

The Maintenance Of Your Home

Your new home has been built with quality materials by licensed trade partners. It was designed with the needs of your family in mind. It will require regular preventive maintenance to preserve its beauty and value. An understanding of how to care for each feature in your new home will prevent costly repairs and replacements later.

Your home may experience a wide range of temperatures each day. These temperature variations combined with expansive soils affect our building practices and your home. Building materials such as wood and concrete are subjected to constant expansion and contraction from day to day. This can result in minor warping of wood materials and hairline cracking of sheetrock, stucco, concrete and mortar. These effects are particularly obvious in the first year after a new home has been built.

You can mitigate these effects by maintaining a constant temperature in your home. This allows the wood to dry at an even rate and may eliminate larger settlement cracks. Minor cracks and displacement of wood are a normal part of the aging process of your home and do not affect its structural integrity.

The features in your new home require routine maintenance. Your Limited Warranty does not cover damage, deterioration or destruction of items due to improper maintenance or inadequate maintenance by the homeowner.

Appliances

Information about each appliance can be found in the literature that is supplied by the manufacturers. Copies of these booklets are normally provided with the appliances. Please read the manufacturers instructions on usage and care before you use your appliances. Your appliances are covered by warranties from the manufacturers. Contact the appropriate manufacturer or distributor for service or questions about the use and care of the appliances.

Cabinets

Your cabinets' fronts are made of finished hardwoods. With proper care, the beauty and utility of your cabinets will last for many years. Remove splashes and splatters promptly to avoid permanent stains. The beauty of the wood can be preserved by polishing with furniture polish or lemon oil as recommended by the manufacturer.

The wood in your cabinets is a natural product. It is subject to drying and can warp. This could cause drawers to stick and prevent doors from closing properly. If you

notice sticking drawers and cabinet doors that do not close properly during the Limited Warranty period, please notify the Warranty Service Department in writing. After that, maintenance of cabinet drawers and doors is the responsibility of the homeowner.

Minor scratches can be covered with a putty stick that matches the finish of your cabinets. Putty sticks can be purchased at paint or hardware stores. This maintenance is the responsibility of the homeowner.

The hinges on your cabinet doors can be lubricated, if necessary, with an oil-based lubricant. Apply a very small drop of oil to the top of the hinge and work the door back and forth several times so the oil will penetrate into the hinge. Wipe off the excess oil with a dry paper towel.

Caulking

Over time, and particularly during warm, dry weather, caulking will dry and shrink. When this happens, it no longer provides a good seal against moisture. As a part of your routine maintenance, you should inspect the caulking around your sink tops, tubs and showers, baseboards, windows, door trim, cabinets and ceramic tiles and repair as needed. Gutter joints are also caulked with a silicone caulking, which needs to be maintained. If caulking needs to be replaced always remove the old caulking before you apply more.

If caulking is not maintained around the base of tubs, showers and toilets, discoloration of the surrounding vinyl flooring can result. If you have questions about caulking or if you need assistance in learning how to apply caulking, please contact the Warranty Service Department.

Concrete

Concrete is a major structural material in your new home. It provides strength and durability for the foundation, driveway and walkways. While concrete requires minimal care, it should be kept free of accumulated dirt, debris, oil and greases. Do not run water or allow water to pond near the foundation, patios, walks or driveways. Positive drainage, away from the foundation, must be maintained. Water can cause soil expansion that can result in fractures to the concrete as well as movement within the home.

In the extreme variations of temperature and humidity in this area, minor cracks and surface color variations in concrete are normal and unavoidable. Small cracks, which are the result of contraction and expansion of the concrete are characteristic of concrete and do not affect its performance or durability. The driveways and walkways in your new home are designed for residential use. Do not permit large trucks and delivery vans to use your driveway.

Counter Tops

The counter tops in your home may be constructed of plastic laminate, glazed ceramic tile, solid surface, granite or cultured marble. They are designed to provide years of use.

We offer these instructions to assure that your counter tops remain beautiful and functional for years:

1. Always use a cutting board to protect your counter tops when you prepare food. While minor scratches that can result from cutting food may not be noticeable at first, in time they will dull and mar the luster of the finish. This can happen to even the hardest counter top surface.
2. Wipe up spills immediately. Some liquids, particularly hot ones, can cause almost imperceptible stains on ceramic tile grout and plastic laminate. In time, the stains can accumulate and become unsightly.
3. Be careful to avoid dropping pots and pans and other kitchen items on your counter tops. This can break or chip the counter's surface.
4. Counter tops can be damaged by sitting on them. Excessive weight can cause warping, drawer malfunction or may cause the top to pull away from the wall.

Plastic Laminate

Your kitchen counter top may be made of plastic laminate. It is constructed of a thin sheet of hard plastic that is laminated onto a wooden base. It is important that you do not break the bond of the two materials.

1. Do not place hot pans directly on the counter's surface. They will scorch the surface.
2. Laminate may be stained by the inks used to mark grocery products, especially meat and produce. These can be very difficult to remove, so we suggest that you avoid placing these items directly on the counter tops.
3. The seams of your counter have been treated with a "seam fill" product, but you should not allow water to stand on the seam. The water can penetrate the seam causing it to buckle. To help prevent this, we suggest that you wax the seams as part of your routine maintenance. Your local hardware store or home center can advise you on the proper product.

Ceramic Tile

Glazed ceramic tile is known for its durability and the variety of colors and designs. Ceramic tiles are purchased in lots that have the same texture and color. Because an exact replacement match of ceramic tile can be impossible, we urge you to take special care to avoid breaking or damaging the ceramic tile on your counter tops. Save any unused tile that you may have for future repairs.

1. Ceramic tile is brittle and can be broken by a sharp blow from a heavy object. The best way to avoid broken tiles is to use a cutting board and other protection for your ceramic tiles when you are at work in your kitchen.
2. Wipe spills away promptly to avoid staining the grout. Soapy warm water, a detergent or a commercial tile cleaner can be used to keep your tile bright and shiny.
3. Because the grout between the tiles is porous, you may consider sealing the grout according to the instructions on the grout sealer package. This will prevent stubborn stains from penetrating the grout and becoming unsightly. Routine scrubbing of the grout with warm soapy water will keep it clean and fresh. Strong cleaners such as Lysol can stain the grout.

