

## ***MAINTAINING YOUR HOME***

In order to preserve the quality of your Alliance Development Services (ADS), Inc. home, you will need to provide regular maintenance and care for your home. Understanding how to care for your house could prevent costly repairs and replacements in the future. This section provides a guideline for maintenance on some of the features of your house. The maintenance recommended does not necessarily address one hundred percent of the maintenance needs of your home, but rather is intended to provide you with an indication of some of the typical tips that should be employed.

This section is divided into separate components of your home that require different levels of care. It is important for you to become familiar with all aspects of preventative care and maintenance because as a homeowner you are primarily responsible for maintaining and caring for your home.

Many of the items found throughout your home are considered “manufactured” items, or components that were originally built offsite and have now been installed into your home. The manufacturers of these items provide warranty manuals or guidelines for proper use of their product. You should thoroughly read all warranty and maintenance guidelines provided to you by the manufacturers. These warranties are at the back of your Manual.

### Homeowner’s Obligations (CA Civil Code § 907)

A homeowner is obligated to follow all reasonable maintenance obligations and schedules communicated in writing to the homeowner by builder and product manufacturers, as well as commonly accepted maintenance practices. A failure by a homeowner to follow these obligations, schedules, and practices may subject the homeowner to the affirmative defenses contained in section 944 of the California Civil Code.

## *Index*

Appliances.....	Page 3
Cabinets.....	Page 4
Caulking.....	Page 5
Concrete.....	Page 6
Countertops/Showers (Ceramic Tile).....	Page 7
Countertops/Showers (Natural Stones).....	Page 9
Doors.....	Page 10
Drywall.....	Page 12
Electrical.....	Page 13
Fireplaces.....	Page 14
Flooring.....	Page 15
Grading & Drainage.....	Page 17
Granite Countertops.....	Page 19
Heating & Air Conditioning.....	Page 20
Landscape & Irrigation.....	Page 22
Mirrors.....	Page 23
Paint (Interior).....	Page 24
Paint (Exterior).....	Page 25
Plumbing.....	Page 26
Roofing.....	Page 29
Stucco.....	Page 30
Trim.....	Page 31
Tubs and Shower Enclosures.....	Page 32
Windows.....	Page 33

## **APPLIANCES**

Cosmetic imperfections in surface of appliances are not covered after the homeowner occupies the home; all imperfections must be reported and noted during the walk through.

The appliances installed throughout your home are considered manufactured items. The appliances were built offsite and then delivered and installed into your home. The manufacturer will provide you with Instruction Booklets and Owner's Manuals. Be sure to read all manuals provided to you thoroughly before operating your appliances. Your instruction booklet will provide answers to many common problems, maintenance guidelines, and general instructions for the operation of your appliances. By following the instructions you will be able to prevent and solve many problems without needing to call a serviceman. However, if a problem persists, and cannot be solved by the trouble-shooting tips in your manual, you should contact the service department.

The manufacturer provides the warranties on your appliances. To validate the warranty on your appliances you must follow the instructions provided in your Owner's Manuals.

*Note! Before calling for service-have you tripped a circuit breaker?*

If a service tech informs you that they cannot help you and that the reported problem is an issue for another trade to resolve, please have the tech put their reasons in writing on the service sheet that they leave with you. Please then forward this service sheet to the Warranty Department at Alliance Development Services, Inc.

If a service tech deems your appliance defective and there is damage to surrounding cabinets, flooring, etc. then you must file a claim directly to have any repairs made (or you can contact your homeowner insurance company).

## **CABINETS**

The color of your cabinets will vary from the samples that you may have viewed before purchasing your home. The color variation is due to the wood grain and stains used on your cabinets; no two wood grains will be exactly the same. Typically, doors have 2, 3 and 4 panels all glued together. These grains can stain differently and can vary the color in the same door. Color variation is to be expected and does not take away from the beauty of your cabinets.

Cracked, chipped, scratched, drawer adjustments or other cosmetic imperfections in surface of cabinets are not covered after the homeowner occupies the home; all imperfections must be reported and noted during the walk through.

### *Maintenance Alert!*

The cabinets in your house are designed to withhold a normal amount of weight. Do not overload cabinet shelves or drawers. You should not store excessively heavy items in the cabinets. If a large amount of weight is stored in the cabinets, the cabinet might pull away from the wall and ceiling which would create an expanding gap. If you notice the appearance of a gap between the cabinets and ceiling, you should evaluate what is being stored in the cabinets and what should be removed to relieve the strain on your cabinets.

Hinges might require periodic adjustments or lubrication for proper door operation. If the hinges become sluggish, try using a lead pencil or graphite tube on the hinge. Alliance Development Services, Inc. does not recommend the use of oil lubricants on the hinges, because oil-based lubricants can attract dust and intensify the problem or even ruin the appearance of your cabinets.

The cabinets in your home need to be treated with the same care as fine wood furniture. Daily or periodic care should consist of wiping the cabinets with a cloth and furniture polish. Do not use abrasive cleaners or soap and water, as these chemicals can damage your cabinets.

Minor scratches can be covered with a putty stick or almond stick that matches the finish of your cabinets. Putty sticks and almond sticks can be purchased at any hardware store. Scratches and blemishes should be repaired to the best degree as possible. Replacing a cabinet door or drawer is the least desirable option because matching a door or drawer and stain color is a very difficult task. The stain used on your cabinets is difficult to replicate, and a cabinet door or drawer with a different shade of stain could be less attractive than the original condition of the component.

## CAULKING

You should inspect the caulking around your sink tops, tubs, ceramic tile and baseboards every six months. Caulking can dry out or shrink in dry, warm weather. When caulking shrinks or dries out, the caulking no longer provides a good seal against moisture and will need to be replaced. Daily use of your bathtubs, showers and sinks will eventually erode the caulking and a reapplication could be necessary. It is both necessary and very important for you to inspect the caulking in your house in order to prevent leaks and water penetration.

Caulking may become permanently discolored or stained over time. The best solution to correcting stained caulking is to remove the old caulking and reapply new caulking. You can purchase caulk remover and mildew proof caulking products at any hardware store. Be sure to apply caulking to dry surfaces and follow the instructions provided with any caulk that you purchase.

There are three (3) basic types of caulking: silicone, butyl and latex.

- Silicone Caulk: For use on metal, glass, tile and other smooth and non-porous surfaces. Best suited for dissimilar materials.
- Butyl/Rubber Caulk: For use on concrete block and brick, and chimneys. Best for high moist areas.
- Latex (Acrylic) Caulk: For use on wood sidings, around windows and doors. Good for interior caulking, and is available for both exterior and interior grades.

