law firm's share and processing and expert witness fees are subtracted.

Meanwhile, the resulting damage to the value of your home and the community's reputation combined with the need to disclose all these details upon sale are likely to result in a negative impact. In most cases, your warranty terminates, and your homeowner's insurance policy and related costs can be impacted as well. Finally, your mortgage company may demand that any proceeds you do obtain be turned over to them to compensate for the diminished value of your home. All in all, it is worth a phone call to Buffington Homes before risking such repercussions.

PRIMARY & ANNIVERSARY VISITS

Meeting Details

Appointment Set by • Warranty Administrator

Appointments Available • Monday through Friday, 7:30 am to 3:00 pm

Where • Your new home

Attendees • Homeowner(s)
• Customer Care Manager

Duration • 30 minutes to an hour, depending on your questions

Purposes • Review our warranty inspection agenda and your list of items, if applicable
• Discuss any questions you have

Preparation • Note items or maintenance questions you want to discuss

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 the benefits of 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, ceiling fans, 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 this process and makes cooling impossible. Therefore, you should keep all windows closed. The heat from the sun shining through windows with open drapes is intense enough to overcome the cooling effect of the air conditioning unit. For best results, close the drapes on these windows.

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

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

Setting the thermostat at 65 degrees will not cool the home any faster and can result in the unit freezing up and not performing at all. Extended use under these conditions can damage the unit.

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.

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.

Zone Units

Some homes have zone units. A zone unit means that 1 unit controls the entire home but has two separate thermostats typically with 1 upstairs and 1 downstairs. It is important that you always have both thermostats set to cool or heat. You would not want to have either thermostat set to off or with one on cool and one on heat.

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 homeowner installs a humidifier 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. Cold air holds less moisture than warm air and there is ample ambient moisture in summer air. If your humidifier adds more, it can overwork the air conditioner and reduce its cooling effect.

Manufacturer's Instructions

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

Modifications or Additions

If you wish to make any modifications or additions to your air conditioning system, contact the heating and air conditioning company (HVAC) listed on the Emergency Phone Numbers you receive at your homeowner orientation. Having another firm modify your air conditioning system during the warranty period will void that portion of your limited warranty.

Temperature Variations

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

Trial Run

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

TROUBLESHOOTING TIPS: NO AIR CONDITIONING

Before calling for service, check to confirm that the—

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

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

One-Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

The air conditioning system should maintain a temperature of 75 degrees Fahrenheit or a differential of 15 degrees from the outside temperature, measured in the center of each room at a height of 5 feet above the floor. Lower temperature settings are often possible, but neither we nor the manufacturer guarantee this.

Compressor

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

Coolant

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

Non-Emergency

Lack of air conditioning is not an emergency. Air conditioning contractors in our region respond to air conditioning service requests during normal business hours and in the order received.

APPLIANCES

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Please read and follow the manufacturer instructions for the use and care of your appliances. The Appliance Service sheet at the end of this chapter offers a convenient location for details about appliances whether they are part of your original home purchase or you have them delivered subsequent to closing. By gathering these details as part of getting settled into your new home you will have them readily available in the event you need to call a manufacturer for service.

One-Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

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

ATTIC

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

The attic space is an unheated space and is neither designed nor intended for storage.

Attic Access

We provide access to this area for maintenance of mechanical services that may traverse the attic space.

When you perform needed tasks in the attic, use caution and avoid stepping off wood members onto the drywall. This can result in personal injury or damage to the ceiling below. Your limited warranty coverage excludes such injury or damage.

Frozen Attic Condensation

Frozen condensation is a condition that can develop in an attic space. In spite of superior construction techniques, homes can be subject to attic condensation if the weather patterns are right.

A condition that can add to the condensation level in the attic is air infiltration from the warm finished areas of the home. This can occur due to small openings in the air barrier through which required equipment must penetrate to the attic (such as attic access weather stripping, plumbing stacks, and electrical wiring). These openings are sealed during construction but no home is 100 percent air tight.

During extended periods of extremely cold temperatures moisture in the attic air can freeze on the roof sheathing and/or roof trusses and may continue to accumulate during extended periods of unusually cold weather. The result can be a substantial amount of frost or ice (sometimes referred to as attic frosting).

Normally the spring temperatures gradually melt the frost allowing the moisture to evaporate. However, because our climate can have drastic temperature increases, if the temperature rises rapidly, this frost or ice may melt so quickly that water collects in your attic.

When this occurs, moisture or water can infiltrate into the interior of your home. Evidence of this can show up as staining on the ceiling or walls, or actual water dripping from the bath fan or a light fixture. This natural phenomenon is outside the control of any builder and therefore is excluded from warranty coverage. If you observe any of these conditions, follow the trouble shooting tips below.

TROUBLESHOOTING TIPS: FROZEN ATTIC CONDENSATION

- If you notice water in a light fixture, do NOT turn the light on. Turn off the breaker to the light and call for service.
- Wipe up water off of floors, carpet, and furniture.
- Run your bathroom exhaust fans, ventilation fans, and range hood fans to help remove extra moisture.
- Turn down your humidifier.
- Allow for air movement in your attic by ensuring that roof vents are clear of ice, snow, or debris.
- Keep your attic hatch closed. If open it allows warm moist air to escape from your home into the attic.
- Take steps to mitigate damage to your home and furnishings; if damage occurs, contact your homeowner's insurance company.

See also Condensation, Roof, and Ventilation

One-Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

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

Frozen Attic Condensation

If a construction defect allows excessive warm moist air from the home to enter the attic, we will correct it.

BRICK AND CULTURED STONE

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Brick and stone are among the most durable and lowest maintenance finishes for a home's exterior. A record of your brick or stone color is included in your selection sheets.

Efflorescence

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

Tuck-Pointing

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

Weep Holes

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

One-Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

We check the brickwork during your homeowner orientation to confirm correct installation of designated materials.

Cracks: One-Time Repair

One time during the warranty period, we repair masonry cracks that exceed 1/8 inch.

CABINETS

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Your selection sheets are your record of the, style, and color of cabinets in your home. If you selected wood or expect differences in grain and color between and within the cabinet components due to natural variations in wood grain and the way each piece takes stain.

Cleaning

Consult your manufacturer's recommendations regarding product to use in caring for your cabinets. Follow container directions. Use such products a maximum of once every three to six months to avoid excessive build-up. Avoid paraffin-based spray waxes and washing cabinets with water, as both will damage 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 crockpot or pressure cooker) too near the cabinet. When operating such appliances,

place them in a location that is not directly under a cabinet. Turning on the range hood fan while preparing meals can also help to minimize or avoid this problem.

Wood Grain

Each species of wood shows characteristics unique to that type of wood. For instance, maple has a fine, smooth grain, knotty alder has knots, clear alder has a smooth grain.

Similarly, other types of wood will exhibit still other traits. Expect variation in the original materials and in the way those materials accept stain and finish products. These properties are part of the beauty of wood.

One-Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

During your homeowner orientation, we will confirm that all cabinet parts are installed and that their surfaces are in acceptable condition.

Alignment

Doors, drawer fronts, and handles should appear level and even when viewed from a normal position.

Operation

Cabinets should operate properly under normal use.

Separations

We will correct gaps between cabinets and the ceiling or cabinets and the walls by caulking or other means if the gap exceeds 1/8 inch. Locations behind appliances are exempt from this repair.

Warping

If doors or drawer fronts warp in excess of 1/8 inch against the cabinet face we will correct this by adjustment or replacement. Replacements may have noticeable variations in wood grain and color.

Wood Grain

Readily noticeable variations in wood grain and color are normal in all wood or wood veneer selections.

Replacements are not made due to such variations.

CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTORS

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Cleaning

For your safety, clean each carbon monoxide detector monthly to prevent a false alarm or lack of response when needed. After cleaning, push the test button to confirm the alarm is working.

One-Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

We will test carbon monoxide detectors during the orientation to confirm that they are working and to familiarize you with the alarm. Buffington Homes does not represent that the carbon monoxide detectors will provide the protection for which they are installed or intended.

CARPET

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Your selection sheets provide a record of the style, and color of floor coverings in your home. Please retain this information for future reference. Refer to your manufacturer's recommendations for additional information on the care of your carpet.

Burns

Take care of any kind of burn immediately. First, snip off the darkened fibers, then use a soap less cleaner and sponge with water. If the burn is extensive, talk with a professional about replacing the damaged area.

Cleaning

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

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

Please note however, that beater bar vacuum attachments should not be used on any type of berber carpeting. This may result in permanent damage to the carpet and voids the warranty.

Wipe spills and clean stains immediately. For best results, blot or dab any spill or stain; avoid rubbing.

Have your carpet professionally cleaned regularly, usually after 12 to 18 months in your home and then once a year after that.

[See also Stains](#)

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.

Fading

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

Filtration

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

[See also Ghosting](#)

Fuzzing

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

Pilling

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

Rippling

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

Seams

Carpet usually comes in 12-foot widths, making seams necessary in many rooms. Visible seams are not a defect unless they have been improperly made or unless the material has a defect, making the seam appear more pronounced than normal. The denser and more 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 noticeable. 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 a carpet manufacturer designates a carpet as stain-resistant, some substances may still cause permanent staining. These include hair dyes, shoe polish, paints, and India ink. Some substances destroy or change the color of carpets, including bleaches, acne medications, drain cleaners, plant food, insecticides, and food or beverages with strongly colored natural dyes as found in some brands of mustard and herbal tea.

Refer to your manufacturer's Website for recommended cleaning procedures for your particular fiber. Pretest any spot-removal solution in an inconspicuous location 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 the tissue and the carpet for dye transfer and check for carpet damage.

Static

Cooler temperatures outside and resulting dry air often contribute to static electricity inside. Confirm that your humidifier is set appropriately to help control static build-up.

One-Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

During your homeowner orientation, we will confirm that your carpet is in acceptable condition. We will correct stains or spots noted at this time by cleaning, patching, or replacement. We are not responsible for dye lot variations if replacements are made. Concerns resulting from lack of cleaning and maintenance are excluded from warranty coverage. The use of beater bar type of vacuum attachments on berber type carpet will void warranty coverage.

Edges

Edges of carpet along moldings and edges of stairs should be held firmly in place. In some areas, metal or other edging material may be used where carpet meets another floor covering.

Seams

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

CAULKING

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Colored Caulk

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

Latex Caulk

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

Silicone Caulk

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

One-Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

During your homeowner orientation we confirm that appropriate areas are adequately caulked.

Separations: One-Time Repair

We will touch up caulking one time during your materials and workmanship period. We suggest that this be performed with your anniversary warranty visit.

[See also Countertops, Expansion and Contraction, Stairs, and Wood Trim](#)

CERAMIC TILE

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Cleaning

Ceramic tile is one of the easiest floor coverings to maintain. Simply vacuum when needed. Occasionally, a wet mopping with warm water may be appropriate. Avoid adding detergent to the water. If you feel a

cleaning agent is required, use a mild solution of warm water and dishwasher crystals (they will not result in a heavy, difficult-to-remove lather on the grout). Rinse thoroughly.

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

Grout Discoloration

Use a brush, cleanser, and water to clean any grout surface that becomes yellowed or stained. Grout cleansers and whiteners are available at most hardware stores.

Sealing Grout

Sealing grout is your decision and responsibility. Once grout has been sealed, ongoing maintenance of that seal is necessary to maintain protection against staining. Some grouts need to cure for 30 days prior to being sealed.