Solid Surface

Solid Surface is a manmade product that provides beauty and charm to your home. While Solid Surface is very durable and will retain its beauty for many years, it requires the following care:

1. Remove spills promptly. If the spills have the potential to stain, rinse the area with clear water after the spill has been removed.
2. Solid Surface can be cut and gouged by knives and other sharp objects. Always use a cutting board on Solid Surface.
3. Solid Surface will char and burn if very hot pans or lighted cigarettes are placed on the Solid Surface countertop.
4. Small burns and gouges can be removed from Solid Surface by using techniques that are recommended by the manufacturer. Consult the manufacturer or a professional for advice or assistance on repairs to Solid Surface.

Granite

Granite is a beautiful and durable natural product. Granite is stain resistant, heat resistant, and very easy to maintain. Your granite counter top has been sealed at the time of installation. We suggest the following maintenance for your granite countertops:

1. Granite can be stained. Remove spills promptly. Clean your granite counter top with mild soap and water. Harsh chemicals will generally not harm granite, but are normally unnecessary and should therefore be avoided.
2. To avoid scratching your counter top, do not use abrasive cleaners or pads
3. Granite should be resealed with a silicone based penetrating sealer every 8 to 12 months. Please contact a granite company or your local home store for product recommendations.

Cultured Marble

Cultured marble is a modern product that adds style to your bathrooms. Proper maintenance of cultured marble is similar to the maintenance needs of fine wood.

1. Remove spills immediately to avoid stains. Routine care of cultured marble counter tops requires warm water and a soft cloth or sponge.
2. Do not use abrasive cleansers on your cultured marble counter tops or bath panels.
3. Most food and drinks are acidic and can etch the finish on the cultured marble.
4. Do not place any items directly onto the counter top that may scratch the surface.
5. If the surface of your cultured marble counter tops becomes dull, you might consider having the cultured marble polished by a professional who specializes in cultured marble polishing.

Exterior Doors

The exterior door for your new home is made of wood, fiberglass or steel. These doors are remarkably resistant to fading, weathering and warping. Care should be taken to avoid splashes of paint or other staining materials. Wash the surfaces of these doors to remove dust and soil. Reinstall weather stripping around exterior doors when it is no longer pliable or has been damaged.

Interior Doors

Interior doors are made of painted hardboard. Because of expansion and contraction with changes in heat and humidity minor warping and sticking of doors can occur. This is normal and may correct itself as conditions change. You should allow your home to go through at least one dry and one damp season before you make any permanent changes.

The hinges and locks on your doors may require lubrication from time to time for proper maintenance and to prevent squeaks. Remove the hinge pin and rub it with a graphite tube or lead pencil and then replace it. We do not recommend using oil because it accumulates dust.

It is a good idea to keep duplicate keys for the locking doors. You may find that some interior locks can be opened with a small screwdriver.

Remove finger smudges from painted or varnished interior doors by washing with warm water and a soft cloth or sponge. Dry the surface thoroughly with a soft cloth or towel. Check your interior doors frequently and use touchup paint or varnish when necessary. These simple steps will keep your interior doors beautiful and in top condition.

If your closets feature sliding doors, you can be confident that they will give you years of trouble-free service. Keep clothes and other items away from the doors so they do not obstruct its proper operation. The roller and tracks should be lubricated with a silicone lubricant.

Garage Doors

Installation of a garage door opener by anyone other than Envision Homes may void your Limited Warranty. Check with the manufacturer of the door before installation of an opener. Never attempt to repair the garage door coils. Severe injury can occur if the coils break or release. Check to make sure the hinge screws remain tight. Lubricate hinges and rollers as needed.

Electrical System

The electrical system in your new home was designed by professionals to comply with stringent local, state and national building codes. It is intended for normal residential use. Any changes or additions to your electrical system may void your Limited Warranty and can result in damage to your home.

Circuit Breaker

There will be one master circuit breaker and several individual circuit breakers. Circuit breakers trip under excessive electrical load. Reset tripped circuit breakers by moving them to the OFF position and then to the ON position. In the event of a loss of electrical power in your home, follow these steps:

1. If the power loss is in one area of your home and power is available in other areas of your home, it is likely that an individual circuit breaker has tripped. Unplug any appliances in the area that are without power and turn other appliances off. Check the circuit breaker and, if necessary, reset it. Plug your appliances back in. If the circuit

breaker fails repeatedly, you have either a short circuit in one of your appliances or a short circuit in the electrical system in your home. Do not attempt further repair.

2. If electrical power is lost throughout your home, check the master circuit breaker. If the master circuit breaker has tripped, reset it. If the master circuit breaker trips repeatedly, refer the problem to a licensed electrician or Envision Homes Warranty Service Department if your home is still covered under the Limited Warranty. If the master circuit breaker has not tripped, take a look around your neighborhood. If you notice a general electrical failure in your neighborhood, call your electric company to report the problem.

Ground Fault Interrupt Devices (GFCI)

During your Home Demonstration, our representative will point out the location of ground fault interrupt devices (GFCI outlets). Usually, GFCI outlets are located near tubs and bathroom sinks, in the kitchen, garage, and exterior locations. These are special circuit breakers that are designed to break the flow of electricity in the event of a short circuit. This will prevent dangerous electrical shock. When this occurs, the GFCI outlets must be reset according to the manufacturer's instructions.

Do not plug appliances such as power tools, air conditioners, water softeners, freezers or refrigerators into GFCI outlets. The electrical surge that occurs when these appliances cycle will trip the GFCI outlets and break the circuit.

Lighting

The lighting fixtures in your new home are designed for standard wattage bulbs. To avoid excessive heat, you should follow the manufacturer's recommendations attached to the fixture.