### *Maintenance Alert!*

Daily use of your tub, shower or sinks will constitute a need for occasional re-caulking. This is a normal homeowner duty and should be done to avoid excessive wear and tear.

***Note: Cracking and shrinking of caulking after you take possession of your home is normal and is not considered a warrantable item.***

## CONCRETE

Concrete is a major structural material used in your home and requires preventive care. When it comes to concrete, there is one fact that all homeowners, builders and tradespersons must realize: **CONCRETE WILL CRACK**. Concrete walkways and driveways are constructed with joints that create a weakened plane or thinner section of concrete. The purpose of these control joints is to control and contain the cracking to specific areas, i.e. the thinner section. Therefore cracks in control joints are a normal occurrence and are considered acceptable. In addition, cracks can and will occur outside the control joint. The degree to which concrete cracks or the deviations in vertical displacement are the determining criteria as to whether or not the cracking is unacceptable or within industry standards. There are many reasons that concrete products crack and most are not related to any structural problems.

In some cases, there is edge deterioration but this does not affect structural integrity or durability. Any cracking that is not accompanied by vertical displacement will be considered aesthetic and is not outside the parameters of normal concrete standards. For cracks with a vertical displacement more than ¼” but less than ½”, the repair will entail filling the crack with concrete and feathering out the patch to achieve a surface slope of 1% or less. For cracks with over ½” vertical displacement the concrete section will be removed and replaced to the nearest joint line. Alliance Development Services, Inc. cannot be responsible for color variations between old and new concrete if repairs are made. A non-uniform surface color on concrete is considered acceptable through industry standards. Repaired or replaced concrete may not have a uniform appearance. The basic intent is to restore strength and durability and to make the concrete safe. Colors, textures and finishes may vary even with our best efforts. Over time (usually 2 years) the non-uniform color will gradually become uniform as the surface of the concrete reacts to the air.

### *Maintenance Alert!*

Cracks that occur at control joints are to be maintained by the Homeowner. This maintenance consists of filling the crack with a suitable waterproof concrete caulk to prevent moisture from penetrating to the soil beneath.

There are some preventable elements that can cause cracks or discoloration of concrete. You should remove any plant growth in the expansion joints of the concrete immediately. The roots can cause cracks or other damage to the concrete; therefore you should remove any plant growth as soon as the growth is noticed.

Concrete should be kept free of dirt, oil, grease and debris to prevent discoloration. Special cleaners are available at hardware stores for removing grease and oil spots from concrete. Be sure to remove oil and grease stains promptly to prevent permanent discoloration.

Do not allow water to stay on any concrete flatwork or near the foundation. You need to insure that proper drainage away from the foundation and flatwork is maintained. Do not alter the surrounding areas of your house in any way that might cause water to drain towards the house. Landscaping should be installed in a manner that does not allow water to drain towards the foundation or concrete flatwork. More information will follow in the Landscaping section of this manual. Water should drain away from the foundation.

## **CONCRETE (CONT.)**

All landscaping and irrigation should be installed as to minimize water contact with the foundation and all concrete flatwork. Alliance Development Services, Inc. has the following recommendations to help achieve minimal water contact with concrete: place the sprinkler spray heads such that they spray away from all foundation and flatwork; use bubbler heads in lieu of spray heads in all areas adjacent to the foundation, and finally, do not plant lawn or sod adjacent to the foundation or flatwork.

The driveway and walkways in your home are designed for residential use and are not meant to withstand heavy loads. Do not allow large trucks or delivery vans to use your driveway and walkways.

The white powdery substance (known as efflorescence) that appears on concrete surfaces is caused by lime in the cement reacting with moisture. It is considered acceptable and can easily be removed with a mild vinegar and water solution.

## COUNTERTOPS/SHOWERS

### *CERAMIC TILE*

Ceramic Tile is a relatively brittle material that can become damaged when hit with a hard or blunt object. The ceramic tile installed throughout your home has been inspected by Alliance Development Services, Inc. employees prior to your walk-through and should be free of any cracks or damages. The grout used for your countertops is susceptible to cracking at the joints, a condition that is considered normal in the industry.

Please pay careful attention to the ceramic tile during your walk-through because any cracked, chipped, scratched or other cosmetic imperfections in surfaces of ceramic tile and re-grouting after you move in will be your responsibility to repair.

#### *Maintenance Alert!*

Ceramic tile requires occasional cleaning with warm water and mild detergents. After washing ceramic tile, you should rinse the tile with warm water and wipe clean with a soft cloth. Ceramic tile requires little maintenance other than cleaning however; the grout in between the tile requires more care.

Grout is a porous substance and will absorb moisture and grease that can cause stains and discoloration. To clean the grout, use a bristle brush and a grout cleaner. Use a mild bleaching solution only if the grout becomes stained. Strong cleaners can stain the grout, so be sure to use mild cleaners.

**ADS does not seal your grout.** You should seal the grout with a silicone-based sealer once a year. Sealing the grout will help to prevent leaks, stains and discoloration. The action of sealing your grout will also improve the overall appearance of your countertops and showers.

We urge you to take special care of your ceramic tile, as replacing ceramic tile with an exact color match is difficult. Please be sure to use caution to avoid breaking or damaging the ceramic tile because tile is a relatively brittle material and can be damaged when hit by a hard object. If a tile should come loose for reasons other than homeowner actions or negligence, Alliance Development Services, Inc. will reinstall the tile during the one year fit and finish warranty. If replacing tile is necessary, the new tile might vary in color from the original tile.

## **COUNTERTOPS/SHOWERS (Continued)**

### *NATURAL STONES (GRANITE, MARBLE, TRAVERTINE)*

These are natural materials that have varying patterns, veining, and colors. It is virtually impossible to ensure that any particular countertop or shower will have color or pattern consistency. These are inherent in the material and contribute to their natural beauty and appearance.

Please pay careful attention to the natural stone during your walk-through because any cracked, chipped, scratched or other cosmetic imperfections in surfaces after you move in will be your responsibility to repair.

#### *Maintenance Alert!*

Natural stones should be cleaned only with approved cleaners to avoid removing the polished surface.

Natural stones do absorb water and depending on their use can discolor if not allowed to dry. For example, when used in a shower, natural stones will discolor as water is absorbed into the material, particularly at the grout joints. If showering is more frequent and the material has less chance to dry, color variation will be a normal recurring event. The lighter the color and the specific softness and porosity of the material will affect the color variation significantly.