Separations

Expect slight separations to occur in the grout between tiles. Cracks in the grout can be filled using premixed grout purchased from flooring or hardware stores. Follow package directions.

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

One-Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

During your homeowner orientation we confirm that tile and grout areas are in acceptable condition. We will repair or replace cracked, badly chipped, or loose tiles noted at that time. We are not responsible for variations in color or discontinued patterns. New grout may vary in color from the original.

Grout Cracks: One-Time Repair

Cracks appearing in grouting of ceramic tiles at joints or junctions with other materials are commonly due to shrinkage. We will repair cracks in grout joints in excess of 1/16 inch one time during the first year. Cracks in grout are evaluated under normal viewing and lighting conditions. We are not responsible for color variations in grout or discontinued colored grout. Any grouting or caulking that is needed after that time is your responsibility. If you adjusted or replaced any of the original grout, the warranty becomes void.

CONCRETE FLATWORK

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Freeze/thaw cycles in our climate are responsible for most concerns with concrete. The constant expansion and contraction of the soil under the concrete and the concrete itself causes shifting and movement that can result in cracks. By maintaining good drainage, you protect your home's foundation and the concrete flatwork. Reinforcing concrete using wire mesh or reinforcing bar does not eliminate cracking. However, adding reinforcement to load bearing concrete slabs and driveways does help control the cracking that will naturally occur.

Cleaning

Avoid washing exterior concrete slabs with cold water from an outside faucet when temperatures are high and the sun has been shining on the concrete. The abrupt change in temperature can damage the surface bond of the concrete. We recommend sweeping for keeping 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.

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

Control Joints

Control joints are grooves tooled or sawed into concrete flatwork in an effort to keep cracks in those locations rather than having them occur randomly.

Cracks

Concrete cracks may be addressed if they exceed industry standards for concrete. It is common to have cracks in concrete, in fact it normally occurs, it is just when it is wider/deeper than industry standards when it is addressed. Because concrete is a water based product, shrinkage and cracking will occur. For example, a typical slab 10 feet across can shrink approximately 5/8 inch as it cures. Some of this shrinkage shows up as cracks. Cracking of concrete flatwork also results from temperature changes that cause expansion and contraction.

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

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

Expansion (Isolation) Joints

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

Heavy Vehicles

Prohibit commercial or other extremely heavy vehicles such as moving vans and 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 of these items can cause spalling (chipping of the surface) of concrete.

Caution: The use of de-icers or salt on your concrete may damage the surface and will void warranty coverage.

Sealer

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

Spalling (Surface Chips)

Causes of spalling include repeated hosing of concrete for cleaning, animal urine, radiator overflow, fertilizer, uncleared snow and ice, ice-melting agents, and road salts from vehicles. Repair of spalling is a home maintenance task unless it results from faulty material or workmanship.

One-Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

Color

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

Separation

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

Spalling (Surface Chips)

Causes of spalling include repeated hosing of concrete for cleaning, animal urine, radiator overflow, fertilizer, uncleared snow and ice, ice-melting agents, and road salts from vehicles. Spalling is excluded from warranty coverage unless it results from faulty material or workmanship. Where this applies, we will repair the concrete surface if exposed aggregate exceeds 10 percent of the total area.

GARAGE FLOOR

Garage Floor Cracks: One-Time Repair

We will repair cracks in garage floors in excess of 1/8 inch in width. When repairs are necessary the color and texture of the repair materials will vary from the original concrete.

Settling or Heaving

We will repair slabs that settle or heave if this movement causes water to drain towards the home.

Epoxy Floors

We will repair flaking, peeling or chipping epoxy garage floor covering in areas greater than one square foot and is limited to the area of defect.

DRIVEWAY

Driveway Cracks: One-Time Repair

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

Settling or Heaving

We will repair differential movement between surfaces in excess of one inch.

CONDENSATION

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Condensation occurs when warmer moist air comes in contact with a colder surface. Outside you see this as dew; inside you may see it as a layer of moisture on a glass containing a cold beverage, on windows and glass doors. This condensation comes from high humidity within the home combined with low outside temperatures and inadequate ventilation. Family lifestyle significantly influences two out of three of these conditions.

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

Daily Habits

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

- Do not cover or interfere in any way with the fresh air supply to your home's systems.
- Develop the habit of running the hood fan while you are cooking.
- Run your bath fans for a minimum of 30 minutes after bathing or showering.
- Air your house by opening windows for a time when weather permits.

Frozen Attic Condensation

[See Attic](#)

Humidifier Operation

If you add a humidifier to your home after closing, 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 50 gallons of water. Water is part of lumber, concrete, drywall texture, paint, caulk, and other materials used in building. Wet weather during construction adds more. This moisture evaporates into the air as you live in your home—adding to the moisture generated by normal living activities. Over time, this source of moisture will diminish.

Normal Activities

As you live in your home, your daily lifestyle contributes to the moisture in the air also. Cooking, laundry, baths and showers, aquariums, house 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 excessively will cause the materials to dry out faster which increases shrinkage cracks and separations.

Ventilation

The best way to assure adequate moisture ventilation after a shower is to run exhaust fans in bathrooms, leaving the bath fan running for a minimum of 30 minutes after bathing or showering. Use your range hood fan when using the stove. When weather conditions permit, open windows so fresh air can circulate through your home. Keep the dryer exhaust hose clean and securely connected.

[See also Ventilation](#)

One-Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

Condensation results from weather conditions and a family's lifestyle. We have no control over these factors. The limited warranty coverage excludes condensation.

COUNTERTOPS

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Caulking

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

Cleaning

Mix a small amount of mild detergent in clean water and use a clean cloth. Dry with a soft clean cloth. Do not allow water to sit on the surface, especially on the seams. Avoid abrasive cleaners or scouring pads that will damage the luster of the surface.

QUARTZ COUNTERTOPS

Cutting

Use a cutting board to protect your counters when you cut or chop.

Heat

Protect the counter from heat and from extremely hot pans. To prevent possible damage, use a protective pad under the item. If you cannot put your hand on it, do not put it on the counter. Do not use countertops as ironing boards and do not set lighted cigarettes on the edge of the counter.

GRANITE

Granite is a term used to refer to a family of natural quarried stone products that come from various parts of the world. No two pieces of granite will have the same pattern or exactly the same color. The granite installed in your home will vary in color and pattern from the sample you selected.

Acids

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

Sealer

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

[See also Ceramic Tile](#)

One-Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

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

Separation from Wall: One-Time Repair

Separation of countertops from walls, backsplash, and around sinks results from normal shrinkage of materials. Separation can also be caused on exterior walls by temperature differences between the exterior and the interior of the home.

If needed, we will re-caulk these areas one time during the materials and workmanship warranty. Subsequently caulking will be one of your home maintenance responsibilities.

GRANITE

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

DRYWALL

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

With the exception of the one-time repair service that we provide, care of drywall is one of your maintenance responsibilities. Most drywall repairs can be easily made. This work is best done when you redecorate the room. We recommend that you wait through one complete seasonal cycle to do so.

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

One-Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

During your homeowner orientation, we confirm that drywall surfaces are in acceptable condition.

Lighting Conditions

Drywall flaws that are only visible under particular lighting conditions are excluded from warranty coverage.

Related Warranty Repairs

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

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

Separations and Nail Pops: One-Time Repair

One time during the materials and workmanship warranty, generally as part of your anniversary visit, we will repair drywall shrinkage cracks and nail pops. The repaired area(s) will appear white and will need to be painted. This touch up painting will be your responsibility. Remember that touch-ups may be visible.

Repainting the entire wall or the entire room to correct this is your choice and responsibility. You are also responsible for custom paint colors or wallpaper that has been applied subsequent to closing. Due to the effects of time on paint and wallpaper, as well as possible dye lot variations, touch-ups are unlikely to match the surrounding area.

Truss Uplift

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

EASEMENTS

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Trees, shrubs, gardens, play equipment, storage sheds, fences, or other items which you install in or across these easements may be disturbed if service entities—such as the gas, electric, or phone companies—need access to lines for repairs or to connect service to nearby properties. The easement holder is not responsible for replacing any items within the easement if they need to perform service or access the easement on your property.

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

[See also Grading and Drainage, and Property Boundaries](#)

ELECTRICAL SYSTEM

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

ARC Fault Circuit Interrupter (AFCI)

Designed as a safety feature, ARC fault circuit interrupters are required for all outlets. They protect you from injury or damage due to appliances with damaged cords, loose connections, or nicked or pinched wires inside the walls. If an AFCI breaker trips, check any cords used in the effected outlet first before re-setting the AFCI break at the breaker panel. Turn the breaker "off" then to "on" to reset it. It could also be an issue with the equipment that you are using, so it will help to test it on another outlet as well to see if the issue remains.

If you find no explanation with an item you had plugged in, call for service.

Breakers

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

Breakers Tripping

Breakers trip because of overloads caused by plugging too many appliances into the circuit, a worn cord or defective appliance, or operating an appliance with too high a voltage requirement (such as a power tool) for the circuit. The starting of an electric motor can also trip a breaker.

If any circuit trips repeatedly, unplug all items connected to it and reset the breaker. If it trips when nothing is connected to it, an electrician will need to investigate. If within your one-year warranty period, report the issue to Buffington Homes Customer Care Department. If the circuit remains on, one of the items you unplugged is defective and will require repair or replacement.

GFCI (Ground-Fault Circuit Interrupters)

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

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

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

Buzzing

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

Dimmable Fixtures/Dimmers with CFL Bulbs

You may have added optional dimmers to your home. There have been changes to the design of dimmer switches in recently years, making them energy efficient. Dimmers can come with a rotary knob or a slider (either is effectively the same) and are used to control some of our larger light sources. Please note that if you are using compact florescent lights (CFLs) for lighting, use dimmable bulbs. A little buzzing with CFLs is normal.

Fixture Location

Light fixtures are installed in a location approximate to the annotated plan set. Structural elements (framing) sometimes require location changes. Moving fixtures to accommodate specific furniture arrangements or room use is your responsibility.

Grounded System

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

Light Bulbs

You are responsible for replacing burned-out bulbs other than those noted during your homeowner orientation. If you have LED light fixtures in your home keep in mind that it may be necessary for an electrician to change those when the light goes out. Fortunately, one of the benefits of LED light fixtures is that they last several years.

Modifications or Additions

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

Outlets

If an outlet fails to work, check first to see if it is controlled by a wall switch or GFCI. Next, check the breaker.

If you have small children in your home, install safety plugs to cover unused outlets. This also minimizes the air infiltration that sometimes occurs with these outlets.

TROUBLESHOOTING TIPS: NO ELECTRICAL SERVICE

No Electrical Service Anywhere in the Home

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

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

No Electrical Service to One or More Outlets

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

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

- Item you want to use works in other outlets
- The bulb in the lamp is good.

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

Underground Cables

Before digging, check the location of buried service leads by contacting utility locators. Maintain positive drainage around the foundation to protect electrical service connections.

Under- or Over-Cabinet Lights

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

One-Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

During your homeowner orientation, we confirm that light fixtures are in acceptable condition and that all bulbs are working. Our limited warranty excludes any fixture you installed after closing.

Designed Load

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

GFCI (Ground-Fault Interrupters)

Food spoilage that results from your plugging refrigerators or freezers into a GFCI outlet is excluded from warranty coverage. The cycles of such appliances will readily trip the circuit.

