

The Maintenance Of Your Home

Your new home has been built by licensed subcontractors. It will require regular preventive maintenance by you 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.

Preventive maintenance on your new home must begin when you move in. Read the following section of this manual to become familiar with the procedures for maintenance.

This area offers a wide range of temperatures that may be experienced from day to day. These temperature variations combined with expansive soils that are common in the area 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 cracking of drywall, cementitious coatings, concrete and mortar. These effects are particularly obvious in the first year after a new home has been built.

You can minimize these effects on the interior of your home by maintaining a constant temperature indoors. This allows the wood to dry at an even rate and may eliminate larger settling 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.

We have provided an overview of the features and materials in your new home. Please study each section carefully so that you become familiar with the routine maintenance that your home requires.

Before you do maintenance such as repainting and replacing exterior items, please consult your Homeowners Association or your C.C.&R.'s, where applicable. This will make sure that the work that you do meets the regulations and guidelines that have been established for your neighborhood.

Note: Your home may not have all the items and features in this maintenance section

Appliances

Home appliances, such as your cook top, microwave, and dishwasher come with an explanation of features, care and cleaning requirements and directions on how to obtain Customer Service. See the owner's manuals at the time of your Homeowner Orientation. Appliances are considered "consumer products" and are specifically covered by a manufacturer's warranty. To activate your warranty and service, be sure to complete and mail in the warranty registration cards right after you move in. In some cases the manufacturer's warranties may extend beyond the first year. Any extended warranty information will be explained in the materials that are provided by the manufacturer and do not extend or alter Renaissance Homes Limited Warranty.

Maintenance Guidelines

Thoroughly read the Use and Care Guide manual supplied with your appliance. Always follow the operation and safety guidelines and requirements contained in that publication.

Do not use steel wool, abrasives, ammonia or commercial oven cleaners on metal parts of your appliances. To safely clean these surfaces wash with a mild soap, rinse, and then dry with a soft cloth. Finish the outside cabinets with a good polish wax.

Glass cleaner may be used for glass surfaces, and polish with a soft, dry cloth. Do not allow the water or cleaner to run down inside openings in the glass. 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.

Cabinets

Your cabinet fronts, doors and drawer fronts are made of finished hardwoods. With proper care, the beauty and utility of your cabinets will last for many years. Washing with water could damage the finish. Remove splashes and splatters promptly and dry all areas thoroughly to avoid permanent stains and damages to the finish. The beauty of the wood can be preserved by polishing with a furniture polish or lemon oil.

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 Quality Assurance 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.

If your cabinets are painted, please know that exact color matches for repairs or replacements are not possible. This is because several factors, including light, cooking odors and gases, air conditioning and general use will cause painted surfaces to change color over time. Keep the painted surfaces clean and dry. Smudges on surfaces should be wiped with a soft cloth and the surface dried promptly.

“Under Counter” appliances that generate heat or steam, including coffee makers and some radios, can damage the wood and the surface paint of cabinets. If these appliances are installed by the homeowner any damages are the responsibility of the homeowner.

The hinges on your cabinet doors can be lubricated, if necessary, with an approved 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 the excess oil with a dry paper towel.

It should be noted that it is not unusual for the color of the installed cabinets to be different from samples shown at the time of selection. Color can differ with wood grain variations and stain used. Some color variation in cabinets or stained natural surfaces is to be expected.

Maintenance Guidelines

Clean and polish your wood cabinets as you do your fine wood furniture. To clean non-lacquered painted or laminated surfaces, use only a mild soap with a cloth that is slightly dampened with warm water. Do not use excessive water. Consult a professional refinisher for scratches and/or gouges.

If repairs or replacements are scheduled, please do not clean or polish the affected surfaces until the defects are corrected

Carpet

To get the best performance and longest wear, adhere strictly to the care and maintenance recommended by the manufacturer, who has provided you with a care program to help preserve your carpet’s appearance during its natural life expectancy. This program consists of preventive maintenance, regular vacuuming, removal of spots and spills and regular overall cleaning. The following carpet industry recommendations will help you maximize your carpet’s natural life.

Maintenance Guidelines

- Always care for your carpet according to the manufacturer’s guidance and recommendations.
 - Use walk-off mats at your home’s entryways to absorb soil and moisture.
 - Move heavy furniture, occasionally, to avoid excess pile crushing.
 - Protect your carpet from prolonged periods of direct sunlight with window blinds or shades.
 - If you use area rugs over your carpet, remove and clean them regularly, restoring the carpet pile underneath.
- After cleaning your carpet, always allow for complete drying before replacing the area rugs.
- Vacuum carpets frequently, particularly in high traffic areas. Light traffic areas will need vacuuming twice (2) weekly on travel lanes and once (1) weekly for the entire area. Heavier traffic areas will need daily vacuuming on travel lanes and twice (2) weekly for the entire area. Three (3) passes will suffice for lightly soiled areas; five to seven (5-7) passes for heavily soiled areas.
 - Remove spots and stains, according to manufacturer guidelines, as soon as they are discovered.
 - Professionally clean your carpet as soon as you notice color dulling. Be sure that your carpet-cleaning contractor is familiar with the manufacturer’s cleaning guidelines for your specific carpet.

Note: Due to characteristics of straight-stitched nylon or wool Berber carpeting, the natural line of the Berber may not follow the line of the wall, variations in weave may create a slightly wavy appearance, and seams may be more noticeable. This appearance may abate somewhat as the seam is given time to “relax”.

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, showers, toilets, windows, doors, siding and ceramic tiles. Repair by re-caulking as needed. Mold on caulking can be removed by wiping with a solution of one part household bleach in nine parts of tap water. If caulking is not maintained around tubs, showers and toilets, windows, doors, shower and ceramic tiles, discoloration of the surrounding vinyl flooring can result. If you have questions about caulking, or if you need assistance in learning how to correctly apply caulking, please contact the Quality Assurance Department.

Ceilings & Walls

The ceilings and walls in your home are easy to maintain. They do not require special attention other than an occasional cleaning, caulking of settling cracks 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. Before you use any cleaner, test it on a section of paint that is out of view.

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.

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. 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.

Concrete

Concrete is a major 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 for at least four feet from the foundation. Excessive water can cause soil expansion which can result in fractures to the concrete as well as movement within the home.

If you choose to add concrete work to your property after closing you must consult with your Homeowners Association and your CC&R's, where applicable, to ensure that your plans are within the architectural guidelines of the association. Further, we recommend that you get professional assistance in planning and implementing your changes. Concrete must be kept below the cementitious coatings weep screed and it must maintain a positive flow away from the footings of the home. Do not block or change the flow plan of your yard and do not cover existing drains and drainage structures. Failure to follow these guidelines could result in damage to your property and nearby properties as well as significant expenses to correct errors in new concrete.

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.

Efflorescence

Efflorescence is a chalky discoloration that sometimes appears on masonry and concrete. Efflorescence can be removed with specific products that are available at home centers and hardware stores. Follow the manufacturer's directions and cautions carefully.

Counter Tops and Flooring

You selected many of the floor and counter surfaces at the Design Center during the process of purchasing your new home. These colors, textures and accents add a special personalized custom touch to your residence. The uniqueness can also make replacement and color matching difficult. Please see color and other disclosures, signed at the time of purchase, as part of the contract.

If warranty service or repair work is required, Renaissance Homes will need to have access to these materials for repairs and cannot be responsible for discontinued patterns, discontinued ceramic or stone tile sizes, discontinued wood floor materials, lot shade variations or grout color variations.

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.

Slight color variations from tile to tile will be typical in genuine glazed ceramic tiles. Also, due to the firing process there may be a slight surface variation or it may not be perfectly flat. Ceramic tiles with a surface texture will of course vary in height.

Ceramic tile liners or specialty apron tiles are typically not manufactured by the same source as the field tile and, therefore will vary with the field tile. Variation in size and or color within individual liners or within the shipment of liners may result in the appearance of unevenness in the finish product.

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. 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.

Grout

Because the grout between the tiles is porous, periodic regrouting is necessary. 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. Sealers and cleaners can be found at your local hardware store.

Keep in mind that grout sealers can change the color of the grout. Consult the manufacturer's label instructions before you use any grout sealer. Renaissance Homes is not responsible for the change in appearance of grout if sealers have been used

Colored Grout

The color shade may vary on a particular installation due to the wide variety of tiles available, environmental conditions and finishing techniques. The elements of nature, including but not limited to sun, temperature, food or chemical reactions, may combine with aging process to change the color of the grout in varying degrees from time to time.

Certain areas of colored grout on any given counter, wall and/or floor area may also vary in color. If repair or replacement of tile or grout areas is required, matching the original or changed color of the remaining color tile grout may be impossible. Colored grout can also cause the discoloration, flecking and/or cracked appearance of the ceramic tile in the areas where colored grout is used.

Grout Cracking

Separations and cracks in the cement filler (grout) between the tiles or stones and between those tiles or stones and baseboards, thresholds, backsplashes, bathtubs, shower pans, etc. are normal and are the homeowner's responsibility.

You can easily fix these cracks with a prepared grout purchased from a paint or hardware store. Follow the simple instructions for use. Be careful not to wash excess grout down the drain, which could cause blockage and the need for plumbing repairs.

Maintenance Guidelines

- Wash ceramic tile surfaces with warm water and mild detergent. Do not use harsh cleaning agents, such as steel wool pads, which can scratch or damage the surface of your tile. Rinse; wipe clean and dry with a soft cloth. Use a bristle brush and mild scouring power to clean the grouting between the tiles. Get professional advice on special cleaning problems or if you have any questions.
- If the grouting becomes stained, use a mild bleaching solution (diluted to 1 part bleach to 4 parts water). Simply apply a small amount of this mixture and scrub with a toothbrush or similar object. Do not let this mixture stand on the tile for more than 10 minutes.
- For colored grouts, color stains are available from ceramic tile stores that can give your ceramic tile surface a new appearance.
- Always clean up liquid spills and water accumulations as soon as detected, to avoid staining and penetration of the grout into the substructure.
- No waxing or polishing of ceramic tile is needed. You may use one-half teaspoon full of lemon oil or red oil sprinkled on a soft cloth to remove hard water spots and restore shine to your new tile. Do not do this more than one (1) time a month.
- All ceramic tile surfaces installed by Renaissance Homes have been installed unsealed. The application of a sealer specifically formulated for use with this particular material as recommended by the manufacturer is highly advisable.
- Clean the marble surface periodically with mild soap and water. NEVER USE ABRASIVE CLEANERS! Auto wax can be applied as water repellent and to provide a shine.