Since separations or cracks in the cement filler or “grout” between tiles are not covered by this warranty, repairing the filler can be easily fixed and should be done to prevent leaks. Prepared grout is readily available at paint and hardware stores. To repair, scrape out the loose grout, fill with new grout, wipe any excess off tile or fixtures and allow the substance to dry thoroughly per manufacturer’s recommendations. Do not wash excess grout down the drain, it could clog the drain and necessitate costly repairs. Since expansion and contraction may continue throughout the life of your home, continual cracking should be maintained with a flexible caulking.

Natural stone is susceptible to staining from alcohol, especially perfumes, or from hard water remaining on the surface for too long. Natural stone is susceptible to scratching from abrasive cleaners. Both stains and scratches should be avoided.

You should seal the grout with a silicone-based sealer once a year. Sealing the grout will help to prevent leaks, stains and discoloration. The action of sealing your grout will also improve the overall appearance of your countertops and showers.

## **DOORS (EXTERIOR)**

Your home has been built so that uncontrolled water should not pass beyond the secondary moisture barrier of the door or the door assembly. The door assembly installation shall integrate building systems and components to provide primary and secondary moisture barriers to control unintended water. Water is intended to be collected by door thresholds and subsequently drain away.

Doors shall meet the wind/rain door ratings appropriate to the location and conditions of the site. Doors must be fully closed and latched in order not to leak in your area's normal weather conditions. However, it should be anticipated that some water might pass beyond a door in a storm event that produces excessive wind-driven rain or flooding. It is not considered a violation of this standard under such conditions.

In addition, it is anticipated that water may enter at the sill of a pedestrian garage door, as the side door to your garage was not intended to prevent water from entering your garage in all circumstances. A sill was not installed at the base of the door. Your garage area is not intended as living space. We recommend that you store belongings in the garage on shelves or otherwise off the floor, keeping in mind that water may enter the floor of the garage. We also recommend that you sweep water back out of the garage when rainy weather causes water to enter.

### *Maintenance Alert!*

Proper maintenance includes monitoring and restoring caulking and weather stripping. Protected areas include the door and door frames. Some caulking and weather stripping may deteriorate over time. Periodically check your caulking to insure that it has not dried and cracked or fallen out. The rate of deterioration depends on the amount of exposure to the elements. It is the homeowners responsibility to check and repair damaged or loose weather stripping around your doors and windows. Reattach the weather stripping if it becomes loose and replace it if it becomes torn or no longer makes an effective seal.

## **DOORS (INTERIOR)**

Alliance Development Services Inc. uses standard doors and frames manufactured as complete assemblies that are a set industry size and are pre-hung prior to installation or purchase of any flooring. Accordingly, depending upon the thickness or height of your flooring, the space beneath your door may vary from door to door and surface to surface. These doors and frames are standard throughout the industry and are not tailored to varying flooring height or thickness.

### *Maintenance Alert!*

The doors and doorframes in your house are made of wood or wood composite. During extreme dry or humid conditions the wood can swell, warp, crack or separate. This is to be expected and might even go away after the weather conditions change. The exterior doors are likely to be weathered quickly and might require resurfacing. Before you make any adjustments on your doors, be sure to wait through one dry and one wet season first. Waiting through the first year of wet and dry seasons will allow you to become familiar with the characteristics of the wood that your doors are made of.

Small cracks may appear in the door joints during the dry season. The cracks may disappear during the winter months, but if they do not, they can be easily filled with wood putty or filler from the hardware store.

A sticking door may be fixed in many ways. If the sticking is minor, first apply either a paste wax, a light coat of paraffin wax, candle wax or soap to the sticking surface. Another method is to tighten the screws that hold the doorjamb or doorframe in place. Should the door continue to bind, use sandpaper and lightly sand where the door binds. Wipe clean and then paint over the sanded area.

To fix a squeaking door hinge, remove the hinge pin and rub it with a lead pencil or lubricate it with a graphite tube. Oil is not a preferable method because it accumulates dust and grease around the hinge.

Doorknobs that are frequently used can become loose. To fix a loose doorknob, you should tighten any screws that are loose as soon as you notice the problem.

To remove any finger smudges or dirt from the door, simply wash the door with warm water and a soft cloth or sponge. Follow by drying off the door with a towel.

## **DRYWALL**

The walls in your home are constructed with drywall (Gypsum wallboard). Alliance Development Services, Inc. has made every effort to minimize the necessary joints where sheets of drywall meet to form seams. The seams can never be completely concealed and might be visible in certain lights.

The walls in your new home are constructed of wood, metal and other materials, which are subject to normal expansion and contraction and occasionally can get “bowed”. Typically, interior walls have different finishes; some of which can make “bowed” walls appear greater than they are.

Please be aware that drywall has seams that may be visible in certain lights. Alliance Development Services, Inc. has made every effort to minimize the number of seams and to conceal the necessary joints. As the house settles, the drywall seams may become more visible and cause nails to protrude from the walls, which are called “nail pops.” The “nail pops” are considered acceptable and can easily be repaired by you, the homeowner. The texture on your walls and ceilings is done in an artistic manner and is unique to each home. Dimples, blotches, tool marks or other irregularities do not affect the performance of your drywall. Any irregularities should be viewed from a distance of greater than six feet under normal lighting conditions. If more than 10% of the wall contains irregularities that are visible from six feet away, ADS, Inc. will make the necessary repairs to the texture to provide a more uniform appearance. Please note that you must report all irregularities in the texture during the walk through, and all irregularities must be viewed under the circumstances described above.

### *Maintenance Alert!*

As the lumber shrinks and the house settles, the drywall seams might become more visible and nails might protrude slightly from the wall. If the nails become visible, simply tap them into the wall with a hammer. The nail can be covered with a drywall joint compound that can be purchased at any paint or hardware store. Apply two to three thin coats of the drywall joint compound and sand lightly with fine sandpaper prior to painting. Finish the repair by painting the wall.

We recommend that you wait to repair any cracks or nails until you redecorate for the first time.

## **ELECTRICAL SYSTEM**

The electrical system in your home was designed and installed by professionals to comply with local building codes. Do not allow anyone other than a licensed electrician to alter the wiring in your home. Any changes made to your electrical system may void your warranty and can cause damage to your home.