Outlets and Switches

Convenient electrical outlets can be found in every room in your new home. Do not exceed the capacity for which the outlets were designed. Devices that increase the capacity of electrical outlets and multiple extension cords can cause a fire. If an electrical outlet does not have power, there are two possible explanations:

1. Some outlets are controlled by a wall switch – usually the upper plug on a two-plug outlet. Plug an appliance into the outlet and turn on nearby wall switches to see if the problem is corrected. If you find that an outlet is controlled by a wall switch, you might point this out to others who live in your home.
2. Check the circuit breaker. If the circuit breaker has been tripped, reset it and try the outlet again. If the circuit breaker trips repeatedly, contact a licensed electrician or Envision Homes Warranty Service Representative if your home is still under the

Limited Warranty.

Exterior Finishes

The primary exterior finishes on your new home are masonry, stucco and wood. These finishes were chosen for their beauty and durability in this area. Because they are exposed to constantly changing weather conditions, the exterior finishes on your new home require routine maintenance and care. We recommend that you inspect the exterior surfaces of your home frequently.

Stucco and Masonry

Stucco and masonry are cement products that are subject to expansion and contraction. Minor hairline cracks can develop in the outer layer of materials. This is normal and does not reduce their function in any way.

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

Suggestions for maintaining the stucco on your home are:

1. Avoid spraying water from irrigation or watering systems on the surfaces. Check the spray from your lawn and plant irrigation system frequently to make certain that water is not spraying or accumulating on the surfaces.
2. Stucco is sealed by the paint that is applied. Repainting improves the seal. Slump block and brick are sealed with a silicone sealer. The sealer should be reapplied as specified by the manufacturer.

Wood

Because wood is a natural, porous material, it requires protection with paint if it is exposed to the elements. Inspect your exposed wood surfaces frequently. If you find cracking or peeling of the paint, sand the area and repaint it promptly.

Surfaces that receive direct sun in the morning and mid-afternoon will require more frequent repainting. Inspect these surfaces frequently. Repaint as needed.

Split or damaged wood, particularly patio beams, should be repaired or repainted to avoid further damage. Small splits on patio beams are called checking. This is normal and does not affect the integrity of the beams. The natural drying of wood can result in gaps and splits in wood molding and trim parts.

Fencing

Please note that the fencing height around your home may vary from that in the models and from homes with different grade elevations. Fence elevations will follow the grade.

When reviewing the condition of your wood fences each spring re-nail fence boards if nails have backed out, straighten leaning posts, and replace boards as needed.

If you choose to add additional fencing to your property, we urge you to employ a professional fencing contractor. It is your responsibility to locate the property lines and to have your fencing installed according to local building codes and your Declaration of Restrictions. Before you install fencing, refer any questions to the local building department.

Fireplaces

Fireplaces are option items that are offered by Envision Homes. If your new home has a fireplace, it is designed to add beauty and style. Please note that the fireplaces are not designed nor intended to heat the entire home or to be a primary source of heating. The fires may lend a sense of warmth to the room while supplementing the heat from your heating system.

Gas Log Fireplace

Your fireplace may be equipped with automatic gas log elements. Practical suggestions for getting the maximum benefits from your gas log fireplace are listed below.

- Never leave the fire unattended. Turn off the fireplace before going to bed and when leaving your home.
- Never use your fireplace as an incinerator to burn trash. Never burn any combustible material in your gas fireplace. Never burn a Christmas tree or holiday decorations in a fireplace.
- When the gas log elements are cold you may use a vacuum cleaner to remove dust from your fireplace.
- Do not attempt to move or replace the gas log elements in your fireplace. This is a chore for a professional who is licensed to work with gas appliances.
- Your fireplace and the gas log elements are covered by a warranty from the manufacturer.

Floors

The flooring in your new home will last longer if you provide routine maintenance and care. The coverage of the Limited Warranty is limited to flooring materials that were provided and installed by Envision Homes. You will receive maintenance manuals for your floor from the flooring contractor.

Carpeting

Vacuum carpeting frequently to avoid the buildup of dirt and grime. Use a fixed brush attachment on your vacuum cleaner. If your vacuum cleaner has a beater type attachment, the beater should barely touch the tops of the carpet fibers.

Eliminate shedding carpet fibers as they appear. Loose carpet fibers will work their way to the surface for quite some time. This is known as fluffing or shedding. Vacuum these fibers as a part of your routine cleaning. If a tuft of carpet appears which is longer than the surrounding carpet, do not try to pull it out. It is probably attached to the backing and simply needs to be trimmed to the height of the surrounding tufts.

Remove spills immediately. Stain removal is easier if it is done promptly. Consult a home center or a carpet professional for stubborn stains. Cleaning products should be tested on a section of carpeting that is not obvious. Do not use cleaners that have not been tested and certified for the carpeting materials in your home. You can test cleaning products as follows: Apply a small amount of the cleaning product to a small section of carpeting that does not show. For example, you can test the products on carpeting in a closet. Observe the effect of the cleaning product on the carpet. Most cleaning products have testing instructions on the package label.

Thoroughly clean your carpets at least once each year. We recommend that you employ a professional carpet cleaner. The professional equipment, materials and experience will add years of life to your carpets.

Ceramic Tile

Ceramic tiles are available in a wide variety of colors and sizes. Glazed ceramic tile is recognized by its shiny, smooth finish.

Glazed ceramic floor tile should be swept or vacuumed on a regular basis to eliminate grit and fine dirt particles which can scratch or dull its finish. Floor tile can be damp mopped with clear water to pick up dust and for general cleaning. When damp mopping, be sure to wring out the mop head thoroughly to prevent leaving droplets of water on the floor which will later become visible water spots. Mild nonabrasive detergents can be used where required by spills but will need rinsing to avoid leaving a dull film upon drying.

Grout can separate from the area between the tiles and the baseboard. If you notice that this has happened, re-grout the area promptly to prevent the entry of water.

Other points to remember:

1. Light colored grouts will show dirt faster than mid tone colors. Select a grout color which will accommodate your home floor maintenance routine.
2. Use door mats at exterior entrances to help intercept dirt and grit.
3. Furniture with metal casters or metal feet should not be used on the ceramic floor tile. Metal will quickly scratch and chip even the hardest of floor tile.
4. A mixture of vinegar and water is not recommended as a cleaning solution for ceramic tile. Even weak acidic solutions such as this will attack grout over a period of time.