Natural Stone Flooring

Natural stone, such as slab granite and marble, is a product of nature exhibiting unique color and texture variations in each piece, and no two pieces will be exactly the same. These stones are considered very durable, and although they require little maintenance, periodic upkeep is recommended. Most stones are porous and readily absorb liquids and moisture, and will stain from any topical spill. All acids, including those found in many foods, fruits and beverages are certain to etch the surface of polished stone, even if the stone has been sealed. Green marbles are especially susceptible to etching. In bath areas stone surfaces can also be susceptible to discoloration from soap, makeup products and hairsprays.

Use of colored grout with a stone surface may cause discoloration and accentuate normal irregularities, due to the porosity of the material.

Maintenance Guidelines

- Dry mop floors frequently to sweep up dirt and grit. Periodic cleaning of all stone surfaces with warm water is also recommended to remove ordinary dirt and dust build up. For more intensive cleaning, consult with the manufacturer of the stone for the type of cleaning product you should use specific to your stone.
- Avoid cleansers that contain grit or are highly alkaline in composition. Grit will scratch these surfaces. Also, particles of asphalt or tar tracked on floors contain oil and highly alkaline. Cleaning media are apt to dissolve or emulsify the oily matter and carry it into the surface, causing stains which are hard to remove.
- Most important, make sure that surfaces are always thoroughly rinsed clean. Soap film left on surfaces becomes slippery. Salts in alkaline cleaners, if not washed off, penetrate and form crystals that grow in size and exert great pressure within the stone.
- Avoid the use of cleaning products that have distinctive colors, this includes oil based dressing or colored waxes. Over time, these tend to impart their own character into the stone.

Note: All stone surfaces have been installed unsealed. The application of a sealer specifically formulated for use with this particular material as recommended by the supplier is highly advisable. The sealer should be one that allows the stone to “breathe.” For specific product information, please consult with the supplier of the stone for the type of cleaning product you should use specific to your stone.

Resilient Floors

This type of flooring material will provide years of service when properly maintained.

Maintenance Guidelines

- Sweep or vacuum daily to prevent particles from being ground into the surface of the flooring. Wipe up spills immediately.
- Use a damp mop and clear water to lightly wash the flooring surfaces weekly.
- If the flooring surfaces receive hard use and become extremely dirty, use a mild detergent in the mop water, and apply the detergent solution to the floor with a sponge mop. After the soil deposits have been loosened, mop up excess detergent and water. Rinse the mop thoroughly with clear water to remove all of the detergent, then rinse the floor using the clean mop with fresh, warm water to remove the soapy residue. Any detergent film left on the floor can hold tracked-in dirt and leave the surface with a dull, cloudy appearance.
- Place a mat at your entryways to help reduce the dirt that gets tracked into your home.
- The following precautions will help preserve the beauty and natural life of your floor covering:
- Avoid high heels on your floor. Heels can dent or permanently scar the flooring material.
- Avoid exposure to direct sunlight on your floor for prolonged periods. During peak sunlight hours, the use of drapes or blinds is recommended.
- Protect your floor against burns, including cigarettes, matches and extremely hot items.

Note: Resilient-flooring material will tear if heavy appliances, such as refrigerators, washers or dryers, are improperly moved across the surface. Use appropriate appliance dollies. Heavy furniture should be placed on pads to avoid point loads, such as sofa legs or piano legs, from penetrating the surface.

Wood Flooring

Like all finished goods made from natural materials, your new wood floor exhibits special characteristics and requires special care and attention.

One such characteristic can be a textured edge where your floor is beveled. This is a normal occurrence and can be eliminated using fine steel wool and polish inside the beveled area.

Height variation may occur between floorboards due to a difference in material heights and subfloor undulation. Separation between boards may also vary due to temperature and humidity related expansion and contraction.

Maintenance Guidelines

- Vacuum or dust mop at the same frequency as for carpeting. A damp mop can be used for spills on floors that have a non-waxed polyurethane finish (always follow the damp mop with a dry cloth to insure that no moisture is left on the wood surface). If the floor is waxed, occasional buffing helps remove scuff marks. A waxed floor should be re-waxed per the recommendations provided by the manufacturer.
- No matter what the finish your wood floor, never intentionally pour water directly on the floor. While damp mopping is fine for non-waxed polyurethane finishes in good condition, excessive amounts of water may find a way of seeping between the boards, causing stains or warping (always follow the damp mop with a dry cloth to insure that no moisture is left on the wood surface). Wax-coated finishes, however, should never be cleaned with water, not even a damp mop.

Note: Wood flooring material will dent and/or splinter if heavy appliances, such as refrigerators, washers or dryers, are improperly moved across the surface. Use appropriate appliance dollies. Heavy furniture should be placed on pads to avoid point loads, such as sofa legs or piano legs, from indenting the surface. Some scuffing should also be expected in areas of heavy traffic and can be susceptible to showing indentations from high-heel shoes.

Doors

All interior passage and closet doors, exterior French doors, service, garage and home entry doors have been installed to meet or exceed National Woodwork Manufacturer Association Standards, and are protected with either paint or stain finish. To maximize the natural beauty and useful life of these doors keep them closed when not in use, this will protect them from exposure to the elements. To prevent damage, please avoid slamming the doors. Wood doors require regular maintenance, especially if they face direct sun and weather. Inspect your wood doors. Paint or finish as required.

Maintenance Guidelines

Some of the exterior doors in your home may have a stained finish similar to that found on furniture. Check these finishes regularly. To protect the stained finish on your doors, use a high quality exterior varnish and a wax suitable for outdoor use at least every six (6) months.

Painted doors also require regular maintenance. Prevent deterioration by regularly repainting with a quality exterior enamel paint and be sure to use the same type of exterior enamel paint that you are painting over.

Note: Door panel inserts are designed to shrink and expand with varying weather and/or temperature conditions and may expose an unpainted surface. This is normal and prevents panel and joint cracking; we recommend you paint the exposed surface.

Door Hardware

Door hardware exposed to the elements is coated with a clear protective shield, which will keep the hardware looking new as long as the coating integrity remains intact. Humidity, salt and rain, and exposure to extreme sunlight could cause the hardware to lose its brilliance.

Maintenance Guidelines

- Lubricate the lock assembly according to manufacturer's directions every six (6) months or as needed. Be careful not to spill any lubricant on the hardware finish.
- To clean, simply use a soft, dry cloth. Do not use any type of chemical or abrasive solution.
- Detergents, alcohol, varnishes, paint remover, thinners and any similar chemicals should not be applied to or used in the vicinity of the hardware surface, as these will damage the finish.
- Sharp objects like knives, door keys, clothes hangers and rings can scratch the protective coating and initiate corrosion.
- Over time and depending on the usage of door hardware, the protective coating may wear away. If the protective coating is not replaced, the hardware may begin to corrode. Refer to the manufacturer for this warranty coverage.

Drywall

Drywall is a standard construction product, comprising most of the internal wall surfaces of your home. Minor cracks or nail pops may appear and are due to normal shrinkage of lumber and/or normal settlement of the building.

Drywall Texture

The texture on your walls is applied by hand by craftspeople. As such, it is impossible to have a consistent, identical texture from wall to wall. There will always be variations in texture and some variations will be more obvious than others due to light angles and viewing angles. We will not re-texture the walls in your home due to minor and usual variations in texture. We urge you to see how the texture variations appear after you have decorated your home with window coverings, pictures and furniture.

For minor cracks or nail pops, repairs are easy. Use Spackle paste or a latex caulking from a hardware store or home improvement center. Simply spread the product with a blade or your finger and then run a moistened towel or sponge over the repair area to smooth and blend with the existing texture. After allowing some drying time, complete the repair with a little touchup paint.

Electrical System

The electrical meter for your home is generally located on the side of your residence, and electricity is delivered through the meter to your breaker panel and possibly a sub panel, located elsewhere in your home. From there, the power is distributed throughout your home, controlled by switches and outlets. Each home has a service panel which was designed for standard residential applications.

Portable personal appliances, such as toasters or hair dryers, generally may be used without overloading a circuit. Larger appliances may require separate circuits. Consult with the Renaissance Homes Quality Assurance Department for additional guidance.

All lighting fixtures have bulb specifications imprinted on them. For safety and fixture longevity, use only the size and type bulb called for. Light bulbs are consumer items and are covered only by a manufacturer's warranty.

We strongly recommend that you consult a licensed electrician to make such changes and additions to your electrical system. Please note that a permit may be required.

Auxiliary Circuits

The electrical circuits in your home are designed to handle today's heavier demands. However, some major appliances and tools will perform better if they have dedicated circuits. If you are considering the purchase of additional items please consult a professional licensed electrical contractor to discuss your capacity and the possible addition of dedicated circuits.

Circuit Breakers

Circuit breakers are the safety valves of your electrical system, and are situated in an electrical panel that is typically located on the outside of the home near the front of the garage. Depending on the size of the home, a sub panel may be located elsewhere in the home and will usually accommodate the lights/switches/plugs circuits only.

In case of malfunction, a breaker (switch) will automatically be thrown to the "off" position. To restore current, simply move the switch to the "on" position. If power is not restored flip the breaker "off" and "on" a few times to insure that the breaker is reset.

Ground Fault Interrupter

Ground fault interrupter ("GFI") outlets are sensitive safety devices installed in the electrical system. The GFI will "trip" or turn off the circuit if a danger of electrical shock exists. GFI receptacles are located in water sensitive areas including the kitchen, bathrooms, exterior yard areas and the garage.

Do not plug your refrigerator or freezer into a GFI outlet as it may "trip" due to the surge of the motor. Especially avoid plugging a refrigerator or freezer into the garage GFI outlet. A "tripped" garage outlet could go undetected for quite some time, which could result in food spoilage.