**Circuit Breakers** are switches that automatically stop the flow of an electric current when a circuit becomes overloaded. A breaker that becomes overloaded by an excessive amount of electricity will “trip.” If the power is lost in only one area of your home, but the power is still on in other areas, then a circuit breaker has been tripped. To reset a circuit breaker, go to the location of the breaker panel. You should then locate the tripped breaker, flip the breaker switch to the OFF position momentarily, and then place the switch to the ON position. If any circuit trips repeatedly, unplug all items connected to it and reset. If it trips when nothing is connected to it, you need an electrician. If the circuit remains on, one of the items you unplugged is defective and will require repair or replacement. If the power is off throughout your entire home, you should contact your local provider to report the problem.

**Ground Fault Interrupt Devices (GFI)** are outlets that are very sensitive and can be found in bathrooms and kitchens. These outlets are designed to trip easily in the event of a short circuit. Ground Fault Interrupt Devices are designed to prevent electrical shock in areas near water. Do not use these outlets to plug in power tools, timing devices or heavy appliances such as refrigerators and freezers. To restore electricity in a tripped GFI circuit you must reset the circuit by pushing the buttons on the face of the outlet.

**Smoke Detectors** in your house should be tested periodically to provide you, the Homeowner, the comfort that they are functional. Never remove the battery or shut off the power to your alarm. The smoke detector is designed to operate on the house electrical system with a battery-powered backup in case of a power failure. The alarm will not work without a battery, and will beep when the battery needs to be replaced. Rechargeable batteries should not be used in your smoke detector. Any dust on the smoke alarm should be cleaned once a month. A warranty manual will be provided with your smoke detector from the manufacturer. The manufacturer, not Alliance Development Services, Inc. provides the warranty of the smoke detector alarm.

## **FIREPLACES**

Please refer to your Care & Operations Manual provided by the Manufacturer for the specific guidelines of proper use and maintenance of your fireplace. Read the Care & Operations Manual thoroughly before you first use your fireplace.

Alliance Development Services, Inc. urges you to use your fireplace with caution. We recommend that you use your fireplace only for small fires, as larger fires can cause abnormal cracking or overheating of the brickwork and severe damage. Regular usage of your fireplace might cause the firebox to discolor or have slight variations in color. This is normal wear and tear from burning fires.

Your fireplace is equipped with a screen and glass doors. These should be used at all times to prevent hot embers from exiting the fireplace into your home. The flue damper has been affixed in a permanently open position to comply with local building codes. When the fireplace is not in use, you should keep the fireplace doors closed to prevent loss of heat or air conditioning.

Your fireplace is intended to provide beauty, style and warmth to your home. The following are suggestions to keep you and your family safe.

- Never light a fire using kerosene, charcoal lighter fluid or other flammable liquids.
- Always use a fire grate inside of the fireplace. Never place the fire directly on the floor inside of the fireplace. The fire grate allows air to circulate under the fire properly.
- Keep the fireplace screen doors closed whenever burning a fire.
- Never leave the fire unattended. Be sure to extinguish the fire before going to sleep or leaving your home. □
- Never burn trash in your fireplace or use your fireplace as an incinerator. □
- Use firewood that is intended for burning in a residential fireplace. Never burn construction lumber that has been painted or treated with chemicals.
- Clean out the ashes in your fireplace periodically. Be sure that the ashes are cold before removing them. If the ashes are hot they can hurt you or ignite another fire once placed in a different receptacle.
- Have your chimney inspected and cleaned periodically by a professional chimney cleaner. If you use your fireplace regularly, you should have the chimney cleaned annually to remove buildup and prevent flue fires.

## FLOORING

Inspect your flooring very carefully during your walk through appointment. Any imperfections or damages need to be reported immediately during the walk through. After you move into your home it is your responsibility to care for the flooring and to provide routine maintenance. Signature Interiors is the flooring subcontractor whom Alliance Development Services, Inc. has a contractual agreement to install flooring. Signature Interiors will provide you with a Warranty Booklet that will give you information on special care instructions.

## CARPETING

You might notice the appearance of seams in the carpet when you first walk through your house. Do not be alarmed, seams are not defects. Most rooms will have visible carpet seams. After the home is furnished and the carpet has had time to mesh together, the seams will become less visible. The visibility of such seams will vary depending on the material chosen. The looser the face yarn is (i.e. frizzee or shag) the less the seams will show. The tighter the weave (i.e. berber) the more visible the joint.

### *Maintenance Alert!*

The carpeting throughout your home should be vacuumed frequently to avoid buildup of dirt or grime. Loose carpet fibers may appear for some time after you move into the home. The carpet is “fluffing,” or shedding loose fibers that need to be vacuumed as part of your routine cleaning. Remove spills and stains immediately from the carpet. Stains will remove easier if they are taken care of promptly. At least once a year the carpets should be cleaned thoroughly. Proper care of the carpeting will help to preserve the original beauty of your flooring.

## CERAMIC TILE

Please pay careful attention to the ceramic tile during your walk-through because any cracked, chipped, scratched or other cosmetic imperfections in surfaces of ceramic tile and re-grouting after you move in will be your responsibility to repair. Hard surfaces are not always perfectly level and flat. Industry standard is 1/4” over a horizontal distance of 10’.

### *Maintenance Alert!*

Ceramic tile is normally used for flooring in the entryway, kitchen and bathrooms. Ceramic tile should be swept on a regular basis to eliminate any dirt and should be mopped using a mild detergent to remove any spills or stains.

Grout is a porous substance and will absorb moisture and grease that can cause stains and discoloration. To clean the grout, use a bristle brush and a very mild scouring powder. Use a mild bleaching solution only if the grout becomes stained. Strong cleaners can stain the grout, so be sure to use mild cleaners.

**ADS does not seal your grout.** You should seal the grout with a silicone-based sealer once a year. Sealing the grout will help to prevent leaks, stains and discoloration. The action of sealing your grout will also improve the overall appearance of your tile.

## **FLOORING (Continued)**

We urge you to take special care of your ceramic tile, as replacing ceramic tile with an exact color match is difficult. Please be sure to use caution to avoid breaking or damaging the ceramic tile because tile is a relatively brittle material and can be damaged when hit by a hard object. If a tile should come loose for reasons other than homeowner actions or negligence, Alliance Development Services, Inc. will reinstall the tile during the one year fit and finish warranty. If replacing tile is necessary, the new tile might vary in color from the original tile.

## **BARE FLOOR CLOSING**

If you chose to use your own flooring subcontractor, you should contact that company for any special care instructions and warranty guidelines.

