



LEVEL

CONSTRUCTION
& DEVELOPMENT

Guide to Home Ownership

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LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT

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Baton Rouge, LA 70801
Office 225-338-6120
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Congratulations on your decision to purchase a new home from LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT. We share your excitement about your new residence and look forward to having you work with us to have your home built.

The *LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT Guide to Home Ownership* has been designed to assist you during and after the purchase of your home. The information presented here will answer many questions and prepare you for each step of the new house experience, making this exciting time easier. In addition to guiding you through the process of purchasing and building, this manual provides you with maintenance guidelines and a description of our limited warranty program, component by component.

Please take time to review this material thoroughly. When complete, your manual will provide a useful record of information about your new home.

Our goal as a company is to build a quality product on time at an affordable price. If you need clarification of additional details about any topic discussed, please give us a call 225-338-6120.

The warranty program that we offer has the following expiration dates:

- One year from the date of sale on workmanship
- Two years on systems (plumbing, A/C, & electrical)
- Five years on structure

If you have any further questions please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT

Caring For Your Home

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT has constructed your home with quality materials and labor-experienced craftsmen. Before we use any material, it must meet our specifications for quality and durability. All work is done under our supervision to attain the best possible results for your investment.

A home is one of the last hand-built products left in the world. Once we have assembled the natural and manufactured materials, the components interact with each other and this means it will require future care and maintenance. A home, like an automobile, requires care and attention from day one. General homeowner maintenance is essential to providing a quality home for a lifetime.

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

We are proud of the homes we build and the neighborhoods in which we build them. We strive to create long-lasting value. This cannot be achieved unless you, as the homeowner, properly maintain your home and all of its components. Periodic maintenance is necessary because of normal wear and tear, the inherent characteristics or the materials used in your home, and normal service required by the mechanical systems. Natural fluctuations in temperature and humidity also affect your home.

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

We recognize that it is impossible to anticipate and describe every attention needed for good home care, but we have covered many important details. The subjects covered include components of homes we build, listed in alphabetical order. Each topic includes suggestions for use and maintenance followed by the LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT limited warranty guidelines. This manual may discuss some components that are not present on your home.

Please take time to read the literature provided by the manufacturers of consumer products and other items on 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 our information current and accurate. However, if any detail in our discussion conflicts with the manufacturer's recommendations, you should follow the manufacturer's recommendations. Specific manufacturer's warranties may extend beyond the first year and it is in your best interests to be apprised of such coverage.

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT

Limited Warranty Guidelines

While we strive to build a defect-free home, we are realistic enough to know that we may make mistakes or that something in the home may not perform as intended. When either occurs, we will make necessary corrections. In support of this commitment, LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT provides you with a limited warranty. In addition to the information contained in the limited warranty itself; this manual includes details about one-year material and workmanship standards. The purpose is to let you know what our quality standard is for the typical concerns that can come up in a new home. The manual describes our standards for each item and what we will do to remedy items that do not meet our standards.

Our criteria for qualifying warranty repairs are based on typical industry practices in our region and meet or exceed those practices for the component of your home. However, we reserve the right to exceed these guidelines if common sense or individual circumstances dictate, without being obligated to exceed all guidelines to a similar degree or for all homeowners.

You will receive the signed limited warranty document at your closing. We include a specimen copy at the end of this section for your review. Please read through this information, as well as the service procedures discussed on the following pages. If you have any questions regarding the standards or procedures, contact our office.

Our warranty service system is designed to accept *written* reports of non-emergency items. This provides you with the maximum protection and allows us to operate efficiently, thereby providing faster service to all homeowners. Emergency reports are the only reports accepted by phone.

Reporting Procedures

All services requested should be put in writing. Services requested must be submitted through our online system: <http://www.levelbr.com/warranty.html>

60-Day Report

In order for our service program to operate at maximum efficiency and for your own convenience, we suggest that you wait 60 days before submitting any warranty list. This allows you sufficient time to become settled in your new home and to thoroughly examine all components.

180-Day Report

Near the end of 180 days of your materials and workmanship warranty you should submit a 180-day report. We will also be happy to discuss any maintenance questions you should have at that time.

Year-End Report

Near the end of the eleventh month of your materials and workmanship warranty, you should submit a year-end report. We will also be happy to discuss any maintenance questions you should have at that time.

Emergency Service

As defined by the limited warranty, “**emergency**” includes situations such as:

- **Total** loss of heat or air.
- **Total** loss of electricity. (Check with the utility company before reporting this circumstance to LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT or electrician.)
- **Total** loss of water. (Check with the water department to be certain the problem is not a general outage in the area.)
- Plumbing leak that requires **the entire water supply to be shut off**.
- Gas leak. (Contact your utility company or plumber if the leak is at the furnace or water heater supply lines.)

During business hours, call Level’s Office at 338-6120

After business hours you may contact our mechanical subcontractor directly. The contact information for each subcontractor is included in your closing binder.

Other Warranty Service

If you wish to initiate warranty service between the 60-day and year-end report, you are welcome to do so by sending in a service request form or writing a letter. We will handle these requests according to the same procedures that apply to the 60-day and year-end reports.

Kitchen Appliance Warranties

The manufacturers of kitchen appliances will work directly with you if any repairs are needed for these products. 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. Appliance warranties are generally for one year; refer to the literature provided by the manufacturer for complete information.

Service Processing Procedures

You can help us to serve you better by providing complete information, including:

- Name, address, and phone numbers where you can be reached during business hours.
- A complete description of the problem, for example, “guest bath—cold water line leaks under sink,” rather than “plumbing problem.”

When we receive a warranty service request, we may contact you for an inspection appointment. We inspect the items listed in your written request to confirm warranty coverage and determine appropriate action. Generally reported items 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 complete repairs, we issue a warranty work order and the repair technician will contact you to schedule the work. We intend to complete warranty work orders within 15 workdays of the inspection unless you are unavailable for access. If a back-ordered part or similar circumstance causes a delay, we will let you know.

If the item is home maintenance, we will review the maintenance steps with you and offer whatever informational assistance we can. LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT does not provide routine home maintenance.

Reporting Warranty Items

The many details of warranty coverage can be confusing. We hope this chart will make reporting items easier. If you do not know whom to contact, call our office and we will guide you.

Appliances Contact the manufacturer directly with model and serial number, closing date, and description of problem.

Emergency During our business hours (Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. until 5 p.m.), call our main office, (225)-338-6120

After business hours or on weekends or holidays, contact the trade or appropriate utility company directly using the emergency numbers you receive at your orientation.