GFI outlets are designed to "trip" easily for your protection; expect this to occur from time to time. If the outlet will not reset after a few attempts, do not continue to use the outlet until the cause is found.

Maintenance Guidelines

Periodically check the GFI outlets for proper function. With a small appliance plugged into the GFI outlet and running, press the black "test" button. The appliance should shut off. Press the red "reset" button and the appliance should start running again. If this does not occur discontinue use of the outlet until the cause of the malfunction can be determined.

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 which increase the capacity of electrical outlets and multiple extension cords can cause a short or a fire. If an electrical outlet does not have power, there are two possible explanations:

- Some outlets are controlled by a wall switch – usually the lower plug on a two plug outlet. These receptacles are turned upside down for easy identification. 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.
- 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 your Renaissance Homes Customer Service

CAUTION: Small children can be injured by poking small metal objects into wall outlets. You can prevent this by installing child proof devices on all floor level electrical outlets. These devices are available in grocery stores and drug stores as well as home centers and hardware stores.

System Outage/Failure

Overloading (using too many appliances at one time), a defective cord or starting an electric motor may cause electrical outlet failure. Electric motors require more current when starting, so it is a good idea to turn off a few lights before you turn the motor on.

Before restoring current, find the cause of the failure. If you cannot, or believe major repairs are necessary, notify the Quality Assurance Department (or an electrician if your warranty has expired). Only a state-licensed electrician should repair or alter any part of your wiring or electrical system.

To protect small children, we suggest outlets be covered with childproof plastic electrical wall outlet covers.

In case of complete power failure, call Portland General Electric at 503-228-6322 or the appropriate utility company for your location.

Exterior Finishes

The primary exterior finishes on your new home are wood, cementitious coatings and, possibly, masonry accents. 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 every three months.

Siding

Your new home may include exterior siding which adds character and beauty to the home. Modern siding is manufactured of manmade composite materials. Although we select these materials to reduce the maintenance needs of your home, some maintenance is required. The following recommendations will help you preserve the beauty and performance of the exterior siding treatment on your home.

Maintenance Guidelines

- Do not permit irrigation water to spray directly on siding.
- Inspect the exterior siding on your home every 3-6 months, especially when exposed to weather conditions such as direct sunlight, extreme temperatures, high humidity or direct rainfall.
- Remove loose or peeling caulking, clean surface of dirt and dust debris. Recaulk the dry surface with an exterior paintable caulk. Look for gaps in caulking or caulking that is pulling away.
- Look for fading, peeling or bubbling paint. Remove loose or bubbling paint, sand and prime with an exterior primer and repaint as needed.
- Reset popped nails with a smooth finish hammer. Touch up paint as needed. If the nail will not reset replace with a nail or screw that is the next size larger in width.

Wood

Because wood is a natural, porous material, it requires protection with caulking and paint if it is exposed to the elements. If the caulk is splitting or peeling, remove the peeling caulking, clean the surface of dust, dirt and loose paint then re-caulk with exterior paintable caulk. Paint as required. 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 every three months. Repaint as needed. Inspect the caulking on wood surfaces often. If necessary, re-caulk areas in which the caulk has deteriorated.

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

Maintenance Guidelines

Periodically remove surface dust and dirt from cementitious coatings surfaces by hosing clean with a low-pressure stream of water. Lightly use a soft bristle brush to remove stains or caked on mud. Remember that after a few years in the sun, the paint will start to fade and any new touchups may not match exactly.

The exterior surface of your home may have exposed wood, which has been painted according to industry standards. You can maintain its appearance by removing surface dust and dirt, hosing these surfaces clean with a low-pressure stream of water. Again, remember that exposure to the sun will cause fading and the new touchups may not match exactly.

No absolute schedule for painting can be established as the weather, wind and sun exposure affect building surfaces differently. A professional painter may assist you in making the necessary decisions.

If you decide to repaint the exterior of your home, your best choice is a state-licensed painting contractor, who is expert in surface preparation and applications. Also, remember to check with your HOA on any color restrictions they may have.

Decorative Features

Certain exterior design features are created from foam shapes applied over the cementitious coatings brown coat and covered with the cementitious coatings finish coat. The foam allows for exterior architectural decorations that do not penetrate the water-resistant barrier.

Foam is softer than wood; ladders or heavy objects may crush it. A commercial cementitious coatings product, painted or fogged to blend the color can repair nicks or dents in foam and cementitious coatings coating, but please be careful when working around these design features.

Wrought Iron

Wrought iron gates, fences, guardrails and other decorative elements require special maintenance attention. Due to the nature of wrought iron and its proximity to water and other caustic elements, no warranty or guarantee can be made as to the minimum life expectancy of the existing paint covering. Finishes applied to iron will deteriorate quickly. You must give them constant attention.

Even with the application of the proper paint primer and enamel paint, rust can develop. Completely remove it before re-priming and repainting; use quality paint recommended by the paint manufacturer. We strongly recommended you consult a state-licensed painting contractor for surface preparations and paint applications on wrought iron surfaces.

Maintenance Guidelines

- Moist, salty air and chemicals are natural enemies to metal. To prevent corrosion, inspect metal surfaces frequently and touch-up/repaint as necessary.
- Inspect railing every 6 months, or after any activity that includes contact with the railing, checking for nicks or breaks in the paint integrity.
- Clean accessible railings as needed to remove common surface dirt with water and a mild household detergent followed by a clear water rinse. Only use a soft brush and low water pressure. Do not use abrasive agents. You'll get best results by washing an overcast day or in shaded areas.
- Do not hang anything on the railing that is not easily removed for rail maintenance, or anything that can penetrate or damage the paint coating.

Gas Log Fireplace

These fireplaces could be equipped with automatic gas log elements. The operation of the fireplaces will be demonstrated during your Homeowner Orientation. Please note that the fireplaces are not designed nor intended to heat the entire home. We suggest that you use small fires which will lend a sense of warmth to the room while supplementing the heat from your heating system.

Maintenance Guidelines

- Never use your fireplace as an incinerator to burn trash. Never burn a Christmas tree or holiday decorations in a fireplace.
- Do not use lighter fluid or other flammable materials to start the fire.
- 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. The operation manual and warranty will be provided at your walkthrough

Food Disposer

Your disposer is self-cleaning and self-contained, needing no maintenance or lubrication of the motor. Because it is a consumer product, you must complete and mail in the warranty registration card for service. For optimum performance with the least amount of wear and tear, run plenty of cold water when using your disposer.

Maintenance Guidelines

- Always operate the disposer with the splashguard in place and according to the manufacturer's operating and troubleshooting instructions. This information is in your owner's manual.
- The manufacturer recommends that you check the following before calling for service.
- Loud noises - when the unit and water is completely off, remove the splash guard, investigate for and remove any foreign objects. Replace the splashguard.
- Unit does not start - Use the hex wrench located under the cabinet to reverse the disposer teeth. The hex nut is located under the disposer unit. When the disposer turns freely, push red reset button and then turn the disposer on.
- If the turntable moves freely, check the reset button. If it has been tripped, push it back in until you hear a click, and it remains depressed. If the reset button is not tripped, check the following, in this order: a) shorted or broken wire connected to the unit; b) wall switch for loose connection; c) fuse box/circuit breaker. Further action will require a qualified repair person to keep the warranty intact.
- If the turntable is stuck, check for a foreign object lodged between the turntable and the grind ring. Dislodge by applying the wrench that the manufacturer provides with the unit. Remove the foreign object. Further action will require a qualified repair person to keep the warranty intact.

The following may cause leaks at the top:

- Improper setting of the sink flange
- Support ring not tightened sufficiently
- Defective cushion mount
- Improper tightening of the flange bolts may cause leaks at the waste elbow
- To clean the disposer, fill the sink with cold water, turn on the disposer and remove the stopper. While the water is draining through the disposer, allow the tap to continue running. When the sink is empty, the disposer will be clean.
- The disposer unit can be "freshened up" with ice cubes that are a solution of one (1) cup of vinegar per tray of water. Start the disposer and add a tray of vinegar ice cubes. After the grinding action is completed, flush the disposer with cold water.

Note: Never put lye or other chemical drainpipe cleaners into the disposer unit, as they will cause serious corrosion of any alloy parts. This will also void all guarantees and warranties.

Gas Valves

Be Prepared to Shut Off Your Gas in Emergencies

Be prepared for emergencies. Know where your gas meter is located and have a 10" or 12" adjustable wrench with your emergency supplies. In an emergency such as an earthquake, turn off your gas meter only if you smell gas or hear the hissing sound of gas escaping.

If you shut off the gas, call Northwest Natural when the emergency is over to have your meter turned on and your appliances inspected. Do not attempt to restore your own service—there may be leaks or pilot valves in the "on" position.

Garage Doors (Sectional Roll-Up)

The manufacturer warrants the garage doors installed in your home. This manufacturer's warranty does not apply if the garage door(s) are misused, altered or used for any purpose other than normal household use. The garage door openers are also a consumer product and must be registered via a completed warranty registration card, sent to the manufacturer.

Check the manufacturer's instructions for complete operating, maintenance and safety instructions.

Note: Be sure to disconnect the electrical garage door opener prior to performing any repair work. Pull the red Emergency Release Knob to release door from the rail assembly if you need to raise or lower the door manually (instructions are on the release knob tag). To re-engage the door with the rail, pull the red Emergency Release Knob toward the motor.

Maintenance Guidelines

- Once a Month

Oil door rollers, bearings, and hinges with a silicone lubricant or light oil.

Check door balance by releasing door from rail assembly and manually raising door to approximately 3 feet. If door does not stay in position have the door serviced by a professional.

Perform the CONTACT REVERSE inspection as described in the operating instructions. If the operator fails the test have the door serviced by a professional.

Use the Self-Diagnostic OS System Troubleshooting information to maintain safe operation as described in the operating instructions.

- Once a Year

Lubricate the drive screw or belt drive using only an approved lubricant. Other lubricants may damage the operator.