Please be advised that once your flooring subcontractor removes your dishwasher, toilet and plumbing fixtures certain aspects of your plumbing warranty will no longer be covered. We recommend that you contract directly with Alliance Development Services, Inc.'s plumbing subcontractor for removal in order to avoid changes in your warranty coverage.

When using your own flooring subcontractor, please be sure that the underlayment is installed properly before having the hard surface flooring is installed. If the underlayment is not properly installed, the flooring will be vulnerable to cracking as the foundation settles.

Hard surfaces and slabs are not always perfectly level and flat. Industry standard is 1/4" over a horizontal distance of 10'. Your subcontractor should be careful to prepare the floor surface properly prior to installation of any flooring (i.e. filling of minor cracks, grinding uneven surfaces and slip sheeting/ underlayment).

## **GRADING & DRAINAGE**

Your lot has been carefully engineered to standards established by local governmental agencies to insure drainage of rain and irrigation water. These agencies have inspected and accepted the grading of your lot. Failure to maintain positive drainage can cause structural failures in your home or financial liability to neighboring property owners. Installation or alteration of landscaping will affect drainage and become the sole responsibility of the homeowner.

Most drainage problems result from interference with the flow of surface water. Your lot was properly graded to ensure that water will run away from the house and off of the lot by means of drainage swales or drains. All lots use an underground pipe drainage system. These systems require routine homeowner maintenance to insure that the inlets remain clean and free from obstructions that can block drainage.

It is recommended that a civil engineer approves all landscaping plans and improvements, and that any homeowner-landscaping contract includes language that insures positive drainage.

***Caution! Your Builder is not responsible for any problems if the grade is changed.***

In order to guide you, we have prepared some Do's and Don'ts that should be followed in maintaining your home site.

### **Do's**

1. Patio slabs should be poured to the house foundation (well under the weep screed and with proper felt expansion joints). Whenever possible planting strips between patio and foundation should have proper under slab drainage away from the foundation.
2. Contact your City Building Department prior to making any improvements to your yard for their direction and input.
3. Clear surface and terrace drains and check them frequently during the rainy season. Ask your neighbors to do likewise.
4. Be sure that all drains have clear outlets. Under the right conditions, this can be tested on a dry day with a hose. If blockage is evident, you may have to use a roter.
5. Keep drain inlets clear of debris and other material, which could block them in a storm.
6. Check roof drains and gutters and downspouts to be sure they are clear. Check that all splash blocks are in place and leading the water away from the house.
7. Check all outlets at the top of slopes to be sure that they are clean and that water will not overflow onto the slope, or cause erosion.
8. Check for loose fill above and below your property if you live on a slope or terrace.
9. Watch hoses and sprinklers. During the rainy season little irrigation is required. Saturating the ground is not only unnecessary and wasteful but can cause damage.
10. Do provide drain lines for water flow if installing patio concrete slabs or other landscaping items across drainage swales.

## **GRADING & DRAINAGE (Continued)**

### **Don'ts**

1. Don't block terrace drains or brow ditches on slopes or at the tops of slopes. These are generally located on terraces and designed to carry away runoff to a place where water can be safely distributed. Generally, a little shovel and rake work will remove any accumulation of dirt and other debris, which clog the drain. If several homes are located on the same terrace, it might be a good idea to check with your neighbors. Water backed up on surface drains will tend to overflow and seep into the terraces, creating less stable slopes.
2. Don't allow water to gather above or on the edge of slopes, also known as ponding. Water ponding will tend to either seep into the ground, loosening fill or natural ground, or will overflow on the slope and begin erosion. Once erosion is started, it is difficult to control. Erosion spreads quickly.
3. Don't drop loose fill over slopes. Loose fill is not compacted to the same strength as the slope itself and will tend to slide with heavy moisture. The sliding may clog terrace drains or may cause additional damage in weakening the slope. If you live below a slope, try to be sure that loose fill is not dumped on the slope.
4. Don't over-irrigate slopes. Ground cover requires some moisture during the hot summer months, but during the wet season, irrigation can cause ground cover to pull loose, which not only destroys the cover, but also starts serious erosion.
5. Don't try to compress or compact backfill behind walls near slopes by flooding them.
6. Don't leave a hose or sprinkler running on or near a slope, particularly during the rainy season. This will enhance ground saturation and may cause slippage or expansion.
7. Don't block flow from splash blocks by landscaping header boards or sidewalks.
8. Don't block drain swales or drain inlets with sod or debris of any kind.
9. Don't fill the swale with loose dirt left over when digging out for postholes, landscaping or footings. A swale is a surface path for seasonal water flow to allow rainwater to flow away from the house out toward the street.
10. Don't place plants that require a lot of water close to your foundation. Some soils are very expansive and will expand when wet. It is advisable to never allow the soil close to your house to get excessively damp and always make certain that if it does get wet, it drains quickly and is allowed to dry out.

To avoid dry rot and termite trouble, keep all earth deposits at least six (6") inches below any untreated wood construction, and sloping away from the structure to prevent water from draining into the house or garage or under a platform.

## GRANITE COUNTERTOPS

Granite is a durable stone substance used for the countertops and back splash in your kitchen. Granite has many varying colors and patterns, making every countertop unique with its own individual pattern. The durability of granite is unlike any other countertop surface. Granite can retain its original shine if properly maintained. It can become damaged from daily use if hard objects are dropped on it or if inordinately heavy materials are placed on extruded pieces. You might notice small pits and imperfections in the granite. These pits and imperfections are a characteristic of the stone and cannot be prevented. They do not alter the quality of your granite in any way. Stone slabs come in varying lengths and are sometimes installed without seams. However, depending on the quarry or other source, pieces will come in various lengths and widths. **ADS cannot guarantee where seams will be located regardless of what is shown in the models.**

### *Maintenance Alert!*

Caring for your granite countertop requires cleaning with soap and water, or products like glass cleaners. Since granite is a porous material, you should wipe up any spills immediately. Water and oil will leave stains if these substances are spilled and are not cleaned after long periods of time. Water can leave dark spots on the granite that eventually fade and disappear over time as the water evaporates. Oil stains will naturally redistribute throughout the stone until the stains become unnoticeable. While these stains can disappear or lessen over time, the best maintenance is prevention. In order to prevent any unsightly spots or stains, you should not allow any water or other substances to remain on your countertops.