Hardwood

Follow these steps to care for your hardwood floors:

1. Clean your hardwood floors as often as you vacuum your carpets. Sweep the floors and mop with a soft, dry mop or cloth. Do not use water or water-based cleaners. Use manufacturer's recommended products for cleaning.
2. Do not flood hardwood floors with water. This will cause stains, warping and the destruction of the flooring. Do not permit water or other liquids to stand on hardwood flooring. Wipe up spills immediately.
3. Do not drag heavy appliances or furniture across hardwood flooring. Permanent scratches in the finish can result. High heeled shoes can dent hardwood flooring.
4. Waxing and buffing hardwood floors should be done according to the manufacturer's instructions for materials and procedures. Consider having this done by a professional.
5. Burns from cigarettes can be difficult or impossible to remove from your hardwood floors. Small burns can be removed by sanding lightly and staining with a commercial wood stain. Apply wax after the wood stain dries. Large burns should be referred to a flooring professional.
6. Do not place rubber backed mats or tightly woven rugs over hardwood floor. The rubber backed mat or tightly woven rug may trap moisture from the slab under the wood floor and cause discoloration.

Vinyl Flooring

Modern, resilient vinyl flooring adds beauty and comfort to your home. The following are tips for proper care of your new vinyl floor:

1. Because of its relatively soft texture, vinyl flooring can be damaged by heavy appliances, dropped tools, furniture legs and by rough use. This damage is permanent and cannot be repaired. High heeled shoes can be particularly damaging to vinyl. Such shoes can cause permanent dents and gouges.
2. Do not use abrasive cleansers or full strength bleach on vinyl floors. Abrasives will dull the finish and cause permanent damage. Full strength bleach can etch and destroy the surface of the flooring.
3. Clean vinyl with warm water and vinyl flooring cleaner as recommended by the manufacturer.
4. Remove spills immediately to avoid staining. Use a sponge or soft cloth. Dry the floor after removing the spill.
5. Prevent discoloration by avoiding rubber backed rugs on vinyl floors.
6. Small cuts may be repaired with seam sealer.

Plastic Laminate Flooring

Plastic laminate flooring is very durable. The high pressure laminate surface prevents almost all dirt and grime from sticking to the floor. Suggestions for the care of plastic laminate floors:

1. Blot up spills and spots immediately.
2. Vacuum, dust mop, or sweep the floor to minimize abrasive grit and dirt. Note: Do not use a vacuum with a beater bar.
3. Periodically clean floor with manufacturer recommended cleaner. Wipe dry immediately.
4. Do not use wax, polish, oil soap, abrasive cleaners, steel wool, scouring powder, or any amount of water on the floor.

Garbage Disposer

Do not load a disposer with food items before turning it on. Turn the cold water on and start the disposer. Drop food items slowly into the unit. When the unit runs clear, turn the disposer off and leave the water running for several seconds. This allows the waste to be carried away.

Only foods that are non-fibrous and easily pulverized should be placed into the disposer. Examples of foods not to place in the disposer are corn husks, celery, onion skins, olive pits, egg shells, bones, and solid or liquid grease. These items may cause your unit to overload or jam.

If a jam happens or you experience other problems with your disposer, follow the corrective measures in the manufacturer's warranty and care guide.

Heating and Air Conditioning

Your new home is equipped with a high quality heating and air conditioning system that complies with local and state energy codes. With proper care, the systems will provide many years of enjoyable, dependable service. Please read the instructions and become familiar with the heating and air conditioning systems before you use them.

Your heating and air conditioning systems can play an important role in the first year after you move-in. By maintaining an even temperature, you can minimize the contraction and expansion of the materials in your home.

The following suggestions are intended to assist you in getting the maximum usage and enjoyment from your heating and air conditioning system:

1. We recommend that filters be changed every 30 days or as needed. In areas with heavy dust more frequent changes may be in order. Fresh filters can significantly reduce operating costs and will prolong the life of your system.
2. Check the operation of your system well in advance of peak operating seasons. Notify the appropriate subcontractor of problems before seasonal service demands are the greatest.
3. Keep all vents, registers, ducts and condensation lines clean and free of dust, cobwebs and debris.
4. Keep plants and grass trimmed well away from the outdoor unit.
5. We recommend that the thermostat, when set for cooling, be set at a higher temperature when you are away from home for an extended period of time. This will prevent excessive cooling and the contraction of materials in the home.

Interior Walls

The walls in your new home are constructed of wood, metal and other materials which are subject to normal expansion and contraction. Molding and trim can shrink and warp in some cases. Routine maintenance on molding, trim and wall boards is minimal and is the responsibility of the homeowner. Replace warped molding and trim. Reset nails that have

popped out of position. Use touchup paint and, if necessary, the appropriate caulking material to complete the repairs.

Minor cracks in sheetrock typically occur around doorframes, cabinets, window areas, and wall ceiling joints. Hairline Shrinkage cracks in sheetrock texture can be corrected when redecorating.

Nail pops occur when the nails back out of the sheetrock as the frame dries. This is not a structural problem. Nails should be re-driven and the heads should be spackled and repainted.

Use care when you hang pictures and other decorative items. The wall board will be damaged if it is hit with a hammer. Costly repairs can be avoided by using picture hooks and other supplies from a home center or hardware store. Always repair nail holes with a dab of spackle or putty.

The walls in your home are textured for beauty and style. The texturing material is relatively soft and can be damaged by scrubbing with abrasive cleansers and rough brushes or cloths. Small finger smudges may be removed from walls with a solution of warm water and a mild soap. Wash gently with a soft sponge or cloth. Rinse and dry the excess water carefully. Do not permit the wall board to become soaked with water. Larger spots, not easily removed by cleaning, will require paint touch up.

Ceilings

The ceilings and walls in your home are easy to maintain. They do not require special attention other than an occasional cleaning and periodic painting. Remove dust or cobwebs as part of your routine cleaning. When needed and as a part of your regular maintenance, you may want to repaint.