Heating & Air-conditioning

Your home is equipped with a heating system & may also contain an air-conditioning system. These systems have been designed to meet the heating and cooling requirement of your home, as well as meeting with state energy efficiency requirements and Earth Advantage requirements.

Maintenance Guidelines

As with any piece of sophisticated machinery, your heating and cooling system, especially the filter, should be checked periodically and cleaned by a professional service. Mark inspection dates recommended by the manufacturer on your calendar. Schedule all work on your equipment early to avoid delays during peak demand periods.

Air-conditioning (If installed in your home)

Have your cooling system inspected and serviced by a licensed professional before the cooling season begins.

Maintenance Guidelines

Have a licensed professional:

- Check Freon line pressure and recharge if necessary
- Clean dirt and debris from condensate pan
- Clear and flush primary and secondary condensate lines
- Perform other service points as recommended by the equipment manufacturer
- Clean the air filter

For optimum performance

- Set thermostat at desired temperature
- Be sure draperies and furniture do not restrict air circulation from registers or grilles
- Keep windows, doors and fireplace damper and flue tightly closed
- Close or angle window coverings to keep out direct sunlight
- Close up the house earlier in the day and set the air-conditioner so as to cool gradually rather than having the system work harder to cool a hot house
- Turn off lights when not needed
- Close off registers to rooms not in use
- Clear away leaves, grass, paper or anything that might impede air flow through the outdoor air-conditioning condenser grille
- Clean or replace the air filters regularly, about once every three months or according to the recommendations from the manufacturer

- To eliminate areas that warm up quickly when the air-conditioning system has reached the desired temperature and has shut off, set the thermostat switch to the “fan” position instead of the “auto” position (the fan will continue to move air through the house while the air-conditioner will still cycle on and off to maintain temperature) Install patio covers, awnings, trees and bushes at large glass areas on ground floors with southwestern exposure

If your system is not cooling properly, check:

- Is the thermostat set below room temperature?
- Is the thermostat selector set on “cool”?
- Has a circuit breaker controlling your cooling system been tripped?
- Are the filters clogged? See below.

Air Filters

A dirty air filter will decrease airflow and heating or cooling capability. This causes the equipment to operate much longer in order to reach the desired temperature (which in the case of an extremely dirty filter may never happen) and will increase operating costs.

Maintenance Guidelines

Filter should be cleaned or replaced every three months. For optimum performance at lowest operating cost and less wear and tear to your equipment, monthly cleaning or replacement is best.

Condensation

If the condenser (the outdoor unit) is running and cooling is unsatisfactory, the cooling coils may have iced up. This is sometimes due to high humidity conditions and is a normal occurrence. Turn the system off and allow the ice time to melt before turning the system back on, 1-2 hours should be enough. If the cooling does not return to acceptable levels, turn the unit off and contact the Warranty Service Office as soon as possible.

Secondary condensate lines have been installed at the condensate pan to divert water if the primary condensate line has become plugged or otherwise disabled. The outlet for the secondary condensate has been placed over a window; malfunction of the primary condensate will bring water trickling from the secondary condensate outlet and down in front of the window.

If this occurs, something is wrong with the primary condensate line and the condensate pan may overflow. This could cause drywall and paint damage to the ceiling under the air-conditioning equipment. Turn off the air-conditioner and check the condensate lines and the condensate pan. Do not restart the air-conditioner without identifying and resolving the problem.

Important Notice: Protecting your property is your responsibility. Even if there is an equipment malfunction, Renaissance Homes will not be responsible for repairs of resultant property damage if these instructions are not strictly adhered to.

Forced Air Units

These units (which power both the heating and air-conditioning) house the fans and the air filters. The areas around your forced air unit must be kept clean and completely free of any combustible or flammable materials.

Maintenance Guidelines

- Air filters should be replaced (or cleaned if substituting reusable filters).
- The motor and bearings in blower-type units should be oiled if recommended by the manufacturer.

Heating

For optimum performance:

- Set thermostat at desired temperature and leave it there
- Setting a lower temperature at night will save energy costs
- Utilize the night setback feature of your thermostat to automatically adjust the temperature range during a 24 hour period
- If a cooler bedroom is desired partially close registers
- Be sure draperies and furniture do not restrict air circulation from registers or grilles
- Keep windows, doors and fireplace damper and flue tightly closed

- Clean or replace the air filters regularly, about every three months or according to the recommendations from the manufacturer
- To eliminate areas that cool quickly when the heating system has reached the desired temperature and has shut off, set the thermostat switch to the “fan” position instead of the “auto” position (the fan will continue to move air through the house while heater will still cycle on and off to maintain temperature)
- If your system is not heating properly, check:
 - Is the thermostat set above room temperature?
 - Is the thermostat selector set on “heat”?
 - Has a circuit breaker controlling your heating system been tripped?
 - Is the gas-cock turned to the on position?
 - Are the filters clogged?
- This is a consumer product and you must complete and mail in the warranty registration card in order to obtain service.

Registers

With the changing of the seasons and demands on your heating & air-conditioning system(s), registers should be adjusted to provide the desired temperature for each room as well as balancing the temperature through the house. Conserve energy and reduce cooling costs by closing off registers to rooms not in use. Remember that hot air rises. If you have vaulted or high ceilings, fully open the lower registers and close down the registers that are higher or upstairs. In colder weather do the opposite, helping regulate the temperatures between upstairs and downstairs.

Thermostat

Your home is equipped with a programmable setback thermostat. Refer to the manufacturer’s manual for complete operating instructions

Landscape, Irrigation, Yard Drainage and Grading

Drainage and Grading

Your lot has been carefully engineered to standards established by local government jurisdictions to insure adequate drainage of rain and irrigation water. Underground drains serve your courtyard areas, and all lots have been fine-graded to move water away from the house and block walls and into the yard drains or directly 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 erosion and damage. The swales 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. Swales and contours which are designed to direct the flow of water away from the home are especially important and must not be altered.

Any alteration of or failure to maintain established drainage shall be solely at your risk and solely your responsibility, and shall relieve Renaissance Homes of all warranties and liabilities related thereto. We recommend that you have a licensed civil engineer, landscape architect or other qualified professional approve all landscaping changes to ensure safe and adequate drainage. Make sure that any landscape or hardscape installed by you or your contractors allows water to be carried into this drain system.

Landscaping can change the grading of your lot. Provide ample room for growth between plants and your 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 may result. The water also could seep into your home and damage the interior and furnishings. When you make landscape and concrete flatwork improvements, please note the following:

- Do not place planters against the buildings. They will enable water to enter your home.
- Permanent planters installed against masonry walls should be sufficiently waterproofed to prevent damage to adjacent walls and property.
- Do not change the approved grading to allow water to flow back towards the foundation. The water will damage your home.

- Ensure that all installations of patios and walks are sloped away from the house and that the base soils are properly compacted.
- Install additional area drains as needed in patios, walks, or in planted areas which alter the existing drainage in the yards or which adjoin the house or neighboring properties.
- The point where cementitious coatings or wood siding joins the foundations is called the weep screed and should not be covered by any type of hardscape or plant material.
- The condensate drains for your air conditioning must remain clear and in the open to remain functional. Please bring this to the attention of your contractor prior to installation of any material.
- Plumbing cleanouts should be left uncovered and unobstructed.
- There are several main line and secondary utility line piping runs located beneath your yard.
- Periodically flush the yard drain lines to keep them clear of dirt and debris.

Important Notice: It is extremely important that you do not to alter the drainage slope pattern around your home when installing and maintaining landscaping. Be sure that any contractor you hire to landscape, pour concrete, etc., understands that you will be financially responsible for any damage caused by changes in the grade or drainage pattern, including soil problems and any water damage to your home or a neighbor's home!

Landscape and Irrigation

Maintenance of landscaping and irrigation systems is your responsibility. Changes and additions to landscaping installed by Renaissance Homes may need to be approved by the Community Architectural Control Committee where applicable.

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 drainage inlets 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.

Do not over water your lawn and shrubs. Over watering is wasteful and can result in the accumulation of water. Excessive water can cause damage to your property, to your home and to neighboring properties.

If your landscaping projects require that additional soil be added to your lot, be especially careful that the grade is not altered in such a way as to prevent positive drainage of water away from the home and into the appropriate drainage receptacles and storm drains.

Monitor your irrigation system and avoid over-watering.

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. 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.

Flower beds can significantly change drainage patterns. We suggest that you consult a professional landscape contractor before you dig flower beds. Keep plantings in flower beds 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.

General Information

Because turf grasses use the most water, consider grass type and location so that you can conserve water and save money on your water bill. (Lawns typically use 75% of irrigation water.)

By carefully designing and regulating your irrigation system, you can reduce your water bill, save many plants from distress and disease, and conserve the Northwest's precious water resources.

Factors which contribute to water needs:

Type of turf grass (cool season grasses use most water) and location in the yard (shady areas need less).

Weather

Variation in soils, including the amendments, will change the requirements.

Maintenance Guidelines

- Always consult a Landscape Architect for watering and fertilization requirements for your custom landscaping.
 - Water your yard but don't over water it! Turn on only one valve a time. Watering for ten to twelve minutes in the morning should be sufficient for all but the hottest of days.
 - Avoid watering at night or very late afternoon, as this may promote fungus in the lawn.
 - Mow and edge your lawn weekly. Prompt removal of weeds will ensure a clean appearance.
 - Fertilize lightly and regularly to promote a healthy and attractive lawn.
 - Water less when skies are cloudy or when the weather is cool. If it rains, watering should be reduced or skipped.
 - Gradually decrease the amount of water in the fall as winter rains approach. In winter, water only during warm or extended dry periods.
 - Water less if trees or buildings shade the lawn.
 - Gradually adjust the amount of water over the spring season to reach the summer water needs.
 - Watch for visual signs of under watering, such as dry spots or wilting, especially during hot, windy weather.
 - Avoid watering sidewalks, patios and streets. If water is flowing off the grass into the gutter, divide the watering time into two blocks to allow the soil to accept the applied water.
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- In areas with deep, sandy soil, water may percolate below the grass root zone. Compensate by dividing the watering time into two blocks.
 - Small lawns surrounded by concrete or other heat-reflecting urban structures may require slightly more water than open-lawn areas.
 - Do not allow sprinklers to spray water on the surfaces of your home. The water will result in blisters and peeling of paint, causing wood to warp, dry out and splinter, or for cementitious coatings surfaces to mold and deteriorate prematurely.