## HEATING & AIR CONDITIONING

The heating and air conditioning system installed in your home is a manufactured item that has been built to meet local and state energy codes. The subcontractor that installed your system will provide you with the Warranty Manual and instruction booklet. Please read these guides thoroughly before operating your new heating and air conditioning system. You must validate the warranty on the heating and air conditioning system by following the instructions provided to you by the manufacturer. The subcontractor provides the warranty, and can be reached in case of emergency 24 hours a day at the number listed in the warranty. It is important for you, and everyone living in the house, to learn how to shut off the gas to your house both at the meter and at the supply line to your heating unit.

All non-urgent warranty items should be submitted in writing to Alliance Development Services, Inc. as stated in the warranty procedure section of this manual. If water is observed dripping in front of a window from the secondary condensation line, it is likely that the primary line is plugged. If this occurs, notify Alliance Development Services Warranty Department to allow for service.

### *Maintenance Alert!*

The following checklist is created to assist you in troubleshooting:

- 1) Check to make sure thermostat is set properly
- 2) Make sure breakers are turned on
- 3) Check the disconnect to make sure it is on
- 4) Check dampers behind the registers to make sure they are open
- 5) Temperature variations in hot climates can occur from room to room up to 5-8°

There are several things that can be done prolong the life of your heating and air conditioning unit. By maintaining an even temperature year round, you will help to minimize or prevent the expansion and contraction of building materials in your home. Set the temperature at a level that is comfortable to you. The thermostat does not necessarily register the exact temperature in the house. Whenever you are away from home, we recommend that you conserve energy by setting the thermostat at a higher temperature for the air conditioner and a lower temperature for the heater.

In rooms that have the potential for high heat gain, such as rooms with a large number of windows facing east and west, the homeowner should provide effective solar blockage such as insulated drapes or blinds in order to meet performance guidelines.

Use as little heat as you possibly can in the first winter season that you occupy your house to avoid overheating. If you overheat your house, the framing lumber may shrink and cause excessive settling, such as cracking in the drywall. Likewise, be sure to use cooling during the summer months to avoid excessive cracking.

## **HEATING & AIR CONDITIONING (CONT.)**

The filters in your heating and air-conditioning system need to be changed every three months, or according to the directions provided by the manufacturer. Keep all vents clean and free of dust and debris. You might notice a distinct smell when you first operate the heater each year. The smell is normal and will disappear after a few minutes of use. We recommend that you have the furnace inspected and serviced prior to using your heater each season and concurrently you should have your air conditioning system serviced prior to each hot season. It is much easier to obtain a qualified technician prior to than during the season.

Most air conditioning systems feature a double drainage system. The primary drain is connected into your main plumbing system. An auxiliary (secondary) or back-up drain from your air conditioner is tied into a pipe leading outside your home. While this drain acts as a back-up system, it also can be considered a “red flag” warning that your primary drain is not functioning properly. If you notice water coming from the auxiliary (secondary) drain, you should have the primary drainage system inspected.

**Important:** Your warranty does not include cleaning or changing filters, adjusting thermostats, cleaning condenser coils, problems caused by insects, rodents or debris in equipment, or tripped breakers.

## LANDSCAPING/IRRIGATION

A licensed landscaping subcontractor has installed the landscaping in the front yard of your lot and followed guidelines provided by Landscape Architects and Civil Engineers to insure proper rain and irrigation drainage. The plants in your front yard correspond with the regulations set forth by the Homeowner's Association. Plant material is not covered under your home warranty agreement.

The backyard landscaping is your responsibility. Should you choose to install landscaping, you will need to be aware of the grading and water drainage. Do not install plants that require a lot of water close to the foundation and flatwork. The soil close to the foundation and flatwork should never become excessively damp, and water should always drain away from the house. Water damage can cause serious problems to your foundation and house.

Landscaping and irrigation should be installed as to minimize the amount of water contact with the foundation and flatwork. Do not plant lawn, or lay sod adjacent to the foundation and/or concrete flatwork. Use bubbler heads for your sprinklers in lieu of spray heads in all areas adjacent to the foundations. Direct any sprinkler spray heads away from the foundation and flatwork.

Proper water drainage is very important. Carefully plan the landscaping with drainage and grading in mind. Landscaping which affects the grading must have an alternate route of drainage. You should contact a civil engineer or professional landscape contractor if you have any questions about irrigation drainage.

Common walls should not have landscaping placed near or on the walls. The water used for maintaining landscape can damage the grading surrounding the wall, which in turn damages the wall.

Provide ample room for plants to grow in between other plants and your house. After each planting, watch the irrigation flow for proper drainage away from the house. The irrigation system should not spray water directly onto the house. Continuous water can damage the stucco or other elements of your home.

Alliance Development Services, Inc. recommends watering your lawn property in the morning or in the evenings for water conservation. **Avoid excessive watering that can cause the soil to erode.**

Some lots may include a system of underground drainage with grates/inlets that allow water to flow into a piped drainage system. **Make sure that the grates and inlets are maintained and kept free of debris.**

Your Homeowner's Association will provide more guidelines for you to follow in the process of landscaping.

## **MIRRORS**

Alliance Development Services, Inc. has meticulously inspected the mirrors installed in your home for scratches and chips. Mirrors with defects are considered unacceptable and have been removed and replaced prior to your walk-through inspection. Because mirrors are man-made materials, they are subject to becoming scratched or broken if a foreign object strikes the glass.

Please pay careful attention to the mirrors during your walk-through because any imperfections found after you move in will be your responsibility to repair or replace.

### *Maintenance Alert!*

When cleaning a mirror, use caution when using cleansers that contain ammonia or vinegar. Ammonia and vinegar are excellent glass cleaners, however they can be extremely damaging to the metallic backing of the mirror. Also, do not allow cleaners to go over the top, sides or to get into the track at the bottom of the mirror. Manufacturers often recommend applying cleaning agents to a cloth, and then wiping down the mirror.

## **PAINT**

### **Interior Walls**

The walls and ceilings have been painted with flat paint. The kitchen, bathroom, trim and interior doors have been painted with enamel or low sheen paint. Normal wear and tear of the home is to be expected, and your walls will need to be repainted by you over time.

Please pay careful attention during your walk through. Cracked, chipped, scratched or other cosmetic imperfections in surfaces are not covered after the homeowner occupies the home; all imperfections must be reported and noted during the walk through.

Alliance Development Services, Inc. cannot be responsible for any color variations between any old and new paint touch ups. Also, should you alter the original paint color, ADS, Inc. will not be responsible for obtaining and matching of paint or other finishes that were not originally supplied and applied by ADS, Inc.