Non-emergency <http://www.levelbr.com/warranty.html>

**Storm damage
or
Other natural
Disaster .** Contact your homeowner's insurance agent immediately. Contain damage as much as possible without endangering yourself. In extreme situations photograph the damage

Questions? Call the main office during normal business hours, (225)-338-6120

Air Conditioning

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

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

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

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

For example, if you come home at 6 p.m. when the temperature has reached 90 degrees F and set your thermostat to 75 degrees, the air conditioning unit will begin cooling, but will take much longer to reach the desired temperature. During the whole day, the sun has been heating not only the air in the house, but the walls, the carpet, and the furniture. At 6 p.m. the air conditioning unit starts cooling the air, but the walls, carpet, and furniture release heat and nullify this cooling. By the time the air conditioning unit has cooled the walls, carpet, and furniture, you may well have lost patience.

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

Adjust Vents

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

Air Filters

To keep your Air conditioning system running at peak efficiency, change the air conditioning filter once a month or more if it becomes dirty.

Compressor Level

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

Manufacturer's Instruction

Since the air conditioning system is combined with the heating system, follow the maintenance instructions. The manufacturer's manual specifies maintenance for the condenser. Review and follow these carefully.

Temperature Variations

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

Alarm System

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT

Limited Warranty Guidelines

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT will correct wiring that does not perform as intended for the alarm system.

Appliances

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Read and follow all manufacturers' instructions for the use and maintenance of each appliance in your home and keep them available for reference.

Manufacturer's Service

If a problem arises with an appliance, call the customer service number listed in the manufacturer's warranty. When reporting warranty items to the appliance manufacturer, be prepared to supply the following details:

- Date of purchase (your closing date)
- Serial and model numbers, found in a metal plate or sticker on the side or bottom of each appliance.
- Description of the problem

Registration

Mail warranty registration cards directly to the manufacturer.

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT

Limited Warranty Guidelines

We confirm that all appliance surfaces are in acceptable condition during your 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.

Appliance Serial Numbers

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

Closing Date _____

<i>Appliance</i>	<i>Manufacturer</i>	<i>Model #</i>	<i>Serial #</i>	<i>Service Phone #</i>
Range				
Range Hood				
Cook top				
Oven				
Microwave				
Dishwasher				
Disposable				
Air Conditioner				

Attic Access

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

The attic space is neither designed nor intended for storage. We provide access to this area for maintenance of mechanical equipment that may traverse 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 does not cover such injury or damage.

Fixtures

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

The manufacturer treats fixtures with a clear protective coating, electro statically applied, to provide beauty and durability. This coating is not impervious to 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 metal 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

Unless you have ordered solid brass fixtures, the brass on your fixtures is a coating on top of a base metal. Water having mineral content is corrosive to any fixture— coated or solid.

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.

Tarnish

Like sterling silver, brass will gradually tarnish and eventually take on an antique appearance.

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT Limited Warranty Guidelines

During the orientation we will confirm that fixtures are in acceptable condition. LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT does not warrant against corrosion damage to the external surfaces or internal workings of plumbing fixtures. This limitation includes solid or coated fixtures.

Brick

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Efflorescence

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

Tuck-Pointing

After several years, face brick may require tuck-pointing (repair 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.**

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT Limited Warranty Guidelines

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

Cracks

One time during the warranty period, we repair masonry cracks that exceed 3/16 inch.

Cabinets

Homeowner Use Maintenance Guidelines

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

Cleaning

Products such as lemon oil or polishes that include scratch cover are suggested for wood cabinet components due to natural variations in wood and the way it takes stain.

Hinges

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

Moisture

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

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT Limited Warranty Guidelines

During the 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 be level and even.

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 excerpted from this repair.)

Warping

If doors or drawer fronts warp in excess of 1/4 inch within 24 inches, we will correct this by adjustment or replacement.

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.

Carpet

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

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 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. A vacuum cleaner with a beater-bar agitates the pile and is more effective in bringing dirt to the surface for easy removal.

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

Some problem conditions that may occur with your new carpet and our suggested remedies are presented below.

Burns

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

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 or crushing because of their level of fiber, but this does not imply or guarantee that no matting or crushing will occur. Heavy traffic areas such as halls and stairways are more susceptible to wear and crushing. This is considered normal wear.

Fading

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

Filtration

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

Fuzzing

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

Piling

Piling 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 piles. 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, and have a professional re-stretch the carpeting using a power stretcher, not a knee-kicker.

Seams

Carpet usually comes in 12-foot widths, making seams necessary in most rooms. Visible seams are not a defect unless they have been improperly made or unless the material has a defect, making the seam appear more pronounced than normal. The more dense and uniform the carpet texture, the more visible the seams will be. Carpet styles with low, tight naps result in most visible seams. Seams are never more visible than when the carpet is first installed. Usually with time, use, and vacuuming the seams become less visible.

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 and lighter in these areas. A good vacuuming, which makes the pile all go in the same direction, provides a temporary remedy.

Shedding

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

Snags

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

Sprouting

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

Stains

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

Static

Cooler temperatures outside often contribute to static electricity inside. To avoid the problem, look for carpets made with anti-static. You can also install a humidifier to help control static buildup.

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT

Limited Warranty Guidelines

During your 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. LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT will not be responsible for dye lot variations if replacements are made.

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. LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT will repair any gaps or fraying.

Caulking

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Colored Caulk

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

Latex Caulk

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

Silicone Caulk

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

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT

Limited Warranty Guidelines

During the orientation we confirm that appropriate areas are adequately caulked.

One-Time Repair

We will touch up caulking one time during your materials and workmanship period. We suggest that this be performed with your 11-month service.

Ceramic Tile

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Cleaning

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

Rinse thoroughly.

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

Grout Discoloration

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

Sealing Grout

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

Separations

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

Tile around bathtubs or countertops may appear to be pulling up after 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.

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT Limited Warranty Guidelines

During the 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. LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT is not responsible for variations in color or discontinued patterns. New grout may vary in color from the original.

One-Time Repair

Cracks appearing on grouting of ceramic tiles at joints or junctions with other materials are commonly due to shrinkage. **LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT will repair grouting and cracked tiles, if necessary, one time during the first year.** We are not responsible for color variations in grout or discontinued color grout. Any grouting or caulking that is needed after that time is your responsibility.

Concrete Flatwork

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Concrete slabs are floating—they are not attached to the home's foundation walls. These are not a structural (load-bearing) element of the home and are not covered by the structural warranty.

Cleaning

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

Repeated cleaning of the garage floor by hosing can increase soil movement by allowing water to penetrate any existing cracks. We recommend sweeping to clean the garage floor.