Power Surge

Power surges are the result of local conditions beyond our control and are excluded from limited warranty coverage. They can cause burned-out bulbs or damage to sensitive electronic equipment such as TVs, alarm systems, and computers. Damage resulting from lightning strikes is also excluded from limited warranty coverage.

ENERGY AND WATER CONSERVATION

Buffington Homes builds an energy efficient home, here is information on how to maintain that efficiency. In the process of conserving, you also save money as an additional benefit. Keep these in mind.

Heating and Cooling

- Maintain your home's heating and cooling systems in clean and good working order to prevent inconvenience and maximize efficiency. Arrange for a professional to service heat and air conditioning systems a minimum of once every two years.
- Keep filters clean or replace them every 90 days or as the manufacturer recommends in the equipment operations and maintenance manual.
- Learn how to use your programmable thermostat for comfort and efficient energy use.
- If you have a zoned system (more than one furnace and separate controls) think through operating

schedules and temperature settings to maximize comfort and minimize energy consumption.

- Plan landscaping elements that support efficient energy use:
 - » Deciduous trees provide shade during the summer and permit solar warming in winter.
 - » Evergreen trees and shrubs can create a windbreak and reduce heating costs.
 - » Position trees to shade the roof and still allow good air flow around the home.
 - » Plant shrubs/trees to shade the air conditioner without obstructing air flow around it.
- Keep the garage overhead doors closed.
- If you expect a house full of dinner guests, you can turn the heat down a few degrees as body heat will make up the difference.

WINTER

- During cold days, open window coverings to allow the sun to warm your home. Close them when the sun begins to set.
- Where applicable, limit use of a wood burning fireplace in extremely cold or windy weather when the chimney draft will draw room air out at an extreme rate.
- During the winter, humidifying the air in your home allows the air to retain more heat and is a general health benefit. Note: If condensation develops on your windows, you have taken a good thing too far and need to lower the setting on the humidifier. The setting requirements change with the outside temperature; your manufacturer owner's manual contains a table defining these. Improper use of humidifiers can promote mold growth in the home. Be sure to follow your manufacturer's recommendations.
- Avoid use of the humidifier when you are using your air conditioner.

SUMMER

- If you include them in your home, ceiling fans use only one tenth as much electricity as an air conditioner and the moving air allows you to feel comfortable at temperatures several degrees higher.
- On hot days, close all windows and the window coverings on windows facing the sun to minimize solar heating.

Water and Water Heater

- If you have a traditional tank style water heater, set it at "normal" or 120 degrees Fahrenheit. You may adjust your temperature setting to suit your individual needs.
- Follow the steps outlined in the manufacturer's directions for draining water from your water heater in order to remove accumulated hard-water scale that builds up inside the tank. Timing will depend on the nature of your water supply.
- If you have a tankless or heat pump water heater, follow manufacturer instructions for the timing and steps to clean the unit.
- Correct plumbing leaks, running toilets, or dripping faucets as soon as possible.
- Front loading washing machines require less than half the water of top-loaders. They also cause less wear and tear on clothing and because they wring more water out in the spin cycle, laundry dries faster.

Appliances

- Use cold water when operating your disposal. This not only saves hot water you pay to heat, it preserves the disposal motor.
- When baking, preheat your oven just five minutes before you use it. When possible, bake several items at the same time or at least consecutively. Turn the oven off a few minutes before baking time is done.
- If your oven includes a convection setting, use it regularly—it can save both time and energy, allowing you to set the temperature 25 degrees lower for most recipes.
- If you will be running the dishwasher immediately, scrape rather than rinse the dishes.
- Run the dishwasher when it has a full load and allow the dishes to air-dry. A full dishwasher uses one half of the energy and one sixth the water of washing dishes by hand.
- Avoid regular use of the rinse and hold cycle.
- Select an appropriate size refrigerator for your needs; two small refrigerators use more energy than one large one.
- Refrigerators with the freezer on top generally use significantly less energy than side-by-side models. Bottom freezer models are the most energy efficient models available.
- Refrigerator shelves are warmer near the door and the coolest parts are near the bottom and toward the back. If possible, keep your meats and dairy products in those cooler places.
- A fuller refrigerator works less to keep cool but do not pack it too tightlygood air circulation is important to efficient operation. Likewise, keep your freezer full.
- Avoid putting containers of hot food into the refrigerator; allow them to cool a bit first.
- Regularly check refrigerator seals to ensure they are working correctly: if a dollar bill slides out without a tug, you may need to replace them.
- Keep dust off the condenser by cleaning every three months or as needed.

Electrical

- Use LED bulbs and fixtures where possible. Currently, incandescent bulbs are the least efficient source of light. Keep your light fixtures and bulbs clean to get maximum light they produce.
- Caution: Compact fluorescent bulbs contain small amounts of mercury. If you break one, ventilate the area and clean up wearing gloves. Disposed bulbs should be delivered to a facility designed to manage them. Always dispose of CFLs or fluorescent bulbs properly rather than putting them in your regular trash. Contact your local waste management service for instructions.
- Unplug small appliances when they are not in use. Small items such as hair dryers and MP3 players draw electricity even when they are not in use. Unplug them or plug them into power strips that you can conveniently turn off when they are not in use.

Your Additional Reminders and Notes

EXTENDED ABSENCES

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

Plan in Advance

- Ask a neighbor to keep an eye on the property. If possible, provide them with a way to reach you while you are away.
- If you will be gone an especially long time (over two weeks) consider arranging for a house sitter.
- If applicable, arrange for someone to mow the lawn or shovel snow.
- Notify local security personnel or police of the dates you will be away.
- Stop mail, newspapers, and other deliveries.
- Consider the use of lighting timers (available at hardware stores).
- Confirm that all insurance policies that cover your property and belongings are current and provide sufficient coverage.
- Some insurance policies stipulate how often your home should be checked when you are away; contact your insurance carrier to make certain you understand and comply with these requirements.
- Mark valuable items with identifying information. Consider whether you have irreplaceable items that should be stored in a bank vault or security box.

As You Leave

- Forward phone calls to a relative or close friend.
- Unplug computers and other electronic devices that might be harmed in an electric storm.
- Leave window coverings in their most typical positions.
- Confirm that all doors and windows are locked and the deadbolts are engaged.
- Shut off the main water supply and drain your water lines. See Plumbing/Extended Absence for additional details.
- Set the thermostat on the water heater to “vacation” to save energy or shut off the water heater. Check the manufacturer’s directions for instructions on the steps involved in this process.

- ### *Your Additional Reminders and Notes*

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Shrinkage of the wood members of your home is inevitable and occurs in every new home. This may be revealed in gaps in joints of baseboards, crown moldings and even painted cabinet doors. 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.

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

FENCING

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Drainage

Fencing should be installed only after the final grade has been established and approved. In planning, installing, and maintaining fencing, ensure that existing drainage patterns function unimpeded. When installing a fence, use caution in distributing the soil you removed to set posts to avoid blocking drainage swales. Plan enough space under the bottom of a wood fence for water to pass through. Always contact local utility companies to locate underground utilities before digging or installing fence posts.

Do not install fence sections flush with your sod. A minimum space of 2-3 inches is required to allow proper drainage for rain water.

If your lawn includes a sprinkler system, be sure to locate sprinkler lines and heads before digging. Buffington Homes is not responsible for relocating sprinkler heads or lines due to damage or blockage due to homeowner installed fencing.

Developer/Property Owners Association Architectural Guidelines

If you choose to add fencing after moving into your new home, keep in mind the architectural requirements of your community may specify the type and style of fence allowed.

Specific community requirements about style, height, and position on your home site are described in the current architectural guidelines, which you receive as part of your purchase documents or can obtain from your Buffington Homes Sales Office or the Property Owners Association. Type, style, and color of fencing are addressed in these guidelines.

Special requirements apply to homes on corner lots where drivers must have adequate visibility. In some communities, zoning laws may impact private fencing. Your responsibilities include checking on such details with City planning and zoning officials of your Community.

We recommend that you engage the services of professionals to install your fence. Be certain to inform any fence installer of your architectural requirements.

[See also Property Boundaries](#)

Variation

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

Weather Damage

Report damage to fencing caused by severe weather to your homeowner insurance company; weather damage is specifically excluded from warranty coverage.

Wood Fences

The lumber used to construct wood fences is all weather wood, rough cedar, or spruce. Over time it will crack, warp, and split. Unless extreme, these conditions require no action on your part. As the wood ages and shrinks, nails may come loose and require attention. Also check the posts and any gates twice a year and tighten hardware or make needed adjustments. Prevent sprinklers from spraying your wood fence.

Wrought Iron Fencing

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

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

[See also Utility Locates](#)

One-Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

If fencing is part of your home purchase, we will confirm the acceptable condition of the fence during your homeowner orientation. If we installed your fence, we will correct fence posts that become loose during the warranty period.

FIREPLACE

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.

WOOD BURNING FIREPLACE

Look upon burning a wood fire as a luxury that adds much to the atmosphere but just a little to the heat in a home. About ten 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.

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

One caution on the use of glass doors: do not close them over a roaring fire, especially if you are burning hard woods (such as oak or hickory) because the extreme heat 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 six 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.

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

GAS FIREPLACE

Read and follow all of your fireplace manufacturer's directions.

A slight delay between turning the switch on and flame ignition is normal. The flames should ignite gently and silently. If you notice any deviation from this and any gas smell, immediately shut off the switch and report it to the gas company. When you first use your fireplace, find a warmer day where you can run the fireplace for a 2-3 hours with the windows cracked. This helps to allow for the manufacture coating to burn off, so that it does not set off your smoke detectors.

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

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

One-Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

Fireplaces are not intended to be the sole heat source in the home. The fireplace should function properly when the manufacturer's directions are followed.

Discoloration

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

FIRE PREVENTION

All family members should practice fire safety. Awareness of potential dangers and preventive actions are preferable to even the fastest response. Keep these hints in mind and add your own reminders in the space provided on the next page. For additional tips, contact your local fire department.

Train Family Members

- 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 confirm that they function and so that everyone recognizes the sound.

- Follow the manufacturer's directions for cleaning and servicing all of your smoke detectors.
- As soon as possible, teach young children how and why to dial 911.
- Have a general use fire extinguisher and instruct all family members in its location and use.
- Teach children the safe use of appliances such as irons and toasters.
- If you smell gas, leave and call for help from another location. Do not use a phone or cell phone and do not turn on any lights.