If your ceiling consists of luminous light fixtures, you should follow these tips. Do not use cleaning solvents or other strong chemicals on the plastic panels. We recommend that you wash the panels in a mild solution of dish washing liquid and water. Use a soft cloth to wipe the grids using only warm water. Towel dry the panels and grids to remove any soap residue and water spotting.

Landscaping, Drainage and Grading

Your lot has been graded to drain water away from your home. The grading plan for your lot has been carefully engineered and graded to standards that have been established by local governmental agencies to insure proper drainage. Failure to maintain the established grade may result in damage to your home, your lot and neighboring property. Do not permit water to drain from your lot to any adjoining property. Drainage should be along the side yards to the street.

The contours and features of your lot have been designed to provide an ideal setting for your home and to give the maximum protection from water and damage. The berms and contours of your lot have been designed to direct the water away from your home and adjacent properties. These contours must be maintained to avoid severe water damage during heavy rains. Berms and contours that are designed to direct the flow of water away from the home are especially important and must not be altered.

Pets can have an effect on the grade of your lot.

If you have yard drains installed in your landscape flush them with a garden hose. Yard drains should show evidence of free-flow prior to the start of each rainy season.

Landscaping can change the grading of your lot. We suggest that you consult a professional landscape contractor when the time comes to landscape your lot. Provide ample room for growth between plants and your home. Vegetation such as grass or weeds should not be in contact with your footings. Vegetation too close to the foundation footings can provide conditions for insects or vegetation (such as weeds, grass or shrubs) to enter the home. The ground next to your home should always slope away to prevent standing water. If water is allowed to stand or pool next to your home, damage to the foundation and the home will result. The water also could seep into your home and damage the interior and furnishings.

Observe the flow of irrigation water after each planting. If you notice pooling water or excessive flows in one area, construct drainage features to direct the flow of water away from your home. Consult with a landscape contractor before such drainage features are begun. Always keep drain blocks in the fence free of debris, leaves and lawn clippings.

To conserve water, you may want to use drip irrigation. These systems concentrate a small amount of water directly to the root of the plant where it provides the most nourishment. The amount of water used is significantly less. For further conservation of water, we urge you to use drought resistant or drought tolerant plants.

Your landscape professional can provide advice on plant selection, watering needs and proper placement in your yard.

If your landscaping projects require that additional soil be added to your lot, be especially careful that the grade is not altered.

In addition, other changes and additions can alter the drainage of your lot and cause water damage. These changes include walkways, patios, spas, pools, fences, walls and planters. Before you make any changes or additions to your lot or the structures on your lot, give careful consideration to the effect the changes will have on drainage. If you have any questions, consult a professional before you begin the project.

The soil on your lot requires that the moisture content be consistently maintained. Extremes of drying and watering can expand and contract the soils and cause concrete to crack and heave. If you have any questions about maintaining moisture content, please contact Warranty Service. Over watering can contribute to concrete cracking and yellowing of grass and landscaping.

Flowerbeds can significantly change drainage patterns. We suggest that you consult a professional landscape contractor before you dig flowerbeds. Keep plantings in flowerbeds a minimum of two to three feet from the foundation. This will prevent excessive water from collecting at the base of the foundation.

Please consider that any changes you make in the grading and drainage of your lot could affect neighboring properties. Damages to your property and to neighboring property will be your responsibility.

Irrigation Sprinklers should be checked often to insure the heads are clean and the spray is not against the house. The sprinklers in your yard may have mineral buildup, dirt and deposits that can keep your sprinklers from retracting. This condition is a natural occurrence from the water conditions in your area such as hard water or chemicals in your water. Clean debris or soil from around your sprinklers often to avoid buildup. Change sprinklers or springs when sprinklers no longer retract.

Plumbing System

Your plumbing system features modern design and materials. It will provide trouble-free service for your family for many years. We recommend that you become familiar with your plumbing system as soon as you move-in. You should know the location of the main water shutoff and individual shutoffs in all the bathrooms and the kitchen. In the event of a plumbing emergency, you must close the main water shutoff at once. Flowing water can cause severe damage to your home and its contents.

The main water shutoff is located below the front hose bibb (outside water faucet). Our representative will identify the water shutoffs during your Home Demonstration.

Other water shutoffs are located in the water panel in your home. Laundry room shutoffs are located at the washing machine connection points. Another water shutoff is located on the top of the water heater. It controls the flow of water to the water heater and should be closed in the event of a leak in the water heater. You and others in your home should know where these water shutoffs are and how they work.

Each plumbing fixture in your home has a drain pipe specially designed to provide a water vapor barrier between your home and the sewer. The drain pipe or trap is the U-shaped area of pipe directly under the sink. The trap holds water which prevents the airborne bacteria and odor of sewer gas from entering your home. If any of your faucets are used infrequently, we suggest that they be turned on occasionally to

replace the water in the trap lost to evaporation. Because of their shape, the traps are the most likely area to become clogged.

If you detect the odor of sewer gas from a sink, contact your plumbing contractor after you have followed the advice above.

The following suggestions will promote long and enjoyable service from your plumbing system:

Bathtubs

The bathtubs in your home are made of cultured marble, fiberglass, acrylic, or metal coated with porcelain. These are a hard, durable surface, but it can be chipped or scratched by blows from a heavy or sharp object. Like the other components in your home, your bathtubs require routine maintenance. Clean the tubs using a nonabrasive cleaner designed for bathroom use. Rinse the surface thoroughly to remove all traces of the cleaner. After each use, rinse the tub thoroughly with clean water to lessen the effects of soap buildup.

Cultured Marble Bathtubs and Surrounds

The bathtubs, shower pans, and surrounds in your home may be constructed of cultured marble. They are designed to provide years of use. Any flaws or damage to your surrounds must be noted during your Home Demonstration so as to be covered by the Limited Warranty. After you move in, the care of your surrounds is your responsibility.