Cracks

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

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

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

Expansion Joints

We install expansion joints to help control expansion. However, as the concrete shrinks during the curing process, moisture can penetrate under the concrete and lift the expansion joint. Expansion joints are designed to allow the concrete to crack so it will be able to expand and contract. Often times this will be an uneven crack that is not a structural defect only cosmetic. When this occurs, fill the resulting gap with a gray silicone sealant, which can be purchase at most hardware stores.

Heavy Vehicles

Do not permit heavy vehicles such as moving vans or concrete trucks to drive on your concrete work. We design and install this concrete for residential use only.

Chemicals

Protect concrete from abuse by chemical agents such as pet urine, fertilizers, radiator overflow, or repeated hosing. All these items can cause spalling (chipping of the surface) of concrete.

Sealer

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

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT

Limited Warranty Guidelines

Concrete slabs are floating—they are not attached to the home's foundation walls. These are not a structural (load-bearing) element of the home and are not covered by the structural warranty.

Color

Concrete slabs vary in color. No correction is provided for this condition.

Cracks

If concrete cracks reach 3/16 inches in width or vertical displacement, LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT will patch or repair them one time during the warranty year. Subsequently, concrete slab maintenance is your responsibility, if you prefer to have the slab replaced, we will obtain a price for you and assist in scheduling the work upon receipt of your payment. However, we advise against this expense since the new slab will crack as well.

Finished Floors

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT will correct cracks, settling, or heaving that rupture finish floor materials that we installed as part of the home as you originally purchased it.

Level Floors

Concrete floors in the habitable areas of the home will be level to within ¼ inch within any 32-inch measurement with the exception of an area specifically designed to slope toward a floor drain.

Separation

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT will correct separation of concrete slabs from the home if separation exceeds one inch.

Settling or Heaving

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT will repair slabs that settle or heave in excess of 2 inches or if such movement results in negative drainage (toward the house) or hazardous vertical displacement.

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 red salts from vehicles. Repair of spalling is a home maintenance task.

Standing Water

Water may stand on exterior concrete slabs for several hours after precipitation or from roof run-off. LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT will correct conditions that cause water to remain longer than 12 hours.

Condensation

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Condensation on interior surfaces of the windows and frames comes from high humidity within the home combined with low outside temperatures and inadequate ventilation. Family lifestyle significantly influences these conditions, if your home includes a humidifier; closely observe manufacturer's directions for its use, especially during periods of cooler temperatures. *See also Ventilation.*

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT Limited Warranty Guidelines

Condensation results from a family's lifestyle; and LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT has no control over this. **The limited warranty coverage excludes**

condensation. Please refer to your Condensation packet given to you at your closing for tips on controlling condensation in the home.

Countertops

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Caulking

The caulking between the countertop and the wall, along the joint at the backsplash, and around the sink may shrink, leaving a slight gap. Maintaining a good seal in these locations is important to keep moisture from reaching the wood under the laminates and to prevent warping.

Cleaning

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

Mats

Rubber drain mats can trap moisture beneath them, causing the laminating plastic to warp and blister. Dry the surface as needed.

Wax

Wax is not necessary, but it can be used to make counters gleam.
See also ceramic tile.

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT

Limited Warranty Guidelines

During your orientation we confirm that all countertops are in acceptable condition. We repair noticeable surface damage such as chips, cracks, and scratches noted on the orientation list. **Repair of surface damage that occurs during or after your move-in is one of your home maintenance responsibilities.**

Laminates

Laminated counter tops will have one or more discernible seams. **LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT** will repair gaps or differential at the seams that exceed 1/16 inch.

Manufactured Marble

Edges should be smooth and even. Where backsplash joints occur at corners, the top edges should be even within 1/16 inch.

Separation from Wall

Separation of countertops from walls, backsplash, and around sinks results from normal shrinkage of materials. **LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT will re-caulk these areas one time during the materials and workmanship warranty.** Subsequently caulking will be your home maintenance responsibility.

Crawl Space

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

The crawl space is not intended as a storage area for items that could be damaged by moisture. Wood stored in a crawl space can attract termites. You may notice slight dampness in the crawl space. Landscaping that is correctly installed helps prevent excessive amounts of water from entering crawl spaces. Report standing water to **LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT** for inspection.

See also Ventilation

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT Limited Warranty Guidelines

During the orientation we will check the conditions of soils in the crawl space. Soils in the crawl space may be damp but should not have standing water. Provided that you have not altered the drainage nor caused excessive moisture to accumulate and remain in this area with incorrect landscaping, **LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT** will correct the conditions that result in persistent standing water.

Doors and Locks

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

The doors installed in your home are wood products subject to such natural characteristics of wood as shrinkage and warpage. Due to natural fluctuation of humidity and the use of forced air furnaces, showers, and dishwashers, interior doors may occasionally require minor adjustment.

Bi-fold Doors

Interior bi-fold doors sometimes stick or warp due to weather conditions. Apply a silicone lubricant to the tracks to minimize this inconvenience.

Exterior Finish

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

Failure to Latch

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

Hinges

You can remedy door hinges by removing the hinge pin and applying a silicone lubricant to it. Avoid using oil, as it can gum up or attract dirt. Graphite works well as a lubricant but can create a gray smudge on the door or floor covering beneath the hinge if too much is applied.

Keys

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

Locks

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

Slamming

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

Sticking

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

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

Warping

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

Weather Stripping

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

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT

Limited Warranty Guidelines

During the orientation we confirm that all doors are in acceptable condition and correctly adjusted. LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT will repair construction damage to doors noted on the orientation list.

Adjustments

Due to normal settling of the home, doors may require adjustment for proper fit. LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT will make such adjustments.

Panel Shrinkage

Panels of wood doors shrink and expand in response to changes in temperature and humidity. Although touching up the paint or stain on unfinished exposed areas is your home maintenance responsibility, LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT will repair split panels that allow light to be visible.

Warping

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT will repair doors that warp in excess of ¼ inch.

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 building material on which the drywall is attached.

Repairs

With the exception of the one-time repair service provided by LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT care of drywall is your maintenance responsibility. Most drywall repairs can be easily made. This work is best done when you redecorate the room. Repair hairline cracks with a coat of paint. You can repair slightly larger cracks with spackle or caulk. To correct a nail pop, reset the nail with a hammer and punch. Cover it with spackle, which is available at paint and hardware stores. Apply two or three thin coats. When dry, sand the surface with fine-grain sandpaper, and then paint. You can fill indentations caused by sharp objects in the same manner.