Practice Prevention

- Store matches away from children and heat sources.
- Avoid smoking in bed and always use a fire safe receptacle to extinguish smoking materials. Keep lighters and matches out of reach of children.
- Avoid leaving small children home alone, even for a short time.
- Maintain appliances in clean and safe working condition.
- Avoid overloading electrical outlets.
- Ensure that all electrical cords are in good repair.
- Avoid having any flammable objects or materials near the stove or leaving anything that you are cooking unattended.
- Keep the range hood filter clean to prevent a build-up of grease.
- Allow space for cooling around electrical equipment. Maintain a clear space of at least three feet around furnaces.
- Unplug the iron when it is not in use. Do not leave an iron that is on unattended.
- Use electric blankets with care, following manufacturer directions.
- Use the correct wattage of bulbs in all light fixtures.
- Use candles safely. Never leave a burning candle unattended. Keep them out of reach of children and pets. Wicks should be cut to 1/4 inch.
- Store volatile materials (paint, gasoline for the lawn mower, and so on) in appropriate containers, away from flames (such as pilot lights) or heat sources. Many trash collection services offer a means for you to dispose of hazardous items. Check with your service provider for details.
- Gas Grills: Keep the barbeque clean and soap test the lines of a gas grill for leaks regularly. A quarter to a half turn provides enough propane; do not turn the valve on all the way. When lighting your barbeque, have the match or lighter already burning with the lid open before you turn on the gas.
- Charcoal Grill: Wait for at least a full minute before lighting fluid soaked coals. Before you light the coals, move the lighter fluid a safe distance away. Never use gasoline to start a charcoal barbeque and never spray more fluid on hot coals. When you are finished barbequing, wear an oven mitt and use tongs to submerge spent coals in a metal pail of water.
- All Grills: Use the barbeque outdoors, at least 10 feet from the house. Grilling in the garage with the door open does not allow enough ventilation and could result in carbon monoxide poisoning. Never leave a lit barbeque unattended. Keep children and pets away from all grills.

- If your home includes a gas fireplace follow all directions and do not leave the fireplace unattended when it is on. If you have a wood burning fireplace:
- Arrange for professional cleaning of the chimney at appropriate intervals.
- Maintain the spark arrester on the chimney.
- Never use liquid fire starters (such as for a charcoal barbeque) in an indoor fireplace.
- Use a screen or glass doors when a fire is burning.
- Confirm the fire is out before closing the flue.
- Do not leave the fireplace unattended while a fire is burning.
- During holidays, ensure that all cords and connections are in good condition and of appropriate capacity for electrical decorations.
- If you decide to remodel, finish the basement, or add onto your home, obtain a Municipal building permit and work with professionals. Ensure that all building department inspections occur and that long periods of time. If you are leaving for an extended period, you may want to use a timer to simulate occupancy.

Your Additional Reminders and Notes

FIXTURES

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Manufacturers typically treat fixtures with a clear protective coating, electrostatically applied, to provide beauty and durability. Even this coating will show wear and tear. Atmospheric conditions, sunlight, caustic agents such as paints, and scratches from sharp objects can cause the protective coating to crack or peel, exposing the brass and resulting in spotting and discoloration.

Cleaning

Initial care of these products requires only periodic cleaning with a mild, nonabrasive soap and buffing with a soft cloth.

Corrosion

Water having a high mineral content can be corrosive to fixtures.

Polish

When peeling, spotting, or discoloration occurs, you can sometimes restore the beauty of the metal by completely removing the remaining coating and hand polishing the item with a suitable polish. Applying a light coat of wax and buffing with a soft cloth helps maintain the gloss.

One-Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

During your homeowner orientation we will confirm that fixtures are in acceptable condition. Corrosion damage to the external surfaces or internal workings of plumbing fixtures is excluded from warranty coverage.

FOUNDATION

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

We install the foundation of your home according to the recommendations of our consulting engineers and to meet or exceed the local municipality requirements. The walls of the foundation are concrete masonry block. To protect your home's foundation, follow guidelines for installation and maintenance of landscaping and drainage in this homeowner guide.

Cracks

Surface cracks can develop in foundation walls. 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 request.

One-Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

The foundation walls are a structural element of your home. They are warranted against failure or defect for one year.

FRAMING

One-Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

Floor Deflection

Floors will deflect (bend) when walked on. This will be more noticeable next to hutches, bookcases, pianos, chairs, and other heavy furniture. This is not a structural deficiency and we will take no action for this occurrence.

Floor Level

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

Plumb Walls

We will correct walls that are out of plumb more than one inch in an eight foot distance of the wall. The variation of a bowed wall may not be more or less than 3/4 inch over the length of the wall.

Squeaks: One-Time Repair

Some floor and stair squeaks are unavoidable. Although we do not warrant against floor squeaks, we will make a reasonable effort to correct them one time during your warranty period.

GARAGE OVERHEAD DOOR

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Keyless Entry

Each brand has a different method for programming so please refer to your manufacturer's guide for reprogramming instructions.

Light Visible

Garage overhead doors cannot be airtight. Some light will be visible around the edges and across the top of the door. Weather conditions may result in some precipitation entering around the door. Likewise, dust may enter especially until most homes in the community have landscaping installed. When freezing temperatures occur, the rubber may not seal along the bottom of the door; this unavoidable condition is a natural result of weather conditions and is excluded from warranty coverage.

Lubrication

Regularly apply a lubricant such as silicone spray to all moving metal parts: rollers, hinges, pulleys, bearings, moveable lock parts, and springs. Lubrication is not required on plastic/neoprene rollers and plastic idler bearings. Refer to the door manufacturer's manual or Website for recommendation. Avoid over lubricating to prevent drips on vehicles or the concrete floor. Also, ensure that all fasteners are tight on the hardware and the overhead door is operating as intended, without binding or scraping.

Opener

To prevent damage to a garage door opener, be sure the door is completely unlocked and the rope-pull has been removed before operating the opener.

Caution: Operating an opener when the manufacturer's lock is engaged in the track could cause the opener to fail.

In fact, garage door companies recommend against even leaving a lock installed once an opener has been added. Side locks can stick or get caught in the track and cause the cables to come off which creates a major inconvenience and repair. If a manual lock is required due to power outage or leaving for an extended period, we suggest snapping a vise grip on to the track above a roller. Either way, upon your return, unlock the garage door first or remove the vise grip, then re-engage the motor (simply push the button to operate the opener and it will reconnect) to restore normal operation.

If you have an opener installed on your home after closing, we suggest that you order it from the company that provided and installed the garage door to assure uninterrupted warranty coverage. Be familiar with the steps for manual operation of the door in the event of a power failure.

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

Expect to replace the battery in the garage opener remote controls about once a year. The battery is usually a 9-volt battery; however, check your manufacturer's manual for correct battery size and other maintenance needs of your remote controls.

Painting

Garage doors are insulated metal and are factory finished. If you repaint the garage door when you repaint your home, the color of your overhead garage door may be specified by the architectural controls of your Property Owner's Association. Therefore, the color of the door may be pre-determined and cannot be changed. Please refer to your exterior color selections or check with your Property Owners Association for further information regarding architectural controls for your community.

Safety

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

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

Sag

The garage door may sag slightly due to its weight and span. This is a normal condition and does not require attention.

One-Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

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

GAS SHUT-OFFS

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Gas Leak

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

One-Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

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

GHOSTING

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

The conclusion of the research and laboratory tests has been that the majority of this staining or "ghosting"

(also known as “carbon black”) results from pollution of the air in the home caused by burning scented candles. Incomplete combustion of hydrocarbons as these candles burn contributes a considerable amount of soot to the air. This sooty substance then settles or accumulates on surfaces of the home. The sooty deposits are extremely difficult to remove; on some surfaces (light-colored carpet, for instance), they are impossible to clean completely away.

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

[See also Carpet/Filtration](#)

GRADING AND DRAINAGE

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

We will final grade your property to ensure proper drainage on your lot. Water will be directed away from the home as required. Swales may be created on or across your lot to drain stormwater from your lot as well as water draining from other nearby lots. Once our contractual commitment is met, you are responsible for maintaining established grade, as applicable. If you alter the drainage pattern later or if changes in drainage occur due to lack of maintenance, the limited structural warranty may be impacted. Altering drainage patterns may include the installation of structures, pools, gardens, planting beds and fences.

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

You share in an overall drainage plan for the community that was predetermined before the homes were built. The rough and final grades around your home have been inspected and approved for proper drainage of your lot. Yards drain from one to another. Yards may drain from front to back, back to front, or have split drainage. Use caution when installing landscaping, fencing, or additions to your home to avoid causing water problems on adjacent lots. Remember that you must submit a plan for any landscaping, fencing or structural additions to the Architectural Control Committee before beginning any work.

Backfill Settlement

The area we excavated for your home’s foundation was larger than the home to allow room to work. In addition, some trenching is necessary for installation of utility lines. Although we replaced the soil, it does not return to its original density. Some settling will occur, especially after prolonged or heavy rainfall or melting of large amounts of snow. Settling can continue for several years. Inspect the perimeter of your home regularly for signs of settling and fill settled areas as needed to maintain positive drainage.

Drainage

The grade around your home should slope away from the house. Drainage swales may or may not follow property boundaries. Maintain the slopes around your home to permit the water to drain away from the home as rapidly as possible. This is essential to protect your foundation. Failure to do so can result in major structural damage and void your structural warranty.

Easements

Most lots have an easement, which is a section of land in front, on the sides, and/or in the back of your home site where public utilities are installed. In some areas, an easement or right-of-way is required for

grass or concrete drainage swales. Easements are shown on the approved plot plan.

Erosion

Until your yard is established and stable, erosion will be a potential concern. Heavy rains or roof runoff can erode soil. The sooner you restore the grade to its original condition, the less damage will occur. Erosion is of special concern in drainage swales. If swales become filled with soil runoff, they may not drain the rest of the yard, causing further problems. Even if your yard has been sodded, until the sod takes root, erosion may still occur. Correcting erosion is your responsibility.

Main Water Line

The main water line to your new home is typically located in the front yard. (in some cases, according to community design it may be located in the back yard). Governing municipalities require that the shut-off valve be visible and accessible.

Subsurface Drains

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

Swales

Drainage swales are shallow-sided, sloped ditches designed to convey surface run-off away from your home toward the nearest street, land, dry pond, or storm water management pond. These swales are usually located along common property lines and sometimes at the back of a lot. After heavy rain or snow, water may stand in swales up to 72 hours.

[See also Landscaping and Utility Locates](#)

One-Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

We established the final grade to ensure adequate drainage away from the home. Once we have met our commitment as described in your purchase agreement documents, maintaining this drainage is your responsibility. If you alter the drainage pattern after closing on your home, or if changes in drainage occur due to lack of maintenance, the limited structural warranty may be impacted.

Backfill Settlement

Backfilled or excavated areas around the foundation and at utility trenches should not interfere with the drainage away from your home. If these areas settle more than six inches around the perimeter of the home during the first year after grade completion approval, we will provide you with fill dirt to maintain positive drainage. Placing this material will be your responsibility.

New Landscaping

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

Recommendations

In order for us to complete grading after closing (when that is necessary), concrete must be poured and the ground must be dry and free of frost. Your property must be clear of personal property or structures (for example, dog runs, swing sets, vehicles). Please refer to our entry on Seasonal Items in Chapter 5, Homeowner Orientation, for further details.

We do not alter drainage patterns to suit individual landscape plans. Typically, a home site receives water

from neighboring home sites and passes water on to other home sites, so changes in grade often affect adjacent or nearby lots. We advise against making such changes. Changes that impact the designed flow of water across homesites includes the installation or alteration of fencing, vegetable and flower gardens, sheds, pools or any structure that alters the flow of surface waters. After heavy rain or snow, water may stand in swales up to 48 hours.

Under Concrete: One-Time Repair

We will fill visible sunken areas under concrete as we complete your grading and one time during your first-year warranty. Following that, any further settlement is your responsibility to correct.

Winter Grading

Due to weather conditions, especially during winter and early spring, the grade may not have been established at the time of closing. We document the status of your grading at the time of delivery. When conditions permit, grading work will continue.