Excessive watering of shrubs against a block wall will cause cracks in the wall for which the homeowner is responsible

Masonry Walls (If Applicable in Your Home)

Masonry walls are functional and aesthetic and constructed of a cement block core, reinforced with iron rebar. Do not cut, drill into, or alter your wall in any way. If you plan to alter your wall as part of landscape improvements, the alterations must be performed by a licensed masonry contractor who is experienced and knowledgeable about the wall system. Some cracking is normal, in part because of normal ground movement or temperature changes. Excessive landscape water will cause cracking. Excessive cracking, not due to overexposure to landscape watering, will be repaired as part of the One Year Limited Warranty coverage.

The white, powdery substance that sometimes accumulates on 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.

Painted Surfaces

Information in the Performance Guidelines section can help you become better acquainted with the products used to protect your home along with recommended maintenance and care.

Painting and Care of Interior Surfaces

The chemical composition of all paint is affected by climatic conditions. Over time, the finish might dull and yellow. This is a natural aging process and cannot be stopped. For a consistent color match when repainting, have your paint supplier or home improvement center color match with a chip taken from the surface you are planning on touching up or repainting.

The paints in your home will retain their beauty longer if you will follow a few recommendations that have been offered by professional painters. One of the most important recommendations is to avoid washing newly painted surfaces for at least three months. This will permit the new paint to dry and 'set'. After this period, avoid the use of strong chemical cleaners and abrasive cleaners, either of which may cause permanent damage to the paint.

When paint touchup is required, do not forget that all paints change color as they age so a perfect color match is not possible. Regular repainting is a better option because this results in longer paint life and reduced maintenance costs. Please consider repainting your bathrooms and your kitchen more frequently. These areas get frequent exposure to steam and condensation and generally receive harder wear.

Variations in wood grain and color on stained wood stairs, paneling, siding, doors and wood trim are inherent characteristics, contributing to the natural beauty of these amenities and cannot be controlled.

Maintenance Guidelines

- Clean and polish your stained wood stair railings and front door interior surface as you do your fine wood furniture, if included in your home.
- On painted or laminated surfaces use only a mild soap with warm water for necessary cleaning.

Plumbing

Water Main Shut off Valve

Your entire water system has a main supply valve that controls hot and cold water flows through the entire system. Be sure you are familiar with its location in case of emergency situations.

If a water leak occurs in the system that you cannot control by closing the angle stop located at the individual fixture, you must turn off the water at the main supply valve. Make sure all members of your household are very familiar with the main supply valve location and operation. Be sure that the main supply valve access is not blocked or obscured by landscaping.

If the water leak is in the yard between the main supply valve and the city water meter, or if the main supply valve has failed then shut off the water at the city meter. The city meter is located in a subsurface box located behind the curb in the front of your home; this will be shown during your Homeowner Orientation. You should have an appropriate sized wrench on hand to shut the meter off in an emergency.

Bathtubs and Showers

Maintaining your bath and shower areas to prevent mildew buildup and water leakage into the wall spaces is important for general hygiene and preventing potential structural damage to your home.

Maintenance Guidelines

- To keep your shower and bathtub enclosure walls mildew-free, clean regularly with tile cleaner or a fungicide such as ammonia. Remove mold and mildew origination with a mold/mildew remover or chlorine bleach and water solution (1 part household bleach to 9 parts water).
- Dry the wall surfaces with a towel after each use and ventilate between baths and showers.
- Inspect all caulking and grout every six (6) months for breaks in integrity and recaulk or patch grouting as necessary. Scrape out loose, cracked, powdery joints and refill with good grout. When repairing the joint between the tub or shower tile and your wall, fill the cleaned, dry joint with a flexible caulking compound such as silicone caulk, according to the manufacturer's directions.

Drains

Grease buildup is the most frequent cause of plumbing drain stoppage; we recommend you put cooking oils and grease in the household trash. If you must pour these down the drain, always run cold water at the same time. Warm water will cause the oil/grease to coat and eventually clog the pipes. Petroleum-base products, such as paint or lacquer thinner, can damage pipes and should never be poured down the drain.

Sink and tub stoppers designed to trap hair and foreign matter should be cleaned regularly to ensure good drainage.

Faucets

The faucets installed in your home come with a Lifetime Warranty for the original purchaser. Refer to the manufacturer's required maintenance guidelines and terms of the manufacturer's warranty.

The best way to prolong faucet life is to avoid force when turning off the water. Unnecessary force may cut or otherwise damage "O" rings, washers, sleeves or seats and require premature replacement of the entire faucet. Normal hand pressure should result in a full shutoff of water flow and drips. Loose or worn washers usually cause noisy pipes and faucets, as well as drips. Keeping a supply of "O" rings and seals is handy.

If a sink faucet develops a leak, turn the water valve stop counter clockwise to the off position. The water valve stop is located underneath the sink. For a tub or shower faucet leak within the wall, turn off the house water supply at the main valve control and notify the Quality Assurance Department or a professional plumber, as appropriate.

Maintenance Guidelines

- Use only a soft cloth to clean and shine all handles and decorative finishes. Use of polish, detergents, abrasive cleaners, organic solvents or acid may cause damage.
- Replace valve gaskets, as necessary, disassembling the faucet according to the manufacturer's guidelines in the information manual. Use only specified replacement parts for repairs.

Note: Always turn off the water supply and relieve pressure before working on your faucet.

- A leaking faucet may result from a worn out washer or from excessive sediment collected on the valve seat. Replacement stem assembly cartridges can be purchased at any plumbing supply store.
- Remove (unscrew) aerator (the screen device located where the water exits the faucet) and flush out any foreign objects to maintain a smooth water flow.
- If the water heater, garden or washing machine faucet valves leak at the base of the handle tighten the packing nut located on the top of the valve and add more packing if needed.

Note: If extensive maintenance overhaul of the fixture is required, your hardware store or home improvement center can provide parts and instruction for the repair. Otherwise, contact a licensed plumbing contractor.

Hot Water Heater

Your water heater is fully warranted by the manufacturer. The Manufacturer's Limited Warranty is void if the water heater is misused, altered or used for anything other than normal private household use.

Your water heater system is equipped with a relief valve safety feature that helps prevent damage from excessive pressure or temperature. The strapping secures the tank in the event of an earthquake and should not be modified or removed. Always keep the area around your water heater clear and free from dirt, debris, flammables and storage items. You may notice a ticking noise as your water heater goes through a heating cycle. This is normal, resulting from the differing expansion and contraction rates of the inner and outer walls that protect the piping used to vent the heater. This vent's location is determined by the home design; it must be in the wall closest to the top of the water heater. This is a consumer product and you must complete and mail in the warranty registration card in order to obtain service.

Maintenance Guidelines

- “Normal” is the recommended thermostat setting for everyday use. If you need exceptionally hot water, set the thermostat to “hot” and reset for everyday use. Follow all manufacturer supplied operation, maintenance and safety information at all times.

- To re-light the heater, remove the pilot cover plate, turn the control knob located on the front of the unit to “PILOT”, depress the red button and light the pilot while holding the red button down for 30 seconds. Release. Replace the cover plate and turn the control knob to “ON”. The water heater should then self-light. Be sure to read the lighting instructions before attempting to light the pilot.

NEVER light a gas pilot or turn on electricity when the heater tank is empty. Always turn off the gas supply at the water heater before shutting off the cold water supply. Instructions for lighting the pilot are usually found on the burner near the pilot access opening. Read before trying to light the gas pilot.

- Regular inspections of your water heating equipment, including the temperature control (110F maximum) and pressure relief valve function are recommended. Make repairs and adjustments as necessary.
- Plan for an annual inspection of the water heater by a properly licensed technician (ideally when your furnace/air conditioning equipment is inspected.) This should include:
 - Checking all gas connections.
 - Checking the external flue to make sure it is not separated, corroded or obstructed.
 - Checking the internal flue to be sure it is clean and hung securely.
 - Making sure all combustion air openings are unobstructed.
 - Making sure the seismic straps have not separated from the wall.
 - Removing any scale that may have fallen on the burner or floor shield.
 - Inspecting the pilot and burner for normal flame patterns.
 - Remove and inspect anode rod; replace as necessary.
 - Performing all repairs, adjustments and cleaning, as needed.
 - Removing combustible/flammable materials.
 - Drain a few quarts of water from the tank each month to help remove solids and hard water deposits.
 - Drain and flush the water heater annually to remove any sediment buildup, and clean the tank bottom. Annually lift and release the temperature relief-valve level handle, to make certain the valve operates freely, and allow several gallons to flush through discharge line. Make certain the discharged water is directed to an open drain.
 - Remove scaling from the heating elements annually, as required. The burner can be vacuumed or cleaned by scrubbing with mild detergent.

The life expectancy of the water heater will vary depending on the chemical properties of the water and maintenance care.

Hot water Re-circulating Pump (If installed)

A water re-circulating pump is a water saving convenience that provides for a much quicker supply of hot water to any given fixture. Important: to avoid overheating the motor, make sure the pump power supply is turned off prior to turning off the water supply to your home. To turn off the motor, shut off the switch located in the wall next to the water heater.

The re-circulating pump for your home is a timer- operated device that allows for two time cycles within a 24-hour period. Set the timer to activate the pump prior to the time when your demand for hot water is greatest, i.e. when you first get up in the morning or in the evening before taking a shower or bath.

When activated, the pump will fill the main water lines with hot water while directing the cold water sitting in the line back to the water heater. Note that some of the fixtures in the water system may be at a remote location and will require a short amount of time after the pump has been activated to evacuate the cold water, replacing it with hot water.

The timer should be set to turn off when the high demand for hot water has passed. The pump should not be allowed to run continuously, as the constant re-circulating of the water might cause premature wear on the system.

Note: Dishwashers heat the cold water supply with their own heating element. Activating the re-circulating pump before running the dishwasher will not enhance its cleaning capabilities.