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT Limited Warranty Guidelines

During the orientation, we confirm that drywall surfaces are in acceptable condition. **One time during the materials and workmanship warranty, LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT will repair drywall shrinkage cracks and nail pops and touch up the repaired area using the same paint color that was on the surface when the home was delivered. Touch-ups will be visible.**

Repainting the entire room or the entire wall 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 in paint and wallpaper, as well as possible dye lot variations, touch-ups are unlikely to match the surrounding area.**

Lighting Conditions

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT does not repair drywall flaws that are only visible under particular lighting conditions.

Related Warranty Repairs

If a drywall repair is needed as a result of poor workmanship (such as blisters in tape) or other warranty-based repair (such as a plumbing leak), LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT completes 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. Due to the effects of time on paint and wallpaper, as well as possible dye lot variations, touch-up may not match the surrounding area.

Electrical Systems

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

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.

Breaker Tripping

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

Buzzing

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

Fixture Location

We install light fixtures in the locations indicated on the plans. **Moving fixtures to accommodate specific furniture arrangements or room use is your responsibility.**

GFCI (Ground-Fault Circuit-Interrupters)

GFCI receptacles have a built-in element that senses fluctuations in power. Quite simply, the GFCI is a circuit breaker. Building codes require installation of these receptacles in bathrooms, the kitchen, outside, and the garage (areas where an individual can 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.

Do not plug a refrigerator or food freezer into a GFCI-controlled outlet. The likelihood of the contents being ruined is high and the limited warranty does not cover such damage.

Each GFCI 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 up to three or four outlets.

Grounded System

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

Light Bulbs

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

Modifications

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

Outlets

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

If there are small children in the home, install safety plugs to cover unused outlets. This also minimizes the air infiltration that sometimes occurs with these outlets. Teach children to never touch electrical outlets, sockets, or fixtures.

Underground Cables

Before digging, check the location of buried service leads by calling the local utility locating service. In most cases, wires run in a straight line from the service panel to the nearest public utility pad. Maintain positive drainage around the foundation to protect this service.

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT

Limited Warranty Guidelines

During the orientation we confirm that light fixtures are in acceptable condition and that all bulbs are working.

Designed Load

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT 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, LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT Will repair or replace them.

GFCI

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT is not responsible for food spoilage that results from your plugging refrigerators or freezers into a GFCI outlet.

Power Surge

Power surges are the result of local conditions beyond the control of LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT and are excluded from limited warranty coverage. These can result in burned-out bulbs or damage to sensitive electronic equipment such as TV's, alarm systems, and computers. Damage resulting from lightning strikes is excluded from limited warranty coverage.

Electric Water Heater

Homeowner Care and Maintenance

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

Drain Tank

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

Element Cleaning or Replacement

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

No Hot Water

If you discover you have no hot water, check the breaker, the temperature setting, and the water-supply valve before calling your service. Refer to the manufacturer's literature for location of these items and other troubleshooting problems.

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 a 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

The recommended setting for operation of a dishwasher is B, or 140 degrees. Higher 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.

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT Limited Warranty

Refer to manufacturer's limited warranty for complete information regarding warranty coverage on your water heater.

Expansion and Contraction

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

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

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT Limited Warranty

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT provides one-time repairs to many of the effects of expansion and contraction. See individual categories for details.

Fireplace

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Gas Fireplace

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT offers non-vented gas fireplaces. If you ordered this type of fireplace, it is demonstrated during the orientation. Read and follow all manufacturers' 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 deviations from this and any gas smell, immediately shut off the switch and report it to the gas company.

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT Limited Warranty Guidelines

Non-vented fireplaces are not intended to be the sole heat source in the home. The fireplace should function properly when LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT and the manufacturer's directions are followed.

Foundation

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Cracks

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

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT Limited Warranty Guidelines

The foundation of your home has been designed and installed according to the recommendations of an engineer. The walls of the foundation are poured concrete with steel reinforcing rods.

Cracks

Shrinkage or backfill cracks are not usual in foundation walls. LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT will seal cracks that exceed 1/8 inch in width.

Cosmetic Imperfections

Slight cosmetic imperfections in foundation walls, such as a visible seam where two pours meet or slight honeycombing (aggregate visible), are possible and require no repair unless they permit water to enter.

Garage Overhead Door

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

30-Weight Oil

Every six months, apply a 30-weight automobile oil or similar lubricant moving parts: track, rollers, hinges, pulleys, and springs. At the same time, check that all hardware is tight and operating as intended without binding or scraping. Avoid over lubricating to prevent drips on vehicles or the concrete floor.

Lock

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

Opener

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

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

Painting

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

Safety

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

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

Sag

The garage door may sag slightly due to its weight and span. This will stabilize after the panels have dried.

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT Limited Warranty Guidelines

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

Light Visible

Garage overhead doors cannot be airtight. Some light will be visible around the edges and across the top of the door. Severe weather conditions may result in some precipitation entering around the door.

Gas Shut-Offs

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

You will find shut-offs in gas lines near their connection to each item that operates in gas. In addition, there is a main shut-off at the meter. We point these out during the orientation. If you suspect a gas leak, leave the home and call the gas company immediately for emergency service.

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT Limited Warranty Guidelines

The gas company is responsible for leaks up to the meter. LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT will correct leaks from the meter into the home.

Gas Water Heater

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Condensation

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

Drain Tank

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

Pilot

Never light a gas pilot when the water heater tank is empty. Always turn off the gas before shutting off the cold water supply to the tank.

To light the water heater pilot, first remove the cover panel on the tank to expose the pilot. Then rotate the on-off pilot knob to the pilot position. When the knob is in this position, the red button can be depressed.

While depressing the red button, hold a match at the pilot. Once the pilot lights continue to hold the red button down for 30-60 seconds. When you release the red button, the pilot should stay lit, if it does not, wait several minutes to allow the gas to dissipate from the tank and repeat the entire process. If it stays lit, rotate the on-off pilot knob to the on position.

Reinstall the cover panel and then adjust the temperature setting with regulating knob on the front of the tank. Water heaters sometimes collect small quantities of dirty water and scale in the main gas lines, which may put out the pilot light. While away from home for an extended period of time, set the temperature to its lowest point and leave the pilot lit.

Safety

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

Temperature

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

No Hot Water

If you discover that you have no hot water, check the pilot, temperature setting, and water supply valve before calling for service. Refer to the manufacturer's literature for specific locations of these items and other troubleshooting information.

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT Limited Warranty Guidelines

Refer to the manufacturer's limited warranty for information regarding coverage of the water heater. **See also Plumbing.**

Grading and Drainage

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

The final grades around your home have been inspected and approved for proper drainage for your lot. Our surveyor completes a drainage certification and then the local building authorities as well as LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT inspect the site.