Confirm that we have completed your grading before continuing with additional yard construction such as fencing or the installation of landscaping.

GREEN HOME CARE

In addition to saving water and energy, numerous lifestyle details can have a significant impact on the environment. The suggestions that follow will get you started.

Cleaning

- Look for products whose manufacturers spell out all ingredients. A long list of ingredients you cannot pronounce is usually an indication that the product contains chemicals you and the environment are better off without.
- You might also want to consider replacing expensive chemically laden products with an all purpose cleaner you mix yourself. Frequently used ingredients include baking soda, white vinegar, salt, corn starch, cream of tartar, and borax—all of which are safer for the environment than many of the chemicals found in commercial cleaning products. Experiment to see which recipes work best for your needs.
- For products you purchase, look for concentrated formulas in containers made from recycled materials; powders contain fewer chemicals and use less energy to transport.
- Whichever cleaner you are using, use just the amount you need to complete the job and not one drop more.
- Micro-fiber cleaning cloths are effective for almost all cleaning tasks, replacing paper towels. Just wash and reuse.

Gardening

- Buy natural fertilizers with ingredients such as bone meal, kelp meal, alfalfa meal, or vermiculture castings (worm poop). These break down slowly which is beneficial to plants. Look for certified organic products and use them sparingly to avoid run-off.
- Start a compost pile. Local nurseries or hardware stores carry compost bins.
- If your lawn is relatively small and flat, consider a push mower to eliminate emissions from a gas-powered model and give yourself some exercise at the same time.

Laundry

- Use the recommended amount of detergent for your washing machine. Using too much will leave a residue on clothing; using too little will fail to clean your clothes adequately.
- A quarter cup of baking soda mixed in with your detergent boosts cleaning power and reduces static cling. (Residue from fabric softener reduces the ability of towels to absorb water; residue from dryer sheets can build up on lint screens, reducing efficiency of your dryer.)
- Skip hot water unless the load of wash is especially soiled. Warm water should be sufficient for washing; use cold water for the rinse cycle.
- A half cup of vinegar added to the last rinse will soften your clothes, reduce lint, and control static cling. For delicate items, add one or two tablespoons to the last rinse. For blankets, two cups of vinegar added to the final rinse will help remove soap scum.
- It is important to remember to keep your dryer vent and screen free from lint or blockage. Vents that are not free from obstruction cause moisture build-up and can even cause fires. Check your dryer vent regularly to ensure it is clean and unobstructed.

Your Additional Reminders and Notes

GUTTERS AND DOWNSPOUTS

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Check gutters periodically and remove leaves or other debris. Materials that accumulate in gutters can slow water drainage from the roof, cause overflows, and clog the downspouts. The accumulation of natural debris (pine needles or leaves) or gravel from the roofing materials is a home maintenance concern. Removing such material is your responsibility.

Downspout Extensions or Splash Pads

It is recommended that you add splash pads to the bottom of downspouts to prevent long term erosion of the sod. You may also add downspout extensions that convey the water beyond flower beds or other impediments.

Ladders

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

Leaks

If gutter seams leak, use a commercial gutter caulking compound available at hardware stores to caulk the inside joint.

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/or cause ice damming and potential water leakage.

[See also Roof/Ice Damming](#)

One-Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

Gutters over three feet long are installed with a slight slope so that roof water will flow to the downspouts.

Leaks

We correct leaks that occur during the warranty period.

Overflow

Gutters may overflow during periods of excessively heavy rain. This is expected and requires no repair.

Standing Water

Small amounts of water (up to one inch) will stand for short periods of time in gutters immediately after rain. No correction is required for this condition.

HARDWARE

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

One-Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

We confirm that all hardware is in acceptable condition during your homeowner orientation. The limited warranty excludes repairs for cosmetic damage subsequent to the closing. We will repair hardware items that fail to function as intended.

HARDWOOD FLOORS

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

In daily care of hardwood floor, preventive maintenance is the primary goal. Please see your flooring manufacturer's instructions or Website.

Floors

Floor squeaks are often a temporary condition common to new homes. We will remedy extreme nail or seam popping, cracked or loose tile, and imperfections in the sub flooring. Scratches, gouges, heel marks, and other visible surface defects identified at the Home Owner Orientation will be repaired. We are not responsible for surface defects identified after closing.

Appliances

Delivery, installation, and moving appliances for cleaning purposes may damage the hardwood floor surface. Use extreme caution when moving appliances; repair of such damage is your responsibility.

Cleaning

Sweep on a daily basis or as needed. Never wet-mop a hardwood floor. We recommend you avoid the use of floor steamers on hardwood flooring—never mind what their ads claim. Excessive water causes wood to expand and can possibly damage the floor. Check with the hardwood manufacturer for cleaning recommendations.

Dimples

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

Filmy Appearance

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

Furniture Legs

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

Humidity

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

Mats and Area Rugs

Use protective mats at exterior doors to help prevent sand and grit from getting on the floor; however, if sand and grit are left to accumulate under these mats further damage to the flooring surface may occur. Gritty sand is wood flooring's worst enemy. Be aware that rubber backing on area rugs or mats can cause yellowing and warping of the floor surface.

Separation

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

[See also Warping](#)

Shoes

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

Spills

Clean up food spills immediately with a dry cloth.

Splinters

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

Sun Exposure

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

Traffic Paths

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

Warping

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

Wax

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

One-Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

During your homeowner orientation we will confirm that hardwood floors are in acceptable condition. We will correct cosmetic details listed during your homeowner orientation when they are readily noticeable under normal lighting conditions from a standing position.

Separations

Shrinkage will result in separation between the members of hardwood floors. Gaps that exceed 1/16 inch over the length of the board in normal moisture conditions will be repaired. You are responsible for removing excess filler that may appear on the surface later if the boards expand due to subsequent changes in humidity and expel the filler.

HEATING SYSTEM: GAS FORCED AIR

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Adjust Vents

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

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

Avoid Overheating

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

Combustion and Fresh Air Ducts

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

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

Duct Cleaning

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

Ductwork Noise

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

Electronic Ignition

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

Filter

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

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

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

Furnace Fan Cover

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

Furnished Home

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

Gas Odor

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

Modifications or Additions

If you wish to make any modifications or additions to your heating system, contact the heating and air conditioning company (HVAC) listed on the Emergency Phone Numbers you received at your homeowner orientation. Having another firm modify your heating system during the warranty period will void that portion of your limited warranty.

Odor

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

On-Off Switch

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

Programmable Thermostat

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

Registers

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

Return Air Vents

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

Temperature

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

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 two degrees Fahrenheit.

Trial Run

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

TROUBLESHOOTING TIPS: NO HEAT

Before calling for service, check to confirm that the—

- Thermostat is set to "heat" and the temperature is set above the room temperature.
- Furnace fan cover is installed correctly for the furnace fan to operate. This panel compresses a button that tells the blower it is safe to operate. Similar to the way a clothes dryer door operates, this panel pushes in a button that lets the fan motor know it is safe to come on. If that button is not pushed in, the furnace will not operate.
- Breaker on the main electrical panel is on. (Remember, if a breaker trips you must turn it from the tripped position to the off position before you can turn it back on.)
- Furnace switch is on.
- Gas line is open at the main meter and at the side of the furnace.
- Filter is clean to allow airflow.

- Vents in individual rooms are open.
- Air returns are unobstructed.
- Exhaust vent is not blocked by snow or ice.

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

One-Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

We will install heating systems according to national and local building codes, as well as to designs of the particular home. Building codes specify that heating systems should be capable of maintaining an indoor air temperature of 70 degrees in the center of the room, five feet above the floor. In extremely cold temperatures (10 degrees below or colder), the system should be able to maintain a temperature differential of 80 degree from the outside temperature.

DUCTWORK

Although the heat system is not a sealed system, the ductwork should remain attached and securely fastened. If it becomes unattached, we will repair it as needed. The exact placement of heat ducts may vary from those positions shown in floor plans or model homes.

Furnace Sounds

Expansion or contraction of metal ductwork results in ticking or popping sounds. While eliminating all these sounds is impossible, we will correct oil canning. Oil canning occurs when a large area of sheet metal like those found in air ducts makes a loud noise as it moves up and down in response to temperature changes.

Thermostat

Thermostats are calibrated to plus or minus two degrees.

INSULATION

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Attic insulation will settle over time; this natural occurrence is taken into account in planning the amount of insulation originally installed. Electrical outlets may emit detectable amounts of cold air when outside temperatures are low. This will happen due to convection in the wall.

One-Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

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

LANDSCAPING

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

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

Plan to install the basic components of your landscaping as soon after closing as weather permits. In addition to meeting your Property Owner Association requirements to landscape in a timely manner, well-designed landscaping prevents erosion and protects the foundation of your home.

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Architectural Requirements

Where landscaping is included with a home, the sod, shrub beds, shrubbery, and trees are chosen to adhere to the architectural requirements set by the developer, Property Owners association, or the local building authority. Where applicable, when you sign your purchase agreement, you agree to maintain the landscaping according to these requirements.

Additions

Before installing patio additions or other permanent improvements, consider soil conditions in the design and engineering of your addition. Remember to adhere to the architectural requirements set by the developer, Property Owners Association, or the local building authority.

Backfill Settlement

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

[See also Grading and Drainage](#)

Bark or Rock Beds

Do not allow edging around decorative rock or bark beds to dam the free flow of water away from the home. You can use a non-woven landscape fabric between the soil and rock or bark to restrict weed growth while still permitting normal evaporation of ground moisture. Ensure that you leave a hole in the fabric large enough to provide good aeration around the base of trees or shrubs. In addition, swales have been created to direct water flows away from your home and through yards. It is your responsibility to keep the swales free of obstruction. Typical obstructions include the addition of flower beds, pools, structures, patios, etc.

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 you hire after closing on your home. Discuss drainage with any company you hire to do an installation in your yard. Do not permit them to tie into existing drainage pipes without approval from the municipality. Ensure that they call all utility companies before doing any excavation. Make sure they are also aware of underground sprinklers as the utility companies will not locate underground sprinkler lines. Remember that you must receive POA approval for most landscaping and structures that you change or add to your property.

Main Water Line

The main water line to your new home is typically located in the front yard and bedded in a sand or stone base. Typically, a shut off valve is located behind the street or sidewalk. Governing municipalities require that this remains visible.

Natural Areas

During construction, we take care to prevent construction debris from accumulating in natural areas. Removing dead wood, tree limbs, fallen trees, or other natural items is your responsibility.

Planning

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

Plant Selection

When choosing plants consider your local climate. Favor native over exotic species. Consider ultimate size, shape, and growth habit of the species.

[See also Property Boundaries](#)

Requirements

In addition to complying with applicable developer requirements, check with your local building department and Property Owners association before designing, installing, or changing landscaping for any regulations that they require you to follow. Avoid blocking swales and the planned water drainage with landscaping or any other structures, temporary or permanent that could impede the flow of storm water. This includes landscaping beds, trees, patios, sheds, fences, pools or any addition that will block the flow of water as planned by the developer.

Sod

Sod is laid after the final grade elevations have been established. Lawn care is one of your maintenance responsibilities. Keep the following points in mind regarding watering: We will replace any dead sod provided it was noted at the Homewoner Orientation.

- The first 12 hours after new sod has been laid down is when it is most vulnerable to drying out. If gaps start to appear between rows of new sod, this is an indication your sod is drying out. Sod installed against your foundation, especially along the south and west sides, is likely to dry out sooner than other locations.