Porcelain Fixtures

Porcelain plumbing fixtures are designed to stay looking new for years with only a minimum amount of care. To preserve the delicate beauty and gloss of porcelain bathtubs, toilets and sinks, simply observe one basic rule: NEVER USE ABRASIVE CLEANERS. They scratch through glasslike surfaces quickly. Liquid dishwashing detergent on a moist cloth is the preferred method of cleaning. Although porcelain is durable, take care not to drop heavy articles on it which might cause chipping. Should chipping occur, porcelain repair services are available.

Maintenance Guidelines

- Avoid abrasive cleansers and solvents that may ruin porcelain and plastic parts. Clean with a soft, damp cloth and dishwashing detergent, followed by polishing with a clean, dry cloth.
- If a toilet connection develops a leak or the toilet is in danger of overflowing, turn the water valve stop counter clockwise to the off position. The water valve stop is located behind the toilet. Call your local plumber for repairs and adjustments.

Pressure Regulator

Located at your main supply valve, your water system may be equipped with a pressure regulator. The regulator will be set with the appropriate pressure at the time of installation. This device will protect your water system pipes and fixtures from pressure surges in the city water supply distribution lines. Increasing the water pressure in your home can cause premature wear and tear on pipe joints and faucets and possibly water leaks. During the warranty period, contact the Quality Assurance Department for pressure adjustments. If future adjustments are necessary, call a licensed plumber with the capability to measure the pressure.

The addition of a soft water system may have an adverse effect to water pressure within your home. If you add a softening system, Renaissance Homes is not responsible for water pressure variations in your home.

Drain Pan

The plastic pan that may be located under your washing machine is equipped with a drain designed to capture small overflows. This device was not designed to handle large water disbursements, such as a hose break. Check your washer hoses regularly and replace them when you see signs of wear. If an overflow into the pan has occurred, be sure that any lint or debris does not block the drain, so that it will remain operational for the next emergency.

Bathtub

Your bathtub is acrylic. Use only a mild, nonabrasive liquid detergent solution to clean it. You can protect and restore the gloss by applying an acrylic polish or automotive paste wax. If your spa tub has whirlpool jets thoroughly review the spa pamphlet for instructions on operation, controls, care and cleaning and for precautions/safety instructions.

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 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.

If you experience a total main line plumbing stoppage within the first 30 days after the close of escrow, contact Quality Assurance. After that time we recommend that you call a plumber. If the plumber can demonstrate that the stoppage was due to construction debris or a faulty installation, Renaissance Homes will reimburse the cost of the plumber. This reimbursement does not include collateral damages and personal expenses.

If the flush valve in your toilet fails or begins to leak, you can purchase a new flush valve at a home center or hardware store. If you are not comfortable with this project, call a plumber.

Water saver toilets are installed in your home and in all Renaissance 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.

Important: Renaissance Homes cannot accept responsibility for the failure of any plumbing fixture resulting from improper home owner's use. Never dispose of non-soluble or bulky matter, such as diapers, paper kitchen towels, or sanitary products, through your toilet. Such wastes should be discarded with other rubbish in the usual manner, rather than through sewer lines. If a toilet stoppage occurs, call a plumber or drain cleaning service immediately.

Roof and Gutters

The roofing material on your new home will be made of concrete tile or composition shingles.

Your roof adds beauty to your home and also protects it. Its service life can be prolonged if you avoid walking on it. Never attach an antenna or other structure to the roof of your home. Cracked tiles and leaks due to attachments or from walking on the roof will void the warranty on your roof.

The roof and gutter system protects your home from unwanted intrusion of the natural elements. Maintaining roof components, especially flashings and roof penetration caulking, is important for prolonging roof integrity. The gutter and downspout system channels roof water flow into the drainage system and must be kept clear to be functional.

Composition Shingles

Shingles are an asphalt based product. They are quite durable as well as attractive. The manufacturer may provide a Material Limited Warranty for asphalt shingles. Please refer to the manufacturer's warranty for details.

Gutters

Your home is equipped with gutters that are connected to a drainage system. Protect them by seasonal inspections and cleaning of debris from the gutters. Clean the gutters at least once each year, more if necessary. Make sure the gutters and the downspouts are clear of debris. Keep all gutters and down spouts free of leaves and debris. The corners and joints of the gutters should be inspected annually and repaired when necessary. Home centers stock commercial products for sealing gutters. If your gutters and downspouts are damaged from wind or storms, we recommend that you retain a professional for repairs and replacements.

Following these guidelines will greatly reduce the inevitable leaks.

Maintenance Guidelines

Inspect the roof annually for broken or missing roofing materials. Check again after high winds or driven rains. Have any damaged or missing roofing materials replaced immediately.

- Inspect metal flashings and caulking for separation from chimneys, skylights, roof penetrations and any other construction joints. Use roofing mastic as needed to form a watertight seal.
- Remove all accumulations of leaves, plant material and debris from the roof surface, valleys, joints and flashing areas. Be sure trees growing over the roof line are trimmed back, away from the roof.
- Every six (6) months, or sooner if leaves are accumulating, inspect the roof gutters for leaves, plant material, and debris accumulation. Clear the gutters and downspout openings so that they are free flowing, then flush out the downspouts until they are running freely.

Note: Walking on roofing materials can cause serious damage to the roof covering and possibly breach the roofs' integrity. It is highly recommended that a competent and properly licensed professional using a "Cherry Picker" lifting device perform all inspections, repairs and cleaning.

Sewer Line Cleanout

The sewer line cleanout location is in the front yard area as shown during your Homeowner Orientation. If your home includes a pressurized sewage pump system, a separate warranty and maintenance manual will be included with your product documentation.

Smoke Detectors

A 110-volt smoke detector system with a battery backup is in each bedroom, and in each hall which adjoins a bedroom; these installations fully comply with all building code and fire safety requirements.

A special system feature: all smoke detectors in your home are interconnected. If one detector is activated, all will sound an alarm.

The smoke alarms are powered by the electrical system. A 9-volt battery in each detector is your backup power if electrical power failure. When the battery is low, you will hear an intermittent beeping or chirping. Turn the alarm housing counterclockwise and separate it from the base of the alarm. Replace the battery located as indicated by the manufacturer.

Maintenance Guidelines

- Each smoke alarm unit should be tested every six months by pressing the “test” button, which should result in an audible warning. This test assures you that the unit is functioning properly. Replace batteries as needed.

Structural Components

To maintain the structural integrity of your new home, do not alter or misuse specific engineered design components.

Concrete walks and driveways

Concrete is a material that is subject to minor cracking due to normal settlement, expansion and contraction or if subjected to heavy loads. Concrete may also exhibit discoloration. This is the result of temperature fluctuations during the concrete curing process. Color variations are considered a normal occurrence and do not affect the structural integrity of the concrete.

Crawl Space

If your home has a crawl space, it is important to keep the foundation vents clear to aid in crawl space ventilation. It is normal to have some water in the crawl space, but also the homeowner’s responsibility to maintain “positive flow” of water to the low point drain. You can confirm proper function by doing an annual inspection of your low point drain to maintain it as necessary. Standing water deeper than” and greater than 9 square feet should be reported to the Quality Assurance Department.

Foundation/Concrete Slab

Though the greatest care was taken in its installation, the very nature of concrete makes it impossible to prevent some minor cracking. This will not affect your home’s structural integrity. Do not permit standing water to accumulate around the slab.

Various coatings are available for concrete floors. Many of them are prone to failure due to chemical actions of solvents and oil due to severe temperature fluctuations within a garage. Renaissance Homes is not responsible for any adverse results of after-market installation of these coatings.

Framing

The inner and outer walls of your home are made up of a system that includes wood posts, steel posts, wood beams, and an engineered steel reinforced foundation with wood-to-wood connectors, and shear paneling. Because of modern design tolerances, many of the walls of your home are considered structural or “bearing” walls.

Since many of these framing components contribute to the structural system as a whole, consult a structural engineer and architect prior to performing any modification or remodeling to your home. You should also check with the local municipality to see if any permits and inspections are required for changes you plan.

Improper modification to the individual framing components could cause stress forces upon areas of your home not designed to handle heavy weight loads, and could cause possible structural damage or failure. Homeowner is responsible for any damage caused by, arising from or connected to any modification in the framing.

Roof Trusses/Attic

The roof trusses in your home have been designed specifically to carry the weight load of the roof sheathing and roof tiles, as well as any mechanical equipment installed in the attic area. The trusses are not engineered to carry the additional weight of household goods. Homeowner is responsible for any damage caused by, arising from or connected to any modification to or adding weight to the trusses.

Wood Framed Floors

The floor system of your home is not designed to support the weight load of a waterbed or heavy exercise equipment. If placing heavy objects, such as a piano or pool table, on a wood framed floor, use floor coasters for each furniture leg or foot to spread the weight load and help prevent a puncture to the wood floor sheathing.

The second story floor is also a structural component to the entire home. Consult with a structural engineer and architect prior to performing any modification or remodeling to your home. And check with the local city or county offices for required permits and inspections.

Your floors may squeak from time to time because of drying wood, weather, uneven temperature inside and normal settling. After that time these items will be considered normal maintenance and your responsibility as a homeowner.

Vents

Your home has several types of vents designed to remove hot air, fumes and moisture from the bathrooms, kitchen and laundry room.

Bathroom Fan Vents

These fans are low maintenance and require only occasional cleaning of fan blades and vent cover. The fan motor is self-lubricating.

Laundry Dryer Vent

Your laundry room has been equipped with a dryer vent to exhaust the moist dryer air to the outside of your home.

Maintenance Guidelines

- Periodically inspect the exterior vent outlet to insure that the vent is clear of any debris.
- Check the interior connection point of the vent to make certain lint has not built up, and make sure that the flex hose from the dryer to the vent connection is not crimped or clogged.
- Clean out the vent line every six (6) months or as often as needed to keep clear and operational. An obstructed vent line creates a fire hazard and could cause the dryer-heating element to malfunction.

Stove Top Hood Fan Vent

Remove and clean the grease filter once (1) a month according to manufacturer's guidelines. To clean the filter, soak it in a solution of detergent and hot water. Do not use ammonia or ammonia products. Light brushing may be used to remove embedded dirt.