Drainage

Typically, the grade around your home should slope 1 foot in the first 10 feet, tapering to a 2 percent slope. In most cases, drainage swales do not follow property boundaries. Maintain the slopes around your home to permit the water to drain away from the home as rapidly as possible. This is essential to protect your foundation. **Failure to do so can result in major structural damage and will void your warranty.**

Roof water

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

Rototilling

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

Settling

The area we excavated for your home's foundation was larger than the home to allow room to work. In addition, some trenching is necessary for installation of utility lines. Although we replaced and compacted 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.

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT Limited Warranty Guidelines

We established the final grade to ensure adequate drainage away from the home. **Maintaining this drainage is your responsibility. If you alter the drainage pattern after closing, or if changes in drainage occur due to lack of maintenance, the limited warranty is void.**

Erosion

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT is not responsible for weather-caused damage to unlandscaped yards after the final grade has been established or the closing date, whichever occurs last. Sod or hay on the yard will slow erosion. New sod installation and the extra watering that accompanies it can cause temporary drainage problems, as can unusually severe weather conditions.

Recommendations

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT documents the grades that exist at the time of delivery of your home or as soon thereafter as possible. The ground must be dry and free of frost to make these determinations. Once final grades are set, LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT will inspect drainage problems reported in writing during the warranty period, compare grades to those originally established, and advise you on corrective actions you might take.

Swales

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT does not alter drainage patterns to suit individual landscape plans. Typically, a lot receives water from and passes water on to other lots, so changes in grade often affect adjacent or nearby lots. LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT advises against making such changes. After heavy rain (or snow), water may stand in swales up to 48 hours.

Winter Grade

Due to weather conditions especially during the winter and early spring, the final 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 beginning landscaping.

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.

Extensions or Splash blocks

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

Ladders

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

Leaks

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

Paint

Gutters and downspouts are painted to match your home. You should repaint them when you repaint your home.

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT

Limited Warranty Guidelines

Gutters over 3 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 on any gutters that came delivered on the home. We do not make any repairs to gutters installed by the homeowner and you must contact the company that installed gutters for any leaks.

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 these conditions.

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.

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT

Limited Warranty Guidelines

We confirm that all hardware is in acceptable condition during orientation. The limited warranty excludes repairs for cosmetic damage subsequent to the orientation. LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT will repair hardware items that do not function as intended.

Hardwood Floors

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Cleaning

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

Dimples

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

Filmy Appearance

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

Furniture Legs

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

Humidity

Wood floors respond noticeably to changes in humidity in your home. Especially during winter months the individual planks and pieces expand and contract as the water content changes. A humidifier helps but does not eliminate this reaction.

Mats and Area Rugs

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

Recoat

If your floors have a polyurethane finish, you may want to have an extra coat of polyurethane applied by a qualified contractor within six months to a year. The exact timing will depend on your particular lifestyle. If another finish was used, refer to the manufacturer's recommendations.

Separation

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

Shoes

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

Spills

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

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. Once you wax a polyurethane finish floor, recoating is difficult because the new finish will not bond to the wax. The preferred maintenance is preventive cleaning and recoating annually or as needed to maintain the desired luster.

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT

Limited Warranty Guidelines

During the orientation we will confirm that hardwood floors are in acceptable condition. We will correct any readily noticeable cosmetic defects listed during the orientation. You are responsible for routine maintenance of hardware floors.

Separations

Shrinkage will result in separations between the members of hardwood floors, if these exceed 1/8 inch, LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT will fill them one time. LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT is not responsible for removing excess filler that appears on the surface if the boards expand due to subsequent changes in humidity and expel the filler.

Heating Systems

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

The guidelines here include general information only.

Adjust Vents

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

Avoid Overheating

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

Ductwork Noise

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

Filter

Remember to change or clean the filter monthly during the heating season (year around if you also have an air condition). 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 frequently overlooked details of normal care. Buy filters in large quantity for the sake of convenience. If you have a permanent, washable, reusable filter, you need to clean this monthly. Use water only to clean the filter, tap to dry or air dry, and leave unit off for a brief period. Do not use soaps or detergents on the filter.

Furnished Home

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

Gas Odor

If you smell gas, call the gas company immediately.

Odor

Anew 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 has settled in the ducts and should pass quickly.

Registers

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

Return Air Vents

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

Temperature

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

Thermostat

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

Trial Run

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

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT

Limited Warranty Guidelines

We will install heating systems according to local building codes, as well as to engineering designs of the particular model home.

Adequacy of the system is determined by its ability to establish a temperature of 70 degrees F, as measured in the center of the room, 5 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 degrees from the outside temperature.

Duct Placement

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

Ductwork

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

Furnace Sounds

Expansion or contraction of metal ductwork results in ticking or popping sounds. While eliminating these sounds is impossible, LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT 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 within plus or minus 5 degrees.

Heat Pump

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

If your home contains a heat pump system, you should be aware of the performance characteristics unique to these systems. As with any system, read the manufacturer's literature and follow all instructions for efficient operations and maintenance of your system. Clean or replace filters once a month. Provide professional service for your system at least once every two years.

Air Circulation Across Coils

Keep the outside unit clear of any materials that would interfere with air circulation. Snow, ice, landscaping materials, trash, leaves, and other accumulating items can cause inefficiency or damage the unit.

Air Conditioning and Heating

A heat pump system operates differently from a gas forced-air furnace. The same system provides both heat and air conditioning. This is possible because a refrigerant flows back and forth in the coils of the heat pump controlled by a reversing valve. In the heat mode, the heat pump removes heat from the outside air and transfers it to the inside air. In the cooling mode, it does just the opposite, removing heat from the inside air and discharging it outside of the home. The thermostat inside your home controls this heating or cooling activity.

Air Temperature at Vents

Do not expect dramatic temperature differences in the air coming from the vents as is common with other kinds of systems. The coils used in a heat pump system operate at lower temperatures than those common in gas forced air systems. As a result, for example, in the heat mode, air from the supply vents will typically range from 85 to 90 degrees F. The vents will not feel hot, though the air discharged is warmer than the air in the room by as much as 20 degrees.

Auxiliary Heat System

At lower outside temperatures, less heat is available for the heat pump to draw from the exterior air. Therefore, from time to time the auxiliary heat system will come on to maintain the temperature that you set at the thermostat. The auxiliary system will also come on whenever the temperature of the thermostat is moved 1.5 degrees or more at one time. If the light stays on when the outside temperature is more than 30 degrees F, contact a service person.