- Stay off of your new sod as much as possible except to water it.
- Be prepared by having enough hose to reach all corners of your yard.
- A good sprinkler is also necessary to ensure proper watering of the entire yard. Avoid watering by hand as doing so distributes water unevenly.
- Water on grass acts like a magnifying glass and will burn your new sod. Therefore, early morning or late evening is best. Avoid watering after 8:00 a.m. or before 6:00 p.m.
- New sod should be watered to the point that the soil is soft when you step on it.
- Water every day for seven days then cut back to once every other day. If temperatures are hot and dry, water more often; if precipitation occurs, water less.
- Keep in mind that you can over water sod as well as under water sod. Take care never to overwater the sod while it is in the rooting stage. Soggy sod can lead to root rot and eventually new sod failure. Instead, water the sod in smaller amounts, several times during the day.
- 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.

Stones

The soil in your area may have stones and rocks. Removing these naturally occurring elements is a maintenance activity. If we install 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.

Trees and Shrubs

We respect and value trees as one of the features that make up an attractive community and add value to the homes we build. We take steps to protect and preserve existing trees in the area of your home. Despite 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 home site, disturbing the root system, and removing other trees to make room for the home. The newly exposed tree may adversely react to conditions it is unaccustomed to. Caring for existing trees, including pruning dead branches or removing these trees altogether is your responsibility.

Trees planted in conjunction with a landscape package are warranted for one growing season following closing provided the homeowner has provided reasonable care for the plantings. As with sod, watering newly planted trees and shrubs is crucial. We replace any dead shrubs provided it was noted at the Homeowner Orientation.

- Trees and shrubs should begin on the same watering schedule as the sod. Like sod, trees and shrubs can be over watered. Therefore, attention is needed through the landscape season to determine how much and when to water.
- The leaves on trees and shrubs will turn yellow from over watering; they will turn brown if watering is insufficient.
- Avoid piling excess soil around the base of your trees and shrubs because this can cause root rot.
- Avoid tilling or planting flowerbeds around trees. This is especially important while trees are recovering

from the construction process.

- To encourage budding in the spring, water your trees and shrubs thoroughly in the late fall.
- If the weather turns warm during the winter, we recommend watering your trees and shrubs to help premature thawing.
- Freeze/thaw cycles may result in vertical tearing of tree bark; this usually repairs itself over time.
- Trees and shrubs require regular inspection for insect infestation. Early detection and prompt treatment may prevent further damage.

Utility Lines

A slight depression may develop in the front lawn along the line of the utility trench. To correct this, roll back the sod, spread topsoil underneath to level the area, and then relay the sod. Before any significant digging, check the location of buried service leads by contacting utility locators.

[See also Easements and Utility Locates](#)

Waiting to Landscape

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

Weeds

Weeds will appear in your new lawn whether seed or sod is used. Even in newly sodded lawns, weeds may appear and will grow more aggressively than sod. When soil is disturbed, dormant seeds come to the surface and germinate. The best control is a healthy lawn, achieved through regular care and attention.

One-Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

We will confirm the healthy condition of all plant materials during your homeowner orientation. With the exception of shrubs seed or sod, trees we install are warranted for one growing season.

Trees and other plant materials that existed on the home site when construction begins, damage from freeze/thaw cycles, and insect damage are all excluded from warranty coverage.

[See also Seasonal, Chapter 5](#)

MILDEW

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

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

One-Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

We will remove any mildew noted during your homeowner orientation. Following that, our warranty excludes mildew.

MIRRORS

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

One-Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

We will confirm that all mirrors are in acceptable condition during your homeowner orientation. We will correct scratches, chips, or other damage to mirrors noted on your homeowner orientation agenda.

MOLD PREVENTION

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Mold is a type of fungus that spreads through the air in microscopic spores. Mold occurs naturally and is found everywhere that life can be supported over 100,000 kinds exist in the world and about 1000 of these are found in the North America.

In order to grow, mold requires food, air, water, and a temperature between 40 and 100 degrees Fahrenheit. While not all molds are harmful, growth of mold within a home is inappropriate and may have side effects for the occupants, such as allergic reactions and infections, in addition to damaging the material on which it grows. At this point, no agency has been able to set guidelines on how much exposure is harmful because each of us reacts to mold differently.

Designing or building homes that exclude mold spores is impossible. If conditions are right, mold will grow in your home. Items commonly found in all homes such as wood, carpet, drywall, fabric, and insulation to name a few, can supply a food source. Likewise, air and temperature in most homes meet the needs of mold spores. If moisture is present and remains on a mold food source, mold can develop within 24 to 48 hours.

Moisture is the only mold growth factor that can be controlled in a home. By minimizing moisture, you reduce or eliminate mold growth. Moisture in your home comes from many sources. Spills, leaks, overflows, condensation, and high humidity are examples. Good housekeeping and maintenance are essential in your effort to prevent or eliminate mold growth.

Caulking

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

Cleaning

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

Most bath tile cleaning products contain chemicals that remove and help protect against mold growth.

Check the refrigerator pan and air conditioning condensate line, coils, and condenser pan for signs of mold growth. Wipe up any spills immediately.

Condensation

Condensation on surfaces inside your home is a sign of high humidity. If you notice condensation, wipe it up and take steps to reduce the humidity level in your home.

Humidifier

If you add a humidifier, be sure to operate it in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and clean it as recommended in the manufacturer's literature. If condensation develops, turn the humidifier down or off.

Inspections

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

Landscaping and Drainage

Maintain positive drainage around your home. Avoid changes to the grade or installing exterior additions that interfere with drainage away from the home; this includes edging or borders that dam water near the home.

Regularly inspect any sprinkler system for correct function. Adjust the heads to avoid their spraying the home and correct any leaks immediately.

Keep splash blocks or downspout extensions in place to channel roof water away from your home. Clean gutters as needed to prevent overflow.

Leaks

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

Purchases or Stored Items

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

Tile Grout

Another vulnerable area is tile grout around showers and tubs. Grout acts as a seal to keep moisture from reaching the wall behind the tile.

Valves

Be familiar with the shut off valves for all water supply lines in your home. Shut-off valves are labeled during the Homeowner Orientation. In the event of a leak, immediately shut off the water at the appropriate valve to minimize the amount of water that is released. Clean up the water immediately.

Vehicle Run-Off

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

Ventilation

Your daily habits can help keep your home well ventilated:

- Do not cover or interfere in any way with the fresh air supply to your furnace.

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

Weather Stripping

Weather stripping on doors may need occasional adjustment to prevent moisture from getting in around the door as well as to reduce air infiltration. New or replacement weather stripping can be purchased from local hardware stores.

See also [Plumbing, Ventilation, and Condensation](#)

One-Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

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

PAINT AND STAIN

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

When cleaning painted surfaces, avoid abrasive cleaners, scouring pads, and scrub brushes. Refer to the paint manufacturer's recommendations when cleaning any painted surfaces. Flat paints show washing marks more easily than gloss paints do. Often better results come from touching up rather than washing a painted surface.

Colors

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

Exterior

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

As it ages, exterior wood trim will develop minor cracks and raised grain. Much of this will occur during the first year. Raised grain permits moisture to get under the paint and can result in peeling. Cedar trim is generally stained, and will cup and split naturally. These are natural occurrences rather than a defect in materials or workmanship. Exterior paint/stain maintenance is your responsibility.

Plan on refinishing any painted or stained 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 and/or stain 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/stain on some parts of your home may begin to show signs of deterioration sooner than others.

When you repaint or restain the exterior of your home, begin by resetting popped nails. Remove blistered or peeling portions of paint with a wire brush or putty knife. Sand, prime, and then paint the entire area. Use a quality exterior paint or stain, formulated for local climate conditions.

Avoid allowing sprinklers to spray water on the exterior walls of your home. This will cause blistering, peeling, splintering, and other damage to the home.

Severe Weather

Hail and wind can cause a great deal of damage in a severe storm, so inspect your home after such weather. Promptly report damage caused by severe weather to your homeowner insurance company. Repair of storm damage falls outside the warranty coverage and is either your responsibility or that of your insurer.

Stain

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

Touch-Up

When doing paint touch-ups, use a small brush or roller, applying paint only to the damaged spot. The appearance and color will vary from the surrounding area even if the same paint mix is used, especially when fresh. 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.

We provide a voucher for a complimentary pint of paint available at our local paint supplier, which you will receive up on closing. Store any paints with the lids tightly in place and in a location where they are not subjected to extreme temperatures. If a warranty matter requires paint touch up, this paint will offer the closest color match.

Wall Cracks/Nail Pops

We suggest that you wait until after the first heating season to repair drywall cracks or other separations due to normal shrinkage. Nail pops are a common occurrence caused by the natural drying of the wood subsurfaces. To repair nail pops, reset the nail or screw and spackle.

See also Drywall

One-Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

During your homeowner orientation, we will confirm that all painted or stained surfaces are in acceptable condition. We will touch up paint as indicated on your homeowner orientation list. You are responsible for all subsequent touch-up, except painting we perform as part of another warranty repair. All paint issues are looked at from a standard six-foot distance, under normal light conditions. If the original color or paint type has been changed, Buffington Homes will perform any “other” repairs needed to the area (i.e.- drywall patch), but will not be responsible for re-painting of those areas.

Fading

fading of paint or stain caused by the effects of sun and weather is a natural occurrence and is to be expected . Our limited warranty excludes this occurrence.

Touch-Up Visible

Paint touch-up can be visible under certain lighting conditions.

Wood Grain

Because of wood characteristics, color variations will result when stain is applied to wood. This is natural and requires no repair. Today's water-based paints often make wood grain visible on painted trim. We do not provide corrections for this condition.

PARGING

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

The white, powdery substance that sometimes accumulates on parging 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.

One-Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

If applicable, we will confirm that foundation parging is complete and in acceptable condition during your homeowner orientation. We will repair areas needing attention which are noted during your homeowner orientation.

Cracks: One-Time Repair

If applicable, one time during your warranty year we will repair cracks in parging that exceed 1/16 inch in width or parging that separates from the foundation. Such repairs will vary in color from the original.

PESTS AND WILDLIFE

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

[See also Termites](#)

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.

During your homeowner orientation, your builder will identify the main water shut off valve. It may be in the garage, basement or a utility closet depending on the home you purchased. Be familiar with the location and operation of the shut off in case of an emergency such as a water line break.

Aerators

In most cases the plumbing lines are a closed system and should have a minimal amount of dirt or construction debris in them. However foreign matter and small amounts of minerals may enter the lines. Aerators on the faucets strain much of this from your water. Naturally occurring minerals in your water may get caught in these aerators, causing distortion in the stream of water from the faucets. This is a sign that the aerator needs to be cleaned.

[See also Dripping Faucet](#)

Cleaning

Follow manufacturer's directions for cleaning fixtures. Avoid abrasive cleansers. They remove the shiny finish and leave behind a porous surface that is difficult to keep clean. Clean plumbing fixtures with a soft sponge and soapy water (a nonabrasive cleaner or a liquid detergent is usually recommended by manufacturers). Then polish the fixtures with a dry cloth to prevent water spots. 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. You can usually clear clogged traps with a plunger. If you use chemical agents, follow directions carefully to avoid personal injury or damage to the fixtures.