#### *Maintenance Alert!*

Using abrasive cleansers and scrub brushes can damage the texture and paint. Walls should be cleaned using a soft sponge, water and a mild soap. Some flat wall paints are washable, but some are not. Before you clean a wall painted with flat paint, test a small area that is not visible. If the flat paint is not washable, any smudges will then need to be repaired by using touch up paint.

The walls are constructed of wood and are subject to shrinkage and settling. Shrinkage and settling can cause drywall to crack and nails to protrude from the walls. Routine maintenance is necessary to fix these small blemishes. Nails that protrude from the walls will need to be hammered back into the wall. Nail holes and drywall cracks can be filled with drywall putty that can be purchased at any hardware store. Follow the instructions on the packaging for the drywall putty, and finish the repair with paint. We recommend waiting until the first time you redecorate to fix these blemishes to keep the color of the walls uniform. Take caution when hanging any pictures or decorations on the walls. Using picture hooks can prevent large holes in your walls and costly repairs.

## **PAINT**

### **Exterior Walls**

Please pay careful attention during your walk through. Cracked, chipped, scratched or other cosmetic imperfections in surfaces are not covered after the homeowner occupies the home; all imperfections must be reported and noted during the walk through

Alliance Development Services, Inc. cannot be responsible for color variations between old and new paint if repairs are made. Every effort will be made to minimize color variation, but the inherent chemistry prevents a full and complete match. Paint affected by extreme weather conditions that exist in the Coachella Valley are considered a maintenance item and any touch ups required after the original walk through that are cosmetic in nature are considered a homeowner maintenance item.

#### *Maintenance Alert!*

Exterior walls should be monitored closely by you, the homeowner. Natural elements can cause cracks, chipping, peeling or fading, and cannot be prevented in most cases. The climate and exposure to sun and wind are elements that will cause normal wear and tear on the house. Landscaping, however, is an element that can be controlled and should never be allowed to damage the exterior of your house. Sprinklers for the landscaping should be directed away from the house. Excessive water spraying on the exterior walls will cause deterioration of the paint and stucco. You should adjust your sprinklers if you notice the house being continuously sprayed with water. Do not allow landscaping or water to damage the paint.

Maintenance of paint on exterior walls is important, but you should be aware that repairs to paint might cause color variations. If you refer to the stucco section of this manual you will see that a special coating of sealant is used on stucco. The sealant chemical makes matching paint colors virtually impossible. Be proactive when caring for the exterior walls of your house.

The white powdery substance (known as efflorescence) that may appear on stucco walls is caused by lime in the cement reacting with moisture. It is considered acceptable and can easily be removed with a mild vinegar water solution.

More information will be provided in the stucco section of this manual.

## PLUMBING

Learn how to shut off the water to your house as soon as you move in. You will need to know the location of the main water valve as well as individual valves found in the kitchen, bathrooms, and on the water heater. There are water shutoffs located underneath all of the sinks and behind each toilet. Your knowledge of how to shut off the water will be vital in case of a plumbing emergency.

**In the event of a plumbing emergency\*, you should first shut off the water and then immediately call the emergency phone number that was provided in your maintenance manual. By closing the main water shutoff, you will prevent water from flowing into and damaging your home.**

**\*A plumbing emergency would be any of the following: a complete house stoppage, a broken water line to the water heater or behind the house shutoffs, and a leak in the wall or ceiling.**

As a homeowner you have the responsibility to take necessary precautions to protect surrounding areas from water damage and to notify ADS/Plumbing Subcontractor immediately upon noticing any leaks. Failure to take such precautions and provide timely notification could be determined as homeowner negligence.

All non-emergency warranty items should be submitted in writing to ADS as stated in the warranty procedure section of this manual.

### Warranty Timelines

- Stoppages/Clogged Drains (2 weeks from the close of escrow)
- Dripping Faucets/Loose Sink Stoppers (90 days from the close of escrow)
- Running Toilets (90 days from the close of escrow)
- Leaks under the sinks at traps (90 days after the close of escrow)
- Bare Floor Closings (See Flooring Section of this Manual)

### *Maintenance Alert!*

The faucets installed throughout your home have been designed for beauty and efficiency. Faucets should be cleaned with a soft sponge and mild soap. Avoid using abrasive cleansers and scouring pads that can damage the finish. Hard water can leave spots on the faucets. The best solution for hard water spots is to wipe the faucets dry after use. A vinegar-water solution used with a soft sponge or rag can also help to remove hard water spots.

## **PLUMBING (Continued)**

Another component of your faucet that needs to be cared for is the aerator. An aerator is a small grate that is designed to mix air into the water to prevent splashing. The aerator can be found at the end of the faucet where the water is dispensed. Clean the aerator periodically with a soft bristle brush and mild detergent to get rid of any minerals and debris that can build up. You can repair a dripping faucet by shutting off the water at the valve directly under the sink, then removing the faucet stem, changing the washer, and reinstalling the faucet stem.

Bathtubs and shower enclosures will need to be cleaned regularly with bathroom cleaning products purchased over the counter. Avoid using abrasive cleansers that will damage the surface of the bathtubs and shower enclosures. Rinse the shower enclosure walls off after each use as part of your daily routine. The caulking around bathtubs and shower enclosures will need to be inspected and repaired periodically. See the Caulking Section of this manual for further instructions.

Toilets should be cleaned regularly by using a toilet bowl cleaner and a toilet bowl brush. In-Tank toilet bowl cleaners should never be used because they are made of chlorine, or chlorine related materials that can damage the toilets and cause leaks that could damage.

Keep a plunger somewhere in the house in case of a toilet stoppage. Do not use drain cleaners in the event of a stoppage.

Your house is equipped with low flow toilets designed to conserve water. As a result of implementing this standard, flushing twice is occasionally necessary to completely empty the toilet bowl. Even though you flush twice on occasion, rest assured that overall you are saving water. If that does not work then you should resort to the use of a plunger.

Toilet, sink or other plumbing clogs can become the source of leaks, and should be prevented through your proper use and maintenance of these systems. The main causes of toilet clogs are the improper flushing of household items such as disposable diapers, excessive amounts of toilet paper, sanitary supplies, Q-tips, dental floss and children's toys.

### *Note*

**If you plan to be away for an extended period, you should drain your water supply lines and shut off the water supply to your home.** To do this, shut off the main supply line and open faucets to relieve pressure in the lines. You may also wish to shut off the water heater. Do this by turning off the cold water supply valve on top and the gas control at the bottom. Drain the tank by running a hose from the spigot on the bottom. If you leave the tank full, keep the pilot on and set the temperature to its lowest or "vacation" setting. Check the manufacturer's directions for additional hints and instructions. Homes left unoccupied over a long period of time may experience an odor upon return. This is usually caused by the evaporation of water in the traps, allowing sewer gases to enter the home.