Defrost Cycle

When the heat pump is operating in the heat mode, the coils outside may reach below freezing temperatures. Moisture in the air will condense into frost and accumulate on the coils under these circumstances. From time to time, the system will go into defrost mode to clear accumulated frost from the coils. This is a normal part of the operation of the system and will occur automatically. During the defrost cycle; the outside fan will stop temporarily. The temperature of the airflow to the home will be a bit lower during the defrost cycle. The defrost cycle can only occur every 90 minutes and lasts no longer than 10 minutes.

Night Setback

Unless you have a night setback thermostat designed to work with a heat pump system, do not turn the thermostat down in the evenings. Adjust the temperature a fraction of a degree at a time until a comfortable permanent setting is found.

Register Adjustment

Registers will require adjustment from time to time to maximize your family's comfort. Do not completely close off more than one supply at a time. This can restrict the airflow too much and reduce the efficiency of the system. A good technique is to completely open all the vents, and then gradually move the temperature setting up until the coolest room is comfortable. Once the coolest room is comfortable, gradually close the vents in the warmer rooms until all rooms are comfortable as well. Reverse the process for air conditioning.

Return Air Vents

As with any heating system, return air vents must be clear so the air flows through the ducts unimpeded. Avoid placing furniture where it blocks the return air vents.

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT

Limited Warranty Guidelines

Refer to the manufacturer's limited warranty for information regarding warranty coverage.

Landscaping

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Additions

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

Backfill

We construct the foundation of your home beginning with an excavation into the earth. When the foundation walls are complete, the area surrounding them is backfilled. Soil in this area is not as compact as undisturbed ground. Water can penetrate through the backfill area to the lower areas of your foundation. This can cause potentially severe problems such as cracks in foundation walls or floor slab movement. Avoid this through proper installation of landscaping and good maintenance of drainage.

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

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

See also Grading and Drainage.

Bark or Rock Beds

Do not allow edgings around decorative rock or bark beds to dam the free flow of water away from the home. You can use a no woven landscape fabric between the soil and rock or bark to restrict weed growth while still permitting normal evaporation of ground moisture.

Contractors

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

First 5 Feet

Place no plants of any type or sprinkler heads within 5 feet of your home.

Irrigation

Make provisions for efficient irrigation. Conduct weekly operational checks to ensure proper performance of the system. Direct sprinkler heads away from the home. Trickle or bubbler type irrigation systems are not recommended for use adjacent to the structure. Regularly drain and service sprinkler systems.

Planning

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

See also Xeriscape.

Plant Selection

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

Requirements

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

Soil Mix

Provide good soil mixes with sufficient organic materials. Use mulch at least 3 inches deep to hold soil moisture and to help prevent weeds and soil compaction.

In areas with high clay content, prepare the soil before installing your grass. First cover the soil with 2 inches of sand and 1 inch of manure that is treated and odorless. Rototill this into the soil to a depth of 6 inches (Rototill parallel to the swales). Whether you use seed or sod, this preparation helps your lawn to retain moisture and require less water. Installing a lawn over hard soil permits water to run off with little or no penetration and your lawn will derive little benefit from watering or rain. Apply appropriate fertilizer and weed and pest controls as needed for optimal growth. Investigate organic compounds for additional protection of the environment.

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.

Waiting to Landscape

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

Xeriscape

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT recommends careful consideration of landscape design and selection of planting materials to minimize the demands of your yard on water supplies. Detailed information about Xeriscape is available from reputable nurseries. This has the triple benefit of helping the environment, saving on water bills, and reducing the amount of moisture that can reach your foundation.

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT Limited Warranty

Landscape materials we install are warranted for one growing season. We will confirm the healthy condition of all plant materials during the orientation. Maintaining landscaping is your responsibility.

Mildew

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Mildew is a fungus that spreads through the air in microscopic spores. They love moister 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 or rubber gloves for this task; the chemicals that remove mildew are unfriendly to humans.

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT

Limited Warranty Guidelines

We will remove any mildew noted during the orientation. **LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT warranty excludes mildew.**

Mirrors

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

To clean your mirrors use any 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. Avoid getting glass cleaners on plumbing fixtures as some formulas can deteriorate the finish.

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT

Limited Warranty Guidelines

We will confirm that all mirrors are in acceptable condition during the orientation. DSLD, LLC will correct scratches, chips or other damage to mirrors noted during orientation.

Paint and Stain

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Colors

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

Exterior

Regular attention will preserve the beauty and value of your home. Check the painted and stained surfaces of your home's exterior annually. Repaint before such chipping and wearing away of the original finish occurs; this will save the cost of extensive surface preparation. Plan on refinishing the exterior surface of your home approximately every two or three years or as often as your paint manufacturer suggest for your area or climate. Climatic conditions control the chemical structure of the paint used on the exterior. Over time this finish will fade and dull a bit.

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

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

Severe Weather

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

Stain

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

Touch-Up

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

We provide samples of paint used in our homes. Store these with the lids tightly in place and in a location where they are not subjected to extreme temperatures.

Wall Cracks

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

See also Drywall.

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT Limited Warranty Guidelines

During your orientation we will confirm that all stained surfaces are in acceptable condition. LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT will touch up paint as indicated on the orientation list. You are responsible for all subsequent touch-up, except painting we perform as part of another warranty repair.

Cracking

As it ages, exterior wood trim will develop minor cracks and raised grain. Much of this will occur during the first year. Raised grain permits moisture to get under the paint and can result in peeling. **This is not a defect in materials or workmanship.** Paint maintenance of wood trim and gutters is your responsibility.

Fading

Expect fading of exterior paint due to the effects of sun and weather. LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT limited warranty excludes this occurrence.

Visible Touch-ups

Paint touch-up is visible under certain lighting conditions.

Wood Grain

Due to wood characteristics, color variations will result when stain is applied to wood. This is natural and requires no repair. Today's water-base paints make wood grain visible on painted trim. LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT does not provide corrections for this condition.

Phone Jacks

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Your home is equipped with telephone jacks as shown on the blueprints and selection sheets. Initiating phone service, additions to phone service and moving phone outlets for decorating purposes or convenience are your responsibility.

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT Limited Warranty Guidelines

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT will correct outlets positioned so that a phone cannot be installed due to a cabinet or countertop that is part of the original home.

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT will repair wiring that does not perform as intended from the phone service box into the home. From the service box outward, care is the responsibility of the local telephone service company.

Plumbing

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

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

Aerators

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

See Also Dripping Faucet.

Cleaning

Follow manufacture'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 manufactures). Then polish the fixture with a dry cloth to prevent water spots. Care for brass fixtures with a good-quality brass cleaner, this is available at most hardware stores.