Improper garbage disposal use also causes many plumbing clogs. Always use plenty of cold water when running the disposal. Cold water also cools the ball bearings which helps the motor last longer. Allow the water to run 10 to 15 seconds after shutting off the disposal. Review the manufacturer's literature to learn which food items can be put in the disposal and which should be avoided.

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

Dripping Faucet

If your faucets are dripping, there could be several causes. You should remove the aerator and ensure that it is free from debris or clogging. If that does not fix the problem, you may need to replace the O-ring or cartridge. How-to guides are available online, and parts are typically available at your local home improvement store. If you are not comfortable doing this yourself, call a plumber for assistance.

Extended Absence

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

If you have a storage tank water heater, you may also wish to shut off the water heater if you are away for an extended period. 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 outside or a drain. . If you prefer to leave the tank full, set the temperature to its lowest or "vacation" setting. Check manufacturer's directions for additional hints and instructions.

[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. We will replace any defective fixtures provided they are noted at the Homeowner Orientation.

Freezing Pipes

Provided your home is heated at a normal level, pipes should not freeze. Keep the garage doors closed to protect plumbing lines running through this area from freezing temperatures.

Set the heat at a minimum of 60 degrees if you are away during winter months.

In unusually frigid weather or if you will be gone more than a day or two, open cabinet doors to allow warm air to circulate around pipes. In areas susceptible to freezing, turn the faucets to slowly drip, creating movement of water in the pipes. Use an ordinary hair dryer to thaw pipes that are frozen. Never use an open flame.

Jetted Tubs

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

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

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

Leaks

If a plumbing leak occurs, the first step is to turn off the water supply to the area involved and minimize damage to your home and personal property. This may mean shutting off the water to the entire home. If your home is in the warranty period, contact the warranty office or the appropriate trade contractor's emergency number if the leak occurs after hour's. If your home is out of the warranty period, call any plumber with emergency service. It is recommended that you maintain an emergency contact list for home emergencies prior to needing them.

Low Pressure

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

Modifications or Additions

If you wish to make any modifications or additions to your plumbing system, contact the plumbing company that completed your home. Contact information is available from the service department. Having another firm modify your plumbing system during the warranty period will void that portion of your limited warranty.

Outside Faucets

Outside faucets (hose bibs) are generally freeze-proof, but for this feature to be effective, you must remove hoses during cold weather, even if the faucet is located in your garage. In extreme cold conditions, shut off water supply to outside faucets using the shut off valves identified during the homeowner orientation. After shutting the supply off, open the outside hosebib and allow any water in the pipe to drain out before closing the spigot.

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. We recommend that you get in the habit of always removing any hose you use on any exterior or garage faucet.

Porcelain

You can damage porcelain enamel with a sharp blow from a heavy object or by scratching. Do not stand in the bathtub wearing shoes unless you have placed a protective layer of cardboard 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

In single family homes the water supply can be shut-off entirely in two locations. The first is at the street and the second is at the meter. Use the shut off at the meter for major water emergencies such as a water line break or when you install a sprinkler system. Each toilet has a shut-off on the water line under the tank and hot and cold shutoffs for each sink are included on the water lines under each 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. Prolonged contact with produce can stain the finish. Also avoid using the sink as a cutting board; sharp knives will gouge the finish.

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

Temperature Variation

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

Toilet 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.

TROUBLESHOOTING TIPS: PLUMBING

No Water Anywhere in the Home

Before calling for service, check to confirm that the—

- Main shut off on the meter inside your home is open.
- Main shut off at the street is open.
- Individual item shut-off is open.
- No Hot Water: See Water Heater

Leak Involving One Sink, Tub, or Toilet

Before calling for service, check to confirm that the—

- Caulking and grout are in good condition.
- Shower door or tub enclosure was properly closed.

If these items do not resolve the issue, turn the water supply off to the item. Use other facilities in your home and report problem on the next business day. If a leak involves a main line, turn water off at the meter in your home and call the emergency number for service.

Back Up at One Toilet

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

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

Sewer Back Up Affecting Entire Home

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

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

One-Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

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

Clogged Drain

We will correct clogged drains that occur during the first 30 days from closing if caused by construction debris. However, if a household item is removed from a clogged drain, we will bill you for the drain service. Unplugging of toilets is not a warranted item.

Condensation on Pipes or Tanks

Condensation on pipes or toilet tanks may result due to combinations of temperature and humidity. Be sure to wipe up any condensation that drips on surfaces that can be damaged by water. Condensation is not warrantable.

Cracks, Chips, Scratches

Buffington Homes will repair cracks, chips and scratches on porcelain, stainless steel and countertops if noted during the Homeowner Orientation. Any damage not noted during the Homeowner Orientation are not warranted.

Cosmetic Damage

We will correct any fixture damage noted during your homeowner orientation. Repairing chips, scratches, or other surface damage noted subsequent to your homeowner orientation is your responsibility.

Outside Faucets

We will repair leaks at exterior faucets (hosebibs) noted during your homeowner orientation. Subsequent to the orientation, repair of a broken line to an exterior faucet is your responsibility. Damage caused by freezing when a hose is left on the faucet is specifically excluded from warranty coverage. Refer to Outside Faucets above for more information.

Freezing Pipes

Provided the home is heated at a normal level, pipes should not freeze. If a pipe freezes due to improper installation, Buffington Homes will correct the issue.

Leaks

We will repair leaks in the plumbing system. If a plumbing leak caused by a warranted item results in drywall or floor covering damage, we will repair or replace items that were part of the home as originally purchased. Please note that payments or adjustments for secondary damages (for example, damage to wallpaper, drapes, and personal belongings) may be covered by your homeowner insurance but are excluded from warranty coverage.

Noise

Changes in temperature or the flow of the water itself will cause some noise in the pipes. This is normal and requires no repair. We will repair persistent water hammer (a thump or bang that can be heard throughout the home, resulting from the rapid closing of a valve, high water pressure, or missing strap).

Supply

We will correct construction conditions that disrupt the supply of water to your home if they involve service from the main water supply to your home, provided that no action of yours has caused the problem. Disruption of service due to failure of the water department system is the responsibility of the municipality to correct.

PROPERTY BOUNDARIES

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

You will receive a drawing that shows your home site and the location of your home on it.

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

[See also Easement](#)

RAILINGS

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Stained or wrought iron railings in your home require little maintenance beyond occasional dusting or polishing. Protect railings from sharp objects or moisture. Cover them during move-in to avoid dents or scratches.

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

One-Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

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

ROOF

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Clean Gutters

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

Frozen Attic Condensation

See Attic

Ice Damming

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

Leaks

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

Limit Walking

Limit walking on your roof. Your weight and movement can loosen the roofing material and in turn result in leaks. Never walk on the roof of your home when the shingles are wet—they are slippery. Please refer to local safety codes regarding walking or completing repairs to your roof.

Severe Weather

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

[See also Tabbing](#)

TROUBLESHOOTING TIPS: ROOF LEAK

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

- Confirm the source of the water is the roof rather than from a—
 - » Plumbing leak
 - » Open window on a higher floor
 - » Ice damming
 - » Attic condensation
 - » Clogged eavestrough or downspout
 - » Blowing rain or snow coming in through (code required) roof vents
 - » Gap in caulking
- Where practical, place a container under dripping water.
- If a ceiling is involved, use a screwdriver to poke a small hole in the drywall to release the water.
- Remove personal belongings to prevent damage to them. If damage occurs to your personal belongings, contact your homeowner insurance company to submit a claim.
- Report the leak to us during first available business hours.

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

One-Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

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

Ice Damming

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

Severe Weather

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

Tabbing

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

SHOWER DOORS OR TUB ENCLOSURES

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Shower doors and tub enclosures require minimal care. We recommend Gel Coat for shower enclosures and commercially available cleaners (non abrasive) for the shower door.

Caulk

Check caulking and touch-up as needed.

Cleaning

Use cleaning products suggested by the manufacturer to avoid any damage to the trim and hardware. Using a squeegee to remove water after a bath or shower will keep mineral residue and soap film to a minimum.

Towels

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

One-Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

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

SIDING

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Siding expands and contracts in response to changes in weather. Slight waves are visible in siding under moist weather conditions; shrinkage and separations will be more noticeable under hot or dry conditions. Typically, the south and west sides of a home show more weathering. Dark or intense colors may fade more rapidly than lighter colors. These behaviors cannot be eliminated. Avoid excessive overspray from sprinklers on any type of siding.

Cement Based Products

Cement based siding may require repainting and caulking just as wood products do. The timing will vary with climatic conditions. Maintain caulking to minimize moisture entry to the home.

Hardboard

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

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

One-Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

Buffington Homes warrants all siding to be free of defects in material and workmanship for one year from closing. We will confirm the good condition of the siding during your homeowner orientation. Repair of subsequent damage to the siding will be your responsibility.

Dents, Scratches, holes in Siding

There should be no dents, scratches or holes in the siding at closing. Buffington Homes will only repair or replace siding noted during the Homeowner Orientation.

Joints

We will correct any separation at joints or where siding meets another material if the separation allows water to enter the home.

Loose Siding

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

SMOKE DETECTORS

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Cleaning

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

Insurance

You are responsible for obtaining fire insurance.

Locations

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

One-Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

We do not represent that the smoke detectors will provide the protection for which they are installed or intended.

We will test smoke detectors during your homeowner orientation to confirm that they are working and to familiarize you with the alarm.

STAIRS

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

No known method of installation prevents all vibration or squeaks in a staircase. Where wood trim is included, a shrinkage separation can develop where the stair trim meets the wall. When this occurs, apply a thin bead of latex caulk and, when dry, touch up with paint.

One-Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

Squeaks: One-Time Repair

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

TELEPHONE AND CABLE OUTLETS

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

STRUCTURED WIRING

Structured wiring is a term used to describe many different types of residential wiring products that all have the same basic purpose—to effectively distribute a variety of data signals throughout your home. Signal types supported range from cable television and telephone to Ethernet computer networks.

Structured wiring allows you to play a DVD in one room and watch it on any other TV in your home, listen to your stereo in any room, hook up multiple computers to one Internet connection, and so on.

With a structured wiring system, wires are installed in a “home run” or “star topology” configuration. This means that each set of wires runs from the main panel to only one outlet, providing you with more reliable and consistent service for all uses. The exact type of wiring used is listed in your home’s specifications.

One-Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

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

TERMITES

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

We treat the foundation of your home for termites and provide you with a certificate confirming that treatment at closing. Plan to renew this treatment annually or as directed by the literature that accompanies the certificate. Treatment for other types of insects or animal infestations is your responsibility. 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, which extend from the soil up to your home.
- Keep soil away from any wood parts of your home.

- Be certain all roof water and precipitation moves quickly away from your home's foundation.
- Avoid storing wood on the ground and against your home.
- Maintain a safe zone of at least two feet in width around the perimeter of your home. Avoid digging of any kind in this area. If you disturb this area, have it re-treated to restore protection.
- Before installing stepping stones, river rock, concrete, or so on, against the home, chemically treat the area that will be underneath the new material.
- If you add onto or change the exterior of your home, be sure to have the areas treated first.

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

One-Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

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

[See also Pests and Wildlife](#)

UTILITY LOCATIONS

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Work that includes digging, augering, driving materials into the ground (for instance installing fence posts or stakes for concrete forms, trees and shrubs, etc..) or mechanical excavation, all require that you arrange to have utility lines located and marked before work begins. Note: Utility companies are not responsible for your sprinkler lines and will not mark their location. When doing any of the above noted work on your property, always be sure to locate your sprinkler lines before starting.