Cultured marble is a modern product, which adds style to your bathrooms. Remove spills immediately to avoid stains. Most food and drinks are acidic and can etch the finish on the cultured marble. Do not use abrasive cleansers on your cultured marble.

Routine care of cultured marble requires warm water and a soft cloth or sponge. If the surface of your cultured marble becomes dull, you might consider having the cultured marble polished by a professional who specializes in cultured marble polishing.

Fixtures

Faucets and other plumbing fixtures are designed to add beauty and trouble-free use. Some of the fixtures are plated with polished brass, bright chromium or a combination of the two, materials which are resistant to water corrosion under normal use and maintenance. The brass and chromium plating materials are, however, relatively soft and can be damaged with abrasive cleansers, scouring pads and tools. Clean the fixtures with warm soapy water and a soft sponge or cloth. Rinse with clear water and wipe dry to prevent spotting.

If water is permitted to accumulate and stand at the base of the fixtures, corrosion and tarnishing can result. Always wipe the area dry.

Hard water can spot and damage bright chromed plumbing fixtures. While this is not entirely preventable, you can minimize the staining and discoloration by drying the fixtures after each use.

Avoid excessive force when you turn your faucets on and off. The seals in the faucets can be damaged and will require repair or replacement in a short time.

Faucets are equipped with aerators which mix air with the stream of water to prevent splashing. They need to be cleaned occasionally to remove a buildup of mineral deposits. When you notice that the stream of water has lessened, unscrew the aerator from the mouth of the faucet. Remove the debris and rinse the washers and screens. Replace the parts in their original order and screw the aerator onto the faucet. Perform this homeowner maintenance as needed, usually every several months.

Toilets

Toilets are made of vitreous china, a glasslike material that is almost impervious to staining. Clean your toilets with a toilet bowl cleaner and a brush or cloth. Vitreous china is brittle and will easily break or shatter if hit with a hard object.

Always keep a plumber's plunger on hand to use in the event of a stoppage of a toilet. If a stoppage occurs, close the shutoff valve on the back side of the toilet. Usually, a few vigorous pumps with the plunger will free the obstruction.

Stoppages that occur due to construction debris are covered by the Limited Warranty. Stoppages that are not construction related are the responsibility of the homeowner. If you are unable to clear the obstruction yourself, we suggest that you call a plumber. Do not use drain cleaners in toilets. The harsh chemicals in drain cleaners can damage the toilet seals and cause a leak.

The flush valve in your toilet should last for many years. If it fails or begins to leak, you can purchase a new flush valve at a home center or hardware store. If you are not entirely comfortable with this do-it-yourself project, a plumber can perform this task.

Water saver toilets are installed in your home and in all Envision Homes, homes. These toilets are designed to reduce water usage. At times you will find a single flush does not clear the toilet bowl. When this happens, wait for the toilet tank to refill then flush again.

Tub and Shower Surrounds

Your new home may have Fiberglas, acrylic, ceramic tile or cultured marble shower surrounds. With proper care, these modern products will provide years of service.

Minimal care is required. Routine cleaning with a household cleaning product will prevent the buildup of soap film and maintain the beauty of the tub and shower surrounds. (See the section on the care of cultured marble and ceramic tile elsewhere in this book)

Please be aware that a sharp blow to any of these products can result in chipping and, in extreme examples, cause a leak. If the tub or shower enclosure in your home becomes damaged, contact a qualified repair contractor immediately. A leak can cause significant damage to the flooring and sheetrock in your home.

Roofs

The roofing material on your new home will be made of Fiberglas shingles or concrete tile. Patio roofs may be constructed with fiberglass shingles or a modified one-piece roofing system.

Access to your roof is not necessary under normal conditions. Do not walk on the roof of your home. The roof may be inspected from the ground or from a ladder set at the edge of the roof. Binoculars can assist you in viewing the roof. The weight of a person can easily break, disrupt the roofing material and destroy, if any, seals on the roof. Leaking may occur and costly repairs could be necessary. If access to your roof is required, call a professional roofing contractor for advice and assistance.

Annual inspections or maintenance for all roofing materials may be necessary. Due to extreme temperatures, areas that require tar or caulking should be inspected and may require attention frequently.

Roof flashings should be inspected annually prior to the rainy season. Sheetmetal caulking sealant or asphalt cement should be maintained to prevent leaks or cracks, voids or splits in the materials. A licensed professional should perform this inspection.

Remove fallen limbs and other debris from your roof promptly. If large limbs have fallen onto your roof, inspect the nearby roofing for signs of damage. Repairs should be made by a professional roofing contractor. Keep all gutters and down spouts free of leaves and debris. Gutter joints are caulked with a silicone caulking. Reapply caulking as needed.

Shingles

Shingles are a Fiberglas based product. They are quite durable as well as attractive. The manufacturer provides a Limited Warranty for Fiberglass shingles. The term of which depends on the grade of roof you purchased. Please refer to the manufacturer's warranty for details.

Concrete Tile

Tile is very durable but not indestructible. A tile roof affords the maximum protection against fire and adds beauty and quality to your home for many years. Tiles are only applied to roofs with 4/12 or greater pitch.

Smoke Detectors

Smoke detectors have been installed in all bedrooms and at other locations. The selection of the smoke detector, the installation procedure and the location of the smoke detectors are done to meet the requirements of local and state building codes. Please do not move or disable the smoke detector. If you feel the need for additional protection, consider purchasing another smoke detector to be installed at additional locations.

The purpose of your smoke detector is to detect the possible presence of fire in your home so that you will have time to call for help and evacuate the house. At the first indication of fire, evacuate your family and call the Fire Department from a neighboring home.

Smoke detectors are hard wired into your electrical system. They also have a battery back-up to alert you if there is a power outage in your home or neighborhood. It is suggested to change the batteries when you change your clocks in the fall and spring.

Termites

Subterranean termites are native to many regions. Your home has been pretreated with a chemical barrier to deter the termites from entering your home. This protective barrier may be broken by landscaping or the routine maintenance that your lot requires. Additional termite treatments are the responsibility of the homeowner.