Clogs

The main causes of toilet clogs are domestic items such as disposable diapers, excessive amounts of toilet paper, sanitary supplies, Q-tips, dental floss, and children's toys. Improper garbage disposal use also causes many plumbing clogs. Always use plenty of cold water when running the disposal. This recommendation also applies to grease; supplied with a steady flow of cold water the grease congeals and is cut up by the blades. if you use hot water, the grease remains a liquid, then cools and solidifies in the sewer line. Allow the water to run 10-15 seconds after shutting off the disposal. **LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT does not warrant clogged drains caused by the above listed items. We will gladly contact a plumber and the expense will be charged to the homeowner.**

You can usually clear clogged traps with a plumber's helper (plunger). If you use chemical agents follow the directions carefully to avoid personal injury or damage to the fixtures. Clean a plunger drain stopper—usually found in bathroom sinks---by loosening the nut under the sink at the back, pulling out the rod attached to the plunger, and lifting the stopper. Clean and return the mechanism to its original position.

Dripping Faucet

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

Extended Absence

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

Freezing Pipes

Providing the home is heated at a normal level, pipes should not freeze at temperatures above 0 degrees F. Set the heat at 65 degrees F if you are away during winter months. Keep garage doors closed to protect plumbing lines running through this area from freezing temperatures. In unusually frigid weather or if you will be gone more than a day or two, open cabinet doors to allow warm air to circulate around pipes. Use an ordinary hair dryer to thaw pipes that are frozen. Never use an open flame.

Gold or Brass Finish

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

Laundry Tub

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

Leaks

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

Low Pressure

Occasional cleaning of the aerators on your faucets (normally every three to four months) will allow proper flow of water. **The water department controls the overall water pressure.** If you detect low water pressure please contact your water company.

Marble or Manufactured Marble

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

Outside Faucets

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

Porcelain

You can damage porcelain enamel with a sharp blow from a heavy object or by scratching. Do not stand in the bathtub wearing shoes unless you have placed a protective layer of newspaper over the bottom of the tub. If you splatter paint onto the porcelain enamel surfaces while 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

Your main water shut-off is located near your meter. You use this shut-off for major water emergencies such as a water line break or when you install a sprinkler system or build an addition to your home. Each toilet has a shut-off on the water line under the tank. Hot and cold shut-offs for each sink are on the water lines under the sink.

Sprinklers

You should routinely inspect sprinkler heads and provide seasonal service to maintain proper functioning.

Stainless Steel

Clean stainless steel sinks with soap and water to preserve their luster. Avoid abrasive cleaners; these will damage the finish. An occasional cleaning with a good stainless steel cleaner will enhance the finish. Avoid leaving produce on a stainless steel surface, since prolonged contact with produce can stain the finish.

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.

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT Limited Warranty Guidelines

During the orientation we will confirm that all plumbing fixtures are in acceptable condition and that all faucets and drains operate freely. LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT will correct clogged drains that occur during the first 30 days after closing, if a household item is removed from a clogged drain during this time, we will bill you for the drain service. After the first 30 days, you are responsible for correcting clogged drains.

Cosmetic Damage

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT will correct any fixture damage noted on the orientation list. Repairing chips, scratches, or other surface damage noted subsequent to the orientation list is your responsibility.

Exterior Faucets

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT will repair leaks at exterior faucets noted on the orientation list. Subsequent to orientation, repair of a broken line to an exterior faucet is your responsibility.

Freezing Pipes

Providing the home is heated at a normal level, pipes should not freeze. Set the heat at 65 degrees F if you are away during winter months. Keep garage doors closed to protect plumbing lines running through this area.

Leaks

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT will repair leaks in the plumbing system. If a plumbing leak caused by a warranted item results in drywall or floor covering damage, LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT will repair or replace items that were part of the home as originally purchased. We do not make adjustments for secondary damages (for example damage to wallpaper, drapes, or personal belongings). Insurance should cover these items.

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. LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT will repair persistent water hammer. Expect temperatures to vary if water is used in more than one location in the home.

Supply

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT will correct construction conditions that disrupt the supply of water to your home.

Resilient Flooring

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Although resilient floors are designed for minimum care, they do have maintenance needs. Follow any manufacturer's specific recommendations for care and cleaning. Some resilient floors require regular application of a good floor finish. This assures you of retaining a high gloss. However, avoid cleaning the new floor with finishing agents until the adhesive has thoroughly set. This will take about two weeks.

Color and Pattern

Your color selection sheet provides a record of the brand, style, and color of floor coverings in your home. Please retain this information for future reference.

Limit Water

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

Moving Furniture

Moving appliances across resilient floor covering can result in tears and wrinkles. Install coasters on furniture legs to prevent permanent damage. If you damage the resilient floor you can have it successfully patched by professionals. We leave any remnants of floor covering materials for this reason.

No Wax

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

Raised Nail Heads

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

Scrubbing and Buffing

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

Seams

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

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT

Limited Warranty Guidelines

We will confirm that resilient floor covering is in acceptable condition during your orientation. LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT limited warranty does not cover damage to resilient floors caused by moving furniture or appliances into the home. We can assist you in contacting professionals who can repair such damage if it occurs in your home. LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT is not responsible for discontinued selections.

Adhesion

Resilient floor covering should adhere. LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT will repair lifting or bubbling and nail pops that appear on the surface.

Ridges

Ridging is measured by centering a 6-inch straight edge perpendicular to the ridge with one end tight to the floor, if the opposite end of the straight edge is 1/8 inch or more from the floor, LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT will repair this condition.

Seams

Seams will occur and are sealed at the time of installation. LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT will correct gaps in excess of 1/16 inch where resilient flooring pieces meet or 1/8 inch where resilient flooring meets another material. LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT will correct curling at seams unless caused by excessive water.

Roof

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

The shingles on your roof do not require any treatment or sealer.

Clean Gutters

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

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 return result in leaks. Never walk on the roof of your home when the shingles are wet--- they are slippery.

Additional Flooring

Do not install additional flooring to your attic. Your home design is based on specific weight & structure and is not designed to suspend additional living quarters to your attic. **Your warranty will be voided and no repairs to a specific area caused by additional remodeling to your attic will be covered.**

Severe Weather

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

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT

Limited Warranty Guidelines

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT 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.

Inclement Weather

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

Rough Carpentry

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT

Limited Warranty Guidelines

Some floor and stair squeaks are unavoidable. Although LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT does not warrant against floor squeaks, a reasonable effort will be made to correct them.

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 LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT will take no action for its occurrence.

Floor Level

Floors will be level to within $\frac{1}{4}$ inch within any 32-inch distance as measured perpendicular to any ridge or indentation. LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT will correct floor slope that exceeds $\frac{1}{240}$ of the room.