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

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

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

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

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

VENTILATION

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Homes today are built more tightly than ever. This saves energy dollars but creates a potential concern. If the ventilation system is not maintained and used regularly, condensation, cooking odors, indoor pollutants, and carbon monoxide may accumulate. We provide mechanical and passive methods for ventilating homes. Your attention to ventilation is important to health and safety.

Attic and Roof Vents

Building codes require attic and roof vents to minimize accumulation of moisture. Attic ventilation occurs through vents in the soffits (the underside of the overhangs) and roof vents. Driving rain or snow sometimes enters the attic through these vents. Do not cover them to prevent the entry of rain or snow. When proper ventilation is maintained, precipitation that blows in safely evaporates.

Frozen Attic Condensation

[See Attic](#)

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 your bath fans for a minimum of 30 minutes after bathing or showering.

Proper ventilation will prevent excessive moisture from forming on the inside of the windows. This helps reduce cleaning chores considerably.

[See also Condensation](#)

One-Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

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

WATER HEATER-ELECTRIC

Homeowner Care and Maintenance Guidelines

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. Also, . This reduces the build-up of chemical deposits from the water, thereby prolonging the tank's life and saving energy dollars. 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.

Temperature

Temperature settings on an electric water heater will produce approximately the temperatures listed below:

Hot	120 degrees F
A	130 degrees F
B	140 degrees F
C	150 degrees F
Very Hot	160 degrees F

Consult the manufacturer's use and care materials regarding the recommended temperature setting for optimal operation of your dishwasher. Higher than necessary settings can waste 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.

One-Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

Refer to the manufacturer's limited warranty for complete information regarding warranty coverage.

WATER HEATER-GAS

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Safety

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

Temperature

A manufacturer recommended thermostat setting for everyday use is "normal," or 120 degrees Fahrenheit. Higher settings can result in wasted energy dollars and increase the danger of injury from scalding.

Hot water will take longer to arrive at sinks, tubs, and showers that are farther from the water heater. The cool water in the lines must be purged before hot water reaches the fixture. The delay of hot water from the appliance to the fixture is not a warrantable item.

TROUBLESHOOTING TIPS: NO HOT WATER

Before calling for service, check to confirm that the:

- Temperature setting is not to "vacation" or too low.
- Scald protection is not set too low on the shower tap.
- Water supply valve is open.
- Exhaust and intake ducts are clear of ice and debris.
- Fumes from painting or other activities have not disabled the system. Strong odors can stop the function of the water heater. A sensor may need to be removed when cleaning or painting basement floors. Consult your manufacturer's literature for specific details and other troubleshooting tips.

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

TRADITIONAL WATER HEATER

Drain Tank

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

TANKLESS WATER HEATER

Cleaning

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

Draining

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

One-Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

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

[See also Plumbing](#)

WINDOWS, SCREENS, SLIDING GLASS DOORS

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Condensation

Condensation on interior surfaces of the window and frame is the result of high humidity within the home and low outside temperatures. Your family's lifestyle controls the humidity level within your home. Buffington Homes provides no corrective action for this condition. If you have added a humidifier in your home, closely observe the manufacturer's directions for its use. Cleaning and repair of damage caused by condensation is your responsibility.

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

Mildew

Mildew is a fungus that tends to develop on very moist surfaces. Try to keep your window frames and windowsills dry by controlling the humidity and condensation and/or wiping up any moisture.

Mildew can be removed by using three tablespoons of Tri-Sodium Phosphate or "TSP" (available at home improvement stores) and 1 cup of household bleach in one gallon of water. (Wear rubber gloves)

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. Before re-installing the screens, clean them with a gentle spray of water.

Sliding Glass Doors

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

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

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

Blinds

We will repair any defective blinds provided they were noted at the Homeowner Orientation.

Sticking Windows

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

Tinting

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

Weep Holes

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

One-Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

We will repair or replace broken windows or damaged screens noted during your homeowner orientation. Windows should operate with reasonable ease, and locks should perform as designed. If they do not, we will provide adjustments.

Condensation

Condensation on interior surfaces of the window and frame results from high humidity within the home and low outside temperatures. You influence the humidity level within your home and warranty coverage excludes this condition.

Condensation that accumulates between the panes of glass in multiple-glazed windows indicates a broken seal. We will replace the window if this occurs during the warranty period, as long as the window was not damaged or broken. Beyond the one year warranty period, check with your window manufacturer for possible extended coverage for this condition.

Infiltration

Some air and dust will infiltrate around windows, especially before the installation of landscaping in the general area. Our warranty excludes this occurrence.

Scratches

We will confirm that all window glass is in acceptable condition at your Homeowner Orientation. Minor scratches on windows can result from delivery, handling, and other construction activities. Refer to the manufacturer's warranty for information regarding flaws allowable in window glass.

[See also Condensation and Ventilation](#)

WOOD TRIM

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Wood trim will behave differently inside your home than it does outside. Heating and air conditioning, traffic patterns, and other living activities readily affect some interior trim elements. On your home's exterior, sun exposure and weather will have an impact. Further, the materials used for interior trim are specifically

selected for interior use and differ from those used for the exterior.

INTERIOR

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

Cleaning

Occasional dusting is usually all the maintenance needed for casing and baseboards. Wiping with a slightly damp cloth may be necessary from time to time.

Touch Up

Chips or scratches that occur can often be corrected with careful paint or stain touch up. In case of severe damage, wood filler may be needed. The appearance is likely to vary from the surrounding trim.

EXTERIOR

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

Separations

Shrinkage of exterior trim pieces can result in separation at joints—especially during hot summer temperatures. Correct this with caulking and touch up paint. If a piece of trim pulls away from the house, re-nail it and touch up with putty and paint.

Splits

Fluctuations in humidity and temperature can cause wood trim to split or cup.

One-Year Limited Warranty Guidelines

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

INTERIOR

Exposed Nail Heads

In finished areas of your home, we will correct exposed nail heads by filling and touching up of the original finish. Such repairs may be visible under certain lighting conditions.

Gaps

We will correct gaps in excess of 1/16 inch that appear between a wall and baseboard or gaps in excess of 1/8 inch between a baseboard and uniform hard surface floor. Gaps between baseboards and non-uniform hard surface floor (, some ceramic tiles, and so on) are unavoidable and are excluded from this repair.

Hammer Marks

We will correct hammer marks visible from a normal viewing position in normal lighting conditions.

Separation/Misalignment

Hairline separations are acceptable between two pieces of the same material (for instance at a casing corner) or between two pieces of dissimilar materials (such as casing and drywall).

We will correct separation or misalignment between pieces of the same material that exceed 1/16 inch. Where trim is painted, pieces should be flush and no raw wood should show. Separations that occur between two dissimilar materials that exceed 1/8 inch will be corrected. In most cases, the repair provided is caulking and touch up with original stain or paint.

Splits

Wood trim pieces that split will be corrected, typically using filler. Such repairs will be visible under certain lighting conditions.

Surface Roughness

Wood surfaces that are touched or grasped during normal use should be uniformly smooth. Surfaces not touched during normal use shall appear smooth when viewed without magnification from a minimum distance of 5 feet under normal lighting conditions and from a normal viewing position.

EXTERIOR

Cracks: One-Time Repair

We will caulk and apply touch-up paint to cracks in exterior trim components that are visible from 20 feet or that result in trim becoming detached one time near the end of the first year if needed. Paint or stain touch-up will vary from the surrounding area.

Raised Grain

Because of the effects of weather on natural wood, you should expect raised grain to develop. This is normal rather than a defect in the wood or paint; warranty coverage excludes this condition.

Resins

We will touch up exterior trim where resin bleeds through painted finish.

Separations

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

Home Care Supplies

You will find that caring for your home is much easier if you have necessary tools and supplies on hand. As you review the maintenance information in this homeowner guide and in the manufacturer materials, list the materials and tools you will need. Note sizes, colors, brands, sources, and so on to create a convenient inventory that will make shopping for home-care products easier. You may wish to make copies of this form before filling it out.

PRODUCT	USE	SOURCE

MAINTENANCE SCHEDULE

Begin care of your home with organized records, including information about all of its components and your furnishings. This information will make caring for your home easier, the records may be useful in completing tax returns, and they will be valuable when you sell your home. Another worthwhile step is to inventory all equipment, appliances, furnishings, and personal belongings. A photo album or jump drive containing pictures of each room is an excellent supplemental item.

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

ADDITIONAL WARRANTY COVERAGE

Manufacturer Warranties

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

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

Some manufacturer’s warranties may extend beyond the first year and it is in your best interests to know about such coverage. Remember to mail in any registration cards you receive with manufacturer materials. Being in the manufacturer’s system assures that in the event of a recall the company can contact you and arrange to provide the needed correction.

Appliance Warranty Service

The manufacturers of kitchen appliances have asked to work directly with you if any repairs are needed for their products. They may be able to resolve the issue by talking with you by phone and if they cannot, they prefer to set an appointment directly with you.

Appliance Service

Customer service phone numbers are listed in the use and care materials for each appliance. Be prepared to provide the model and serial number of the item and the closing date on your home. The form below offers a place to record these details in one convenient location for future reference. Appliance warranties are generally for one year but can be longer. Refer to the literature provided by the manufacturer for complete information. Please alert our warranty department as well so we can document the issue for or file and follow up with you to ensure the issue is resolved.

APPLIANCE	MANUFACTURE	MODEL#	SERIAL#	SERVICE PHONE#

INDEX

Air conditioning.....	71
Appliances.....	73
Attic	73
Brick and Cultured Stone.....	75
Cabinets	75
Carbon Monoxide Detectors	76
Carpet.....	77
Caulking	79
Ceramic Tile	80
Concrete Flatwork	81
Garage Floor	82
Driveway	83
Condensation	83
Countertops.....	84
Drywall	85
Easements	86
Electrical System	87
Energy and Water Conservaton	89
Extended Absences.....	92
Expansion and Contraction	93
Fencing.....	94
Fireplace.....	95
Fire Prevention.....	96
Fixtures	98
Foundation	99
Framing.....	99
Garage Overhead Door	100
Gas Shut-Offs.....	101
Ghosting.....	101
Grading and Drainage	102
Green Home Care	103
Gutter and Downspouts.....	105
Hardware	106
Harwood Floors.....	106
Heating System: Gas Forced Air	108
Ductwork	111

INDEX

Insulation	111
Landscaping.....	111
Mildew.....	115
Mirrors	115
Mold Prevention.....	116
Paint and Stain	118
Parging	119
Pest and Wildlife	120
Plumbing.....	120
Property Boundaries	125
Railings	126
Roof	126
Shower Doors or Tub Enclosures.....	128
Siding.....	128
Smoke Detectors.....	129
Telephone and Cabel Outlets.....	130
Structured Wiring	130
Termites	130
Utility Locations	131
Ventilation	132
Water Heater-Electric.....	132
Water Heater-Gas	134
Traditional Water Heater.....	134
Tankless Water Heater.....	134
Window, Screens, Sliding Glass Doors.....	135
Wood Trim	136
Interior	137
Exterior.....	137
Maintenance Schedule.....	139
Additional Warranty Coverage.....	140



BUFFINGTON HOMES