Subterranean termites depend on moisture in the soil as their primary source of water. Moist soil at or near the surface encourages the termites to forge upward, bringing them closer to the wood in your home. By reducing the moisture in your soil, you can aid in deterring these pests.

It is important that you inspect the perimeter of your home on a regular basis. If you notice evidence of termites, such as a mud tube on your foundation wall, call a licensed pest control company or Envision Homes Warranty Service Department if your home is still covered under the Pre-treat warranty as soon as possible. Pretreatment for termites is done immediately before the concrete slab for your home is poured. Therefore your termite warranty will predate your Limited Warranty from Envision Homes. Please ask your Sales Process Manager for information on this subject. The subcontractor that treated your home initially will retreat the soil, if necessary for one year from the original treatment date, in accordance with the termite treatment guarantee.

Any additions or alterations to your home must be pretreated. This includes any patios or sidewalks that will adjoin the foundation. If the soil next to the foundation is disturbed in any way, including landscaping or the installation of a sprinkler or irrigation system, the area should be retreated with a termiticide. Failure to treat a disturbed area will void your Limited Warranty.

Water Heater

Your water heater is covered by a warranty from the manufacturer. Please read the operating instructions that the manufacturer provides. In the event of a leak in your water heater, close the shutoff valve on the top of the water heater and turn off the gas. Call the plumber listed on your Emergency List.

While some water heaters do not require additional insulation, this will save significantly on the cost of operating the water heater. These products are available at home centers and hardware stores. Check the operating manual that came with your water heater before you add an insulating blanket.

Your water heater should be drained and flushed according to the manufacturer's suggestions. This simple procedure will remove accumulated silt and debris so that the water heater is efficient and durable.

Windows

These few simple maintenance tasks will help your windows to provide years of trouble-free service.

Aluminum foil also causes a heat buildup between window panes and should not be used. Review your Declaration of Restrictions before you install window coverings that are visible from the street or other areas of your neighborhood.

Weep holes are installed in the bottom of window frames by the manufacturer to let water from condensation drain to the outside. This prevents damage to the window sills from the accumulation of water. Unfortunately, these weep holes can permit dust to enter during occasional dust storms. This is normal and is not preventable nor is it a warranty item. Clean dust and debris from the weep holes as needed.

Vinyl Window Frames

Vinyl window and door frames are made to last for years, but they do require routine maintenance. Perhaps the most important step is to keep the window and door tracks free of dirt and debris. The vinyl tracks are soft and can become damaged if they are not kept clean. Use a broom or a brush to loosen collected debris. Vacuum thoroughly as a part of your regular cleaning routine. Avoid using abrasive cleaners as they may scratch the vinyl. No corrosion prevention products are needed with vinyl windows.

If windows and doors do not slide freely, inspect the tracks for debris or an object that is inhibiting the travel of the windows. Use a silicone, not an oil, based lubricant. Oil attracts dust and dirt which become embedded in the lubricant and may damage the vinyl and promote wear. Silicone lubricant is recommended.

Vinyl window and door frames have small weep holes at the bottom to permit water to drain from the track. Keep the weep holes open and free of debris. Avoid flooding window and door frame tracks. Excessive water can overflow the track and back up into your home.

During high winds, air will penetrate your windows, especially through the weep holes. This is normal. The weep holes are necessary for proper drainage and ventilation and you should keep them clear at all times.

Double Glazed Vinyl Windows

Some vinyl windows feature double panes of glass that create air gap insulation barrier. The vinyl forms an airtight seal between the panes of glass. Yanking or forcing vinyl windows open or closed can destroy the seal and permit moisture to enter the air gap. This will result in fogging between the panes of glass. Use gentle, firm, even pressure to open and close vinyl windows. Do not force the window if resistance is felt. Inspect for the cause of the resistance and remove it before continuing to open or close the window.

In the summer, long-wave heat energy radiating from objects is reflected back outside. In the winter, internal long wave heat energy is reflected back inside.

Condensation

Condensation on windows can be a sign of excess humidity in your home. While a small amount of condensation around the corners of the windows is normal, excessive condensation can lead to damage to your home. The first areas to be damaged are window frames and sills that are exposed to the run off from condensation. But even more serious damage can occur when excess humidity in the home can penetrate the structure, blister paint, create moisture within the walls and weaken structural components.

Moisture in the home is produced by showers, cooking, house plants, breathing, etc. Even lumber in your home contributes to the moisture. A family of four can add about 18 gallons of water each week in their home from normal activities.

Follow these steps to reduce the humidity in your home.

- Ventilate the entire house for a few minutes each day. Ventilate the kitchen, laundry room and bathrooms during use. Run the exhaust fan longer and more often.

- Open windows on dry days to let the interior components dry out a bit.
- Vent humidity producers such as the clothes drier and gas appliances as provided.

Low-E

Low-E is a coating applied inside your dual pane windows. It allows natural light to enter but absorbs a significant portion of short-wave heat energy. The Low-E coating blocks radiant heat from the sun and cuts down on damaging ultraviolet rays.

Convection

In the winter as you use your heater you may feel cool air at the windows. This is a result of convection. The cause of convection is when hot air raises to the ceiling and moves towards the window. The hot air is cooled by the cool air around the window and allows the air to drop; which feels as if the window has a draft. This is a natural occurrence.



Suggested Maintenance

The key to long life for your new home is regular maintenance. It is well known that a few minutes every month can save money on expensive repairs, keep your home looking its best and maintain the value of your home.

Routine maintenance on your new home is your responsibility. We have provided the following suggestions for frequent maintenance. Always follow manufacturer's recommended maintenance for the components in your home.

Bathroom Hardware - Bathroom hardware including but not limited to towel bar, towel ring, and toilet paper holder. The bathroom hardware is installed with Molly bolts and should be used with great care, excessive force could cause them to pull away from the wall.

Caulking - Inspect the caulking around your tub, shower, toilets and windows every month. Replace missing or incomplete caulk beads with new caulking. We recommend use of 100% silicone caulking in water areas.

Exterior Doors - Lubricate hinges and locks if required. Inspect finish for cracks and peeling. Use touchup paint or varnish where required.