Plumb Walls

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT will correct walls that are out of plumb more than $\frac{1}{2}$ inch in an 8-foot distance or walls that are bowed more than $\frac{1}{4}$ inch in any 32-inch measurement.

Siding

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Siding expands and contracts in response to changes in humidity and temperature. Slight waves are visible in siding under certain weather conditions; this cannot be entirely eliminated. Wood or wood-product siding will require routine refinishing. The timing will vary with climatic conditions.

See also Paint and Wood Trim.

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT Limited Warranty Guidelines

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT will caulk and apply touchup paint to cracks that exceed 3/16 inch. We provide this repair one time only near the end of the first year. Paint or stain touch-up will not match.

We will correct any separation at joints or where siding meets another material if the separation allows water to enter the home. LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT will correct delaminating siding. Inspect your home after severe weather and notify your insurance company should you see and damage to your vinyl.

Smoke Detectors

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

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.

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT Limited Warranty Guidelines

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT does not represent that the smoke detectors will provide the protection for which they are installed or intended. We will test smoke detectors during the orientation to confirm that they are working and to familiarize you with the alarm. You are responsible for obtaining fire insurance.

Stairs

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT Limited Warranty Guidelines

Although LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT does not warrant against stair vibrations and squeaks, a reasonable effort will be made to correct them.

Stucco

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Drainage

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

Efflorescence

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

Sprinklers

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

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT Limited Warranty Guidelines

One time during the warranty period, LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT will repair stucco cracks. The repair will not exactly match the surrounding area. Repainting the entire stucco area after a repair is your responsibility.

Termites

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

We treat the foundation for termites and provide you with a certificate confirming that treatment. **Plan to renew this treatment annually or as directed by the literature that accompanies the certificate. Renewing treatment is your responsibility. Treatment for other type of insects or animal infestations is your responsibility. LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT Limited Warranty excludes animal infestations such as insects and rodents.**

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT Limited Warranty Guidelines

We certify treatment of your foundation for termites at closing. This is our final action for termites. **LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT warranty excludes treatment for any other insect (such as ants) or animal (such as mice) infestations.**

Ventilation

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

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

Homes with crawl spaces usually include two or more vents. Open crawl space vents for summer months and close them for winter months, pulling insulation over them. Failure to close these vents and replace insulation may result in plumbing lines freezing in the crawl space. This occurrence is not covered by your warranty.

Your daily habits can help keep your home ventilated:

- Develop the habit of running the hood fan when you are cooking.
- Turn on the bath fans when bathrooms are in use.
- Air your house by opening windows for a time when weather permits.

Proper ventilation will prevent excessive moisture from forming on the inside of the windows. This helps reduce cleaning chores considerably.

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT Limited Warranty Guidelines

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT warranty guidelines for active components (for example, exhaust fans) are discussed under the appropriate headings (such as electrical systems, heating system, and soon).

Windows, Screens, and Patio 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.

Cleaning

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

Condensation

Condensation on interior surfaces of the window and frame is the result of high humidity within the home and low outside temperatures. Your family's lifestyle controls the humidity level within your home. If your home includes a humidifier, closely observe the manufacturer's directions for use. LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT limited warranty does not include condensation and is based on your family's lifestyle.

Door Locks

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

Door Tracks

Keep patio door tracks clean for smooth operation and to prevent damage to the doorframe. Silicon lubricants work well for these tracks.

Invisible Glass

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.

Sticking Windows

Most sliding windows (both vertical and horizontal) are designed for a 10-pound pull. If sticking occurs or excessive pressure is required to open or close the window, apply a silicon lubricant. This is available at hardware stores. Avoid petroleum-based products.

Storing Screens

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.

Weep Holes

It 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. **LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT limited warranty excludes any damage to the home from blocked weep holes.**

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT Limited Warranty Guidelines

We will confirm that all windows and screens are in acceptable condition during the orientation. LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT will repair or replace broken windows or damaged screens noted on the orientation list. Windows should operate with reasonable ease and locks should perform as designed.

Condensation

Condensation on interior surfaces of the window and frame is the result of high humidity within the home and low outside temperatures. You influence the humidity level within your home; LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT provides no corrective measure for this condition. Condensation that accumulates between the panes of glass in dual-glazed windows indicates a broken seal. LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT will replace the window if this occurs during the warranty period.

Infiltration

Some air and dust will infiltrate around windows, especially before the installation of landscaping in the general area. LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT warranty excludes this occurrence.

Scratches

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT confirms that all window glass is in acceptable condition at the orientation. Minor scratches on windows can result from delivery, handling, and other construction activities.

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT will replace windows that have scratches readily visible from a distance of 4 feet. LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT does not replace windows with scratches visible only under certain lighting conditions.

Tinting

If you add tinting to dual-glazed windows, all warranties are voided. Damage can result from condensation or excessive heat build-up between the panes of glass. Refer to the manufacturer's literature for additional information.

See also Ventilation.

Wood Trim

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

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

See also Expansion and Contraction

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT Limited Warranty Guidelines

During the orientation we will confirm that wood trim is in acceptable condition. Minor imperfections in wood materials will be visible and require no action. LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT will correct readily noticeable construction damage such as chips and gouges listed during the orientation.

Exterior

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT will caulk and apply touch-up to cracks in exterior trim components that exceed 3/16 inch. We provide this repair one time only near the end of the first year. Paint or stain touch-up will not match. We will correct any separation at joints that allows water to enter the home.

Raised Grain

Because of the effects of weather on natural wood, you should expect raised grain to develop. This is normal and not a defect in the wood or paint. Warranty coverage excludes this condition.

Conclusion

We hope this manual has helped you to become familiar with items in your home and how to care for them. If you have any questions, please feel free to call our office. The office hours are from 8:00am to 5:00pm. We will be glad to answer any question you have or to direct you toward finding the answer. Thank you.

LEVEL CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT, Inc.

450 Main Street

Baton Rouge, LA 70801

Warranty Request Form

For your protection and to allow efficient operations, our warranty service system is based on your written report of non-emergency items. Please use this form to notify us of your 60-day warranty items.

You may either mail to the address shown above, fax to us @ (225) 338-6195 or by email to Candice@levelbr.com.

We will contact you to set an inspection appointment. Service appointments for inspections are available from 8a.m. to 4p.m., Monday through Friday.

Please note that all service contractors make repair appointments Monday through Friday from 8am to 5pm during normal business hours. Please be prepared to have someone at your residence for a repair appointment. Thank you for your cooperation.

Name _____
Address _____
Phone # _____
Work # _____
Cell # _____

Date _____
Subdivision _____
Lot # _____
Closing Date _____
Email: _____