These fans are low maintenance items and require only occasional cleaning of the fan blades and vent cover. The fan motor is self-lubricating.

Maintenance Guidelines

- The main supply valve may become corroded from lack of use or from the existence of hard water. So open and close the valve every two to three months to ensure that it will operate freely. Lubricate valve stem when needed.

Windows

The windows and sliding glass doors installed in your home are guaranteed directly by a manufacturer warranty. This warranty does not apply if the windows and/or sliding glass doors are misused, altered or used for any purpose other than normal household use.

Window & Sliding Glass Door Frames

The window and door frames installed in your home are a formed extrusion of solid vinyl with thermally welded corners.

Maintenance Guidelines

- You will be able to maintain their appearance for years with periodic cleaning. Use a mild soap and water to clean the vinyl frames.
- Most sliding windows are designed for a ten-pound pull. If the window sticks or excessive pressure is needed to open or close, apply a silicone lubricant.
- There is at least one water weep hole in the exterior ledge of the window frame. Be sure weep holes are always open, as water will accumulate if they are plugged.

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. Even more serious damage can occur when excess humidity in the home can penetrate the structure, blister paint, create mildew conditions within the walls and weakened components. 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 fans longer and more often.

Window Glass Issues

Window glass is subject to ASTM standards for inclusions (small bits of sand or debris embed in the glass), bubbles (small bubbles of gas trapped in the glass and scratches. These issues, if visible at a distance of ten feet in normal lighting can be cause for replacement.

The most common cause of scratches on window glass is cleaning. If small grains of sand or other debris are present when the glass is cleaned, scratches can happen. Sand and other debris can be much harder than window glass so a simple wipe with a cloth can scratch the glass. Always flush the glass with water and gently wipe the surface.

The importance of maintaining your new home on a regular basis is directly comparable to maintaining a brand new car. If you never change the oil or get the car tuned up, little problems will eventually become big problems.

Similarly, your Renaissance home has numerous components and equipment that require you to complete periodic maintenance. By implementing the following preventative maintenance guidelines, you can help keep the components of your home functioning properly with as few problems as possible.

To help you pinpoint when specific maintenance items should be performed, this checklist is divided into distinct time periods: After Move-In, Every Month, Every Three Months, Every Six Months, Annual, plus Spring and Fall. For additional information regarding the subjects presented here, please refer to the appropriate Manufacturer's Operating Instructions and/or the specific subject discussions contained in this Manual.

After Move-In Checklist

Bathrooms

Apply silicone based grout sealer to ceramic tile grout.

Electric

Locate and label the main circuit breaker in the electric panel box and show family members how to turn it off in case of emergency.

Fire Extinguisher

Purchase a general purpose fire extinguisher for each floor of the home plus one small kitchen extinguisher for grease fires. Demonstrate proper usage to family members in case of an emergency.

First Aid Kit

Keep first aid materials and a book on first aid procedures in an accessible location.

Flooring

Attach furniture protectors underneath furniture legs to protect hardwood, resilient, and ceramic tile floors.

Household Tools

Acquire basic tools to help you with normal home maintenance chores, to include: pliers, adjustable wrench, flat-blade and Phillips head screwdrivers, claw hammer, hand saw, tape measure, caulk and caulking gun, putty knife, paint roller and brush, power drill and drill bits, assorted nails, brads, screws, nuts, bolts, sandpaper, utility knife, toilet plunger, and flashlight.

Landscaping

Follow your Landscaping Contractor's instructions for year-round landscaping care. Review and implement recommendations in this Manual.

Plumbing

Locate and label the main water line shutoff valve and show all family members how to close it in case of a plumbing emergency. Locate and mark the sewer clean out location(s).

Water Erosion

After first heavy rain, check foundation for erosion and fill eroded areas. Thereafter, always be on the alert for erosion and take immediate action to fill eroded areas.

Monthly Checklist

Cabinets and Hardwood Stair Rails

Clean and apply a wood protection product that is approved for use on the materials in your cabinets.

Air Conditioning and Heating

Check air filters and replace as necessary. Vacuum air supply and air return registers to remove dust and lint.

Cabinets

Check drawers and hinges for proper alignment. Tighten and adjust.

Fire Extinguishers

Check fire extinguishers to ensure that they are fully charged.

Garbage Disposer

Clean disposer blades by grinding up ice cubes. Freshen it with baking soda and by grinding up citrus fruit rinds.

GFCI Breakers

Test the GFCI breakers in your home every month. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for routine testing.

Interior Caulking

Check for cracks or separations in caulking around sinks, bathtubs, showers, toilets, faucets, showers, counter tops and backsplashes, ceramic walls, resilient and ceramic floors, window sills, and any other areas originally caulked by Renaissance Homes To repair these areas, use an appropriate caulking compound and follow the caulking instructions in the Plumbing Section.

Exterior Caulking

Inspect the caulking on the exterior of your home. Observe cracks and separations in the caulk around windows, doors, siding, and ventilation outlets.

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.

Perimeter Drainage

Observe the drainage of irrigation and rain water from your yard. If water is standing around the concrete slab or pooling in your yard, correct the drainage to the original specifications.

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.

Inspect the drainage patterns of your lawn to ensure that water is draining away from the home and toward existing drainage facilities.

Plumbing

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

Range Hood Fan

Clean or replace dirty filter.

Smoke Detector

Test smoke detectors. Replace batteries at least once each year. Clean and/or vacuum detector openings as necessary.

Three Month Checklist**Air Conditioning and Heating**

Check air filters and replace as necessary.

Interior Doors

Lubricate hinges with a silicone based lubricant as needed.

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.

Windows

Check sills for caulking cracks or separations and re-caulk as necessary.

Check weather-stripping around windows and repair or replace as necessary.

Check windows for smooth opening and closing operation. Clean tracks and lubricate as necessary with a non-oil based lubricant.

Inspect window screens and repair or replace as necessary. Make sure the weep holes are clear.

Six Month Checklist

Doors

Check screws on door lockset and hardware and tighten as necessary. Lubricate bifold and by-pass doors as necessary with a non-oil based lubricant. Clean sliding door track and apply silicone or other non-oil based lubricant spray to tracks as necessary. Lubricate moving parts of garage door with a non-oil based lubricant. Adjust the threshold for proper contact with the sweep.

Electric

Check electrical extension and appliance cords. Replace frayed or split cords.

Exterior Finishes

Check for cracks and voids in exterior caulking and re-caulk as necessary. Check exterior painted surfaces for damage and weathering. To repair, follow the maintenance instructions contained in the Caulking Section of this Manual.

Front Doors

Repaint if necessary. Stained doors should be sealed.

Plumbing

Check water supply lines and valves to sinks and toilets. Tighten if loose or leaking.

Clean out faucet aerators, spray nozzles, and drains.

Check pipes and drains for water leakage.

Windows

Check sills for caulking cracks or separations and re-caulk as necessary.

Check weather-stripping around windows and repair or replace as necessary.

Check windows for smooth opening and closing operation. Clean tracks and lubricate as necessary with a non-oil based lubricant.

Inspect window screens and repair or replace as necessary.

Annual Checklist

Attic

Check attic to ensure that soffit vents are not blocked with insulation and move insulation to its original location if there are voids on the attic floor.

Garage Door

Lubricate screw drive mechanism with white garage door screw drive grease as recommended by the manufacturer.

Doors

Check and repair or replace weather-stripping on exterior doors as necessary.

Check and tighten door hardware and lubricate as necessary with a non-oil based lubricant.

Tighten all bolts on garage door.

Spring Checklist

Air Conditioning System (if applicable)

Have licensed HVAC Contractor perform seasonal maintenance checkup for summer. Ensure that air supply registers are not blocked by rugs, draperies, and furniture.

Irrigation System

Check sprinkler heads for damage and adjust for full coverage.

Roofing

Visually inspect roof from the ground for loose or missing shingles or roof tiles.

Contact Roofing Contractor should repairs be required.

Inspect roof penetrations such as air vents for proper mastic, caulking and seals.

Fall Checklist

Heating System

Have licensed HVAC Contractor perform seasonal maintenance checkup for winter.

Irrigation System

Drain sprinkler system for the winter by closing main sprinkler valve and opening all control valves to ensure drainage to lowest sprinkler head.

Helpful Information

Conservation

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

Heating and Cooling

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

Water and Water Heater

- Set your water heater at 120 degrees if your dishwasher has a water booster heater. If not, set the water heater at 140 degrees.
- Follow the steps outlined in the manufacturer's directions for draining water from your water heater in order to remove accumulated hard-water scale that builds up inside the tank.
- Timing will depend on the nature of your water supply.
- Correct plumbing leaks, running toilets, or dripping faucets ASAP.
- Keep aerators clean.
- Check with your jurisdiction for local lawn and plant watering regulations.

Appliances

- In selecting your home's appliances, compare the information regarding energy consumption on the Energy Guide sticker. Sometimes spending a bit more up front can reduce operating costs over the life of the appliance, conserving energy at the same time.
- Use cold water when operating your disposal. This not only saves hot water you pay to heat, it preserves the disposal motor.
- When baking, preheat your oven just five minutes before you use it. When possible, bake several items at the same time or at least consecutively. Turn the oven off a few minutes before baking time is done.
- Microwave rather than using the range when possible, especially during hot weather.
- Run the dishwasher when it has a full load and use the air-dry cycle. Avoid regular use of the rinse and hold cycle.
- Turn electric burners off a few minutes before cooking is complete.
- Refrigerators with the freezer on top generally use significantly less energy than side-by-side models. Select an appropriate size for your needs; two small refrigerators use more energy than one large one.

Electrical

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

Maintenance

- Caulk in dry weather when temperatures are moderate. Check all locations, such as:
- Foundation penetrations (electrical, phone, water, cable TV, and gas line entrances)
- Around fans and vents
- Joints between door or window frames and siding
- Check weather-stripping on all exterior doors and adjust as needed. Ensure that door thresholds are a good fit—most are adjustable.
- After any activity in the attic, check that the insulation is evenly distributed.
- Caulking is not needed at the butt joints of HardiPlank siding - per the manufacturer's guidelines for a Rain Screen system.