Exterior Paint - Inspect for cracked and peeling paint. Repair and repaint if necessary. Consult your Declaration of Restrictions before you change the exterior paint colors. Southern and western exposures are especially subject to peeling and cracking. Inspect these areas more often. Repaint as necessary.

Faucet Aerators - Check for proper flow of water. If the flow is reduced, clean the aerator screens. During the first two months, the faucet aerators could require more frequent cleaning.

Front Doors - Repaint if necessary. Consult your Declaration of Restrictions before you change the exterior paint color of your doors.

Furnace/Air Conditioning - Inspect filters for dust. We recommend you clean and/or replace filters monthly.

Garage Door - Lubricate hardware. Inspect mechanism for free travel. Adjust if necessary. **DO NOT ADJUST OR ATTEMPT TO REPLACE THE SPRING COIL ON THE GARAGE DOOR. CHECK HINGE SCREWS FOR TIGHTNESS.**

Interior Doors - Lubricate hinges

Kitchen Exhaust Fan - Remove and clean the filter. Clean accumulated grease deposits from the fan housing.

Kitchen Tile Grout - Inspect for loose or missing grout. Regrout if necessary. Recaulk the edge of the back splash if necessary.

Perimeter Inspection - Look for evidence of termites on or near your foundation. If evidence of termites is found, please consult the termite section of this manual.

Plumbing - Check under kitchen and bathroom cabinets for leaks. Check fittings carefully for tightness. Check the area around the hot water heater for leaks.

Roof - Inspect for damaged tiles or shingles and for accumulated debris after storms and high winds. We suggest you clean gutters and downspouts prior to the rainy season and after the rainy season annually or more often if needed.

Shower Doors - Inspect for proper fit. Adjust if necessary. Inspect caulking and recaulk if necessary.

Tiled Areas - Inspect caulked areas for missing or damaged caulking. Recaulk if necessary.

Tub Enclosures - Inspect for proper fit. Adjust if necessary. Inspect caulking and recaulk if necessary.

Wood Cabinets – Follow the manufacture’s recommendation for wood.



Troubleshooting Suggestions

In case of an emergency, contact the appropriate trade contractor. For other problems that arise, we provide these Troubleshooting Suggestions for your convenience.

PLUMBING

1. If a water main breaks or a major plumbing leak develops, turn off the main water valve. It is located below the front hose bib. An additional shutoff is located in a ground level box near the street.
2. If you notice a leak under a sink or toilet, turn off the water to the fixture by using the shutoff valves located in the main water panel. Arrange for service.
3. If a toilet becomes clogged, turn off in the main water panel.
4. If you notice a leak in the tub or shower, turn off the water at the main water panel and arrange for service. Do not use the shower or tub until service can be provided.
5. If there is a leak in the water heater, turn the shutoff valve on top of the heater to "off". Turn the gas supply off and drain the water heater.
6. If you notice water spots (darkened areas) on your walls or ceilings, you may have a water leak. Determine the source of water if possible and take steps to prevent further damage. If the leak can be traced to one location (one toilet, sink or tub), turn off the water to that fixture. If the leak cannot be isolated, turn off the main water service. Contact Envision Homes Warranty Service Department for service.
7. If you notice water dripping from the PVC pipe coming out of the overhang, there could be a problem with the air handler in your attic. Call for service immediately.

ELECTRICAL

If a complete power outage occurs, look to see if your neighbors have electrical power. If the power is off in your neighborhood, call the electric company to report the outage. If the outage is limited to your home, inspect all circuit breakers, including the main breaker. If a breaker appears damaged leave it off and call your electrical trade contractor. If the breakers are not damaged, turn them all off and back on again one at a time.

1. If you notice sparks or you smell burning, find the location of the odor or sparks. If an appliance is plugged into that outlet, check the appliance for a short in the cord or other problem and unplug it. If this is not the problem, shut off the problem circuit and call the electrical trade contractor listed on your Emergency List.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Immediately call the fire department if there is any possibility of a fire.

2. If there is no power in a bathroom, kitchen, garage or outside receptacle, these receptacles may be connected to a Ground Fault Interrupt (GFCI) device designed to interrupt the flow of electricity preventing electrical injury or damage. Locate the nearest GFCI outlet. If the reset button has tripped, unplug the appliance; press the reset button to restore power. If power is not restored, determine if the circuit is being overloaded. Two hair dryers or other appliances being used on one circuit could cause the breaker to trip. Defective appliances can trip a GFCI when they will not trip a standard breaker. Rarely a GFCI will be too sensitive and will require replacement during the manufacturer's warranty period. Contact Warranty Service if you have questions about the GFCI outlets in your home.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Do not use power tools, refrigerators, freezers or appliances in GFCI outlets. Do not plug an appliance with a separate transformer or an item with a timing device (such as an irrigation system) into GFCI outlets.

3. If there is no power to an electrical outlet, make sure that the outlet is not controlled by a wall switch that may be turned off. Once this is determined, inspect the circuit breakers and reset any that are in the OFF position.

4. If a luminous light fixture does not work, make sure all fluorescent bulbs are installed properly. Adjust any tubes that are flickering or buzzing. Check wall switches and circuit breakers.

HEATING AND AIR CONDITIONING

1. If the heating system is not working properly, make sure the thermostat is set to a temperature higher than the room air and the thermostat is turned to the "heat" position. Review the thermostat operating manual you received in your appliance manual envelope. Make sure the circuit breaker is in the on position. See Chapter 11:

Construction Standards for information on the heating and air conditioning system in your home. If you are unable to isolate the problem, call the heating and air conditioning trade partner for service.

2. If your air conditioning unit shuts down or will not start, make sure the thermostat is set to a temperature that is cooler than the room air. Then, turn the air conditioner off at the thermostat and inspect the circuit breaker. If the breaker is tripped, reset it and restore power to the unit. On some units, if the air conditioner does not restart, check to see that the disconnect switch - located on the disconnect box which is near the compressor - is in the "ON" position.

3. Poor air circulation and quality could be the result of a dirty air filter in your return air. We recommend the filter be changed once a month.