Your Additional Reminders and Notes:

Extended Absences

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

Plan in Advance

- Ask a neighbor to keep an eye on the property. If possible, provide them with a way to reach you while you are away.
- If you will be gone an especially long time (over two weeks) consider arranging for a house sitter.
- Arrange for someone to mow the lawn and check irrigation.
- Notify local security personnel or police of the dates you will be away.
- Stop mail, newspapers, and other deliveries.
- Use lighting timers (available at hardware stores for \$10 to \$20).
- Confirm that all insurance policies that cover your property and belongings are current and provide sufficient coverage.
- Mark valuable items with identifying information. Consider whether you have irreplaceable items that should be stored in a bank vault or security box.

As You Leave

- Forward phone calls to a relative or close friend.
- Unplug computers and other electronic devices that might be harmed in an electric storm.
- Leave window coverings in their most typical positions.
- Confirm that all doors and windows are locked and the deadbolts are engaged.
- Shut off the main water supply. Set the thermostat on the water heater to “vacation” to save energy.
- Store items such as your lawn mower, bicycles, or ladders in the garage.
- Summer: Turn your air conditioner fan to auto. Set the thermostat to 80.
- Arm your security system, if applicable.

Your Additional Reminders and Notes:

Fire Prevention

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

Train Family Members

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

Practice Prevention

- Store matches away from children and heat sources.
- Avoid smoking in bed.
- Avoid leaving small children home alone, even for a short time.
- Maintain appliances in clean and safe working condition.
- Avoid overloading electrical outlets.
- Ensure that all electrical cords are in good repair.
- Avoid having any flammable objects or materials near the stove.
- Keep the range hood filter clean to prevent a build up of grease.
- Allow space for cooling around electrical equipment.
- Unplug the iron when it is not in use. Do not leave an iron that is on unattended.
- Use electric blankets with care, following manufacturer directions.
- Store volatile materials (paint, gasoline for the lawn mower, and so on) in appropriate containers, away from flames (such as pilots lights) or heat sources. Many trash collection services offer a means for you to dispose of hazardous items. Check with your service provider for details.
- Keep the barbecue clear of flammable objects and materials.
- If your home includes a gas fireplace follow all directions and do not leave the fireplace unattended when it is on.

Your Additional Reminders and Notes:

Home Safety

Each year, too many Americans are injured in home accidents. Here are some home safety suggestions designed to avoid injuries and save time, worry and needless expense.

Oily Cleaning Rags

Never pile oily or greasy rags where they are exposed to air or heat. If they must be stored, seal them in a metal container well away from heat sources. This is especially important when rags are saturated with furniture polish, floor oils, linseed oil or paint.

Rugs

Rugs should be fastened down, laid on non-slip pads, or undercoated with nonskid materials. Carpet edges should be flat, and curling should be prevented or corrected. Small, loose throw rugs can be especially dangerous when placed at the head or foot of stairs. Stair carpeting should always be securely fastened.

Stairways

Orient your entire family to the necessity of keeping halls and stairways clear of loose articles that might trip someone. Remove boxes, toys, mops, brooms and tools to their allotted storage areas.

Trash

Do not let trash accumulate, it is a potential fire hazard and may attract vermin. Never stack newspapers and magazines near your furnace or hot water heater.

Indoor Air Quality and Mold

Mold and Mildew What is Mold?

Mold is a type of fungus that occurs naturally in the environment and is necessary for the natural decomposition of plant and other organic material. It spreads by means of microscopic spores borne on the wind, and is found everywhere life can be supported. Residential home construction is not, and cannot be, designed to exclude mold spores. If the growing conditions are right, mold can grow in your home. Most owners are familiar with mold growth in the form of bread mold and mold that may grow on bathroom tile. Mildew is another microorganism similar to molds and fungi.

In order to grow, mold requires a food source. This food source might be supplied by items found in the home, such as fabric, carpet or even wallpaper, or by building materials such as drywall, wood and insulation. Also, mold growth requires a temperate climate. The best growth occurs at temperatures between 40°F and 100°F. Finally, mold growth requires moisture. Moisture is the only mold growth factor that can be controlled in a residential setting. By minimizing moisture, an owner can reduce or eliminate mold growth.

Moisture in the home can have many causes. Spills, leaks, overflows, condensation, and high humidity are common sources of home moisture. Good housekeeping and home maintenance practices are essential in the effort to prevent or eliminate mold growth. If moisture is allowed to remain on the growth medium, mold can develop within 24 to 48 hours.

Should I be concerned about mold in my home?

All molds are not necessarily harmful, but certain strains of mold have been argued to have adverse health effects in susceptible persons. The most commonly asserted effects are allergic reactions, including skin irritation, watery eyes, runny nose, coughing, sneezing, congestion, sore throat and headache. Individuals with suppressed immune systems may risk infections. Some experts contend that mold causes serious symptoms and diseases that may even be life threatening. However, experts disagree about the level of mold exposure that may cause health problems, and about the exact nature and extent of the health problems that may be caused by mold.

What Owners can do?

Owners can take positive steps to reduce or eliminate the occurrence of mold growth in the Residence, and thereby minimize any possible adverse effects that may be caused by mold. The steps include the following:

Before bringing items into the Residence, check for signs of mold on the items. For example, potted plants (roots and soil), furnishings, stored clothing and bedding material, or many other household goods, could already contain mold growth.

Regular vacuuming and cleaning will help reduce mold levels. Mild bleach solutions and most tile cleaners are effective in eliminating or preventing mold growth if used in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations.

- Keep the humidity in the residence low. 40% relative humidity is ideal.
- Vent clothes dryers to the outdoors.
- Ventilate kitchens and bathrooms by using exhaust fans, or by setting the fresh air system to facilitate evaporation of water from wet surfaces.
- Promptly clean up spills, condensation and other sources of moisture. Thoroughly dry any wet surfaces or material. Do not let water pool or stand in your home. Promptly replace any materials that cannot be thoroughly dried, such as drywall or insulation.
- Inspect for leaks on a regular basis. Look for discolorations or wet spots. Repair any leaks promptly. Inspect condensation pans (refrigerators and air conditioners) for mold growth. Take notice of musty odors and any visible signs of mold.

Should mold develop, thoroughly clean the affected area. First, test to see if the affected material or surface is color safe. Porous materials, such as fabric, upholstery or carpet should be discarded. Should the mold growth be severe, call on the services of a qualified professional cleaner. There are several sources of information on mold. If you want more information, please contact Renaissance Homes Quality Assurance at: 503-636-5600

Whether or not you as a buyer experience mold growth depends largely on how you manage and maintain your home. You will need to take actions to prevent conditions that cause the mold or mildew. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have taken the necessary precautions to prevent mold from becoming a problem in your home. This is part of the responsibility of home ownership. You are responsible for following the recommendations set forth above. You further acknowledge that if there is any water damage or water intrusion to your home, you will take immediate action to prevent conditions that cause mold or mildew to develop.

Please call Renaissance Homes if you discover water intrusion or mold growth within your home. Renaissance Homes has specific remediation protocols for these situations.

Lawn Care Procedures

Mowing

- Mow your lawn when it is at a height of 2-3 inches
- Do not mow more than 1/3 of the total length of your lawn at one time
- Mow your lawn in different patterns
- Mow shorter in the spring and fall, and higher in the summer during warm weather
- Be sure that your mower blades are always sharp
- TO HELP AVOID THATCH - In the spring, mow your lawn slightly shorter than normal, rake with and spring rake, and mow again

Watering

- When you begin watering in the spring, start with 2-3 days per week
- As the weather warms up, additional watering days should be added
- The best use of your water would be to water between 1:00 and 7:00 AM when the temperature is cooler and the wind is calm
- Water 3-5 minutes for spray type sprinklers and 12-15 minutes for rotor type sprinklers
- If you need to water longer than that, add a second start time to the controller
- Your first start time should be for around 5:00 AM, if you add a second start time, it should be for 1:00 AM
- If you mow on a regular schedule, DO NOT water the night before your mowing day

Fertilizing

- Use a whirlybird type spreader for fertilizing to help distribute the fertilizer evenly
- Fertilize your lawn every 6-8 weeks during the growing season starting in February until late September when your lawn starts to show yellowing after mowing
- Apply a winter fertilizer between Thanksgiving and Christmas
- There are many different fertilizer formulas to use, whichever one you chose, it is best to use one that says "50% Slow Release"
- Apply gypsum or lime to your lawn every year in January or February at the rate of 50 pounds per 1,000 square feet
- Apply moss control when needed, in January through March

Weeding

- Use a broadleaf weed killer to spot spray weeds as needed or 2-3 times during the growing season
- For Poa Trivialis, use a preemergent labeled specifically for that use

Shrub Care Procedures

Pruning

- Pruning can occur at different times of the year for different plants
- Late summer and fall blooming plants should be pruned in the spring
- Spring and early summer blooming plants should be pruned after flowering
- If evergreen plants are pruned too early in the spring or too late in the summer, new growth can be damaged by frost or cold wind
- Be sure to use sharp tools for pruning

Watering

- Train your shrubs to use less water provided by you as they grow older by providing less watering time from the irrigation system
- When you begin watering in the spring, water one day per week
- As the weather warms, additional days may be added but avoid watering consecutive days until needed
- Water 2-5 minutes for spray type sprinklers and 6-10 minutes for rotor type sprinklers
- For the best use of your water, water between 4:00 and 7:00 AM when the temperature is cooler and the wind is calm

Irrigation System Care Procedures

Winterizing

- In the jumbo valve box located near your water meter, shut off the gate valve on your backflow device and open the drain valve to release the pressure off the main line
- At the irrigation controller, manually run each valve station for one minute to release excess water in the valve assembly
- This procedure should be done in November

Activating

- In the jumbo valve box located near your water meter, close the drain valve and turn on the gate valve on your backflow device slowly to avoid water hammer
- At the irrigation controller, replace the 9 volt battery in the controller, this does not run the controller during a power outage, but it keeps the memory of the program for when power would come back on