## PLUMBING (Continued)

### *Trouble Shooting Guide*

<b>Problem</b>	<b>Probable Cause</b>	<b>Solution</b>
Fill valve turn on/off without toilet being flushed.	No proper slack in flapper chain.	Adjust for proper slack.
	Flush valve flapper is dirty.	Inspect, clean valve and flapper
Fill valve runs continuously.	Dirty fill valve seal.	Shut off water supply; open fill valve cap & clean valve seal.
	Flush valve flapper does not seal properly.	Inspect, clean or adjust flapper position.
Toilet flushes poorly.	Trapway obstructed.	Unclog trapway.
	Supply stop is partially closed.	Open supply top.
	Venting is obstructed.	Clear venting pipe.
	Water supply is too low.	Minimum water supply pressure is 20 psi. Consult your plumber.
Toilet does not flush	Supply stop is closed.	Open supply stop.
	Flush valve chain is loose or disconnected.	Adjust chain length as needed.

## ROOFING

The roof on your house will provide many years of protection if properly maintained. Please do not allow anyone to walk on your roof. The weight of a person can easily break roofing tiles and may allow water intrusion. Roof tiles serve three purposes: they complement the architectural design of your home; help to direct water off of the house down the overlapping materials; and protect the waterproofing membrane of your home.

The weatherproofing system of your home is comprised of the roof tiles, the felt below the roof tiles, and the metal flashing. It is essential that you avoid walking on your roof and refrain from nailing or screwing anything into your roof or fascia. Items that are nailed or screwed into your roof can lead to leaks and costly repairs by compromising the weatherproofing system. Please do not install any items that may damage your roof. If for some reason, it is absolutely necessary to walk on the roof be very careful not to damage the surface of the flashing or the tiles. A cracked or broken tile can damage and rip the felt underneath the tiles. The warranty may be voided if damage occurs or results from someone walking on the roof.

During normal weather conditions the roof on your home should not allow water intrusion. However, under extreme weather conditions such as rain driven horizontally by wind, snow, and ice build up water intrusion is considered acceptable.

Fallen debris on the roof should be removed as soon as possible. If large items fall on your roof you should inspect the tiles surrounding the debris to be sure no damage occurred.

An annual inspection of your roof is recommended to determine if any tiles/seals on the roof are damaged and need to be replaced. Damage can occur from acts of nature such as high winds. Assess your roof after storms in case of any possible damage. A qualified, licensed roofing contractor should perform annual inspections and any required maintenance.

### *Maintenance Alert!*

You are responsible for periodic maintenance and for checking all areas of the roof that have caulking or sealant type material such as vents, pipe penetrations, and inspecting all sheet metal flashing for deteriorated/cracked sealant, etc. Painting and caulking of flashing by a qualified roofing contractor is a routine maintenance item.

Homeowners should not walk on roof tiles because concrete and clay tiles are subject to breaking. The Homeowner can do generalized inspections safely from the ground or from ladders set at the edge of the roof.

Homeowners should be extremely careful when installing products on the roof (solar panels or skylights) or fastening items to the roof (such as holiday lights). All after-market items attached to the roof should be made by a licensed contractor. The original roof warranty may be voided when someone other than the original contractor makes an addition or alteration to the roof.

Should a leak occur, immediately place a container under dripping water to avoid or minimize damage to your home. If a ceiling is involved, holding water that has entered through a leak, use a screwdriver to poke a small hole in the drywall to release the water, capturing it with a container.

## STUCCO

Stucco is a durable cement product used for the finish and waterproofing of your exterior walls. As with any cement product, stucco is susceptible to expansion and contraction due to weather variations. Minor cracking (1/8" or less) may still appear and is beyond the control of you and ADS, Inc. Do not be alarmed; minor cracks do not affect the durability or effectiveness of stucco. Cracks will most often appear around windows and door corners. Some cracks will be really small and hard to see, while others might be larger and more noticeable.

Small pieces of the stucco may chip off at the bottom of the walls along the metal flashing. The purpose of the metal flashing at the bottom of the walls is to allow the wall to vent and release any moisture. It is normal for stucco to chip at the metal flashing. Keep the metal flashing in mind as you landscape your house. Soil and concrete should be installed at a level below the metal flashing to allow proper ventilation. Good ventilation of the walls can help to prevent cracking and chipping of the stucco.

Before repairing any cracks you should wait approximately two years to allow the house to settle. This amount of time will allow any normal shrinkage of the house to finish occurring. Standard quality stucco paint and stucco patches can be used to make repairs, especially on hairline cracks. Do not use oil-based paints, these paints will peel and crack. Your local paint store or hardware store can assist you with any questions on stucco paint and patches. Please be aware that there can be color variation between old and new stucco if repairs are made.

In normal performance, some rain water will be absorbed in the stucco system and the system is intended to drain excess moisture through the weep screed. To allow this system to perform as it is intended, proper maintenance of your home includes taking steps to keep dirt and concrete flat work below the screed. **Do not** pour concrete or masonry over the stucco screed or right up to the foundation. This will cause water to intrude into the house causing severe damage over time.

### *Maintenance Alert!*

The white powdery substance (known as efflorescence) that may appear on stucco walls and bare concrete slabs is caused by lime in the cement reacting with moisture. It is considered acceptable and can easily be removed with a mild vinegar and water solution.

## **TRIM**

Trim Carpentry is the final touch that adds to the beauty and style of your home. Trim consists of the doors, the trim around the doors and the hardware that you will find around the house, such as the towel bars and toilet paper holders, base boards and crown molding.

Please pay special attention to these details as you complete your walk-through inspection. Be sure that all of the trim carpentry operates properly and has been installed correctly at the time of your walk through. Any items not noted on your walk through will not be covered.

## **TUBS AND SHOWER ENCLOSURES**

The bathtubs installed in your home need to be cleaned as part of your regular household maintenance. Warm water and liquid detergents that are safe for use on fiberglass products are best suited for cleaning tubs and showers. Abrasive cleansers and scouring pads can dull and scratch the surface. Should your tub become scratched, you can apply an automotive polishing compound with a soft rag. After applying the polishing wax, buff the surface of the tub to a high shine and wipe off all excess residue. This method will not only help your tub to look beautiful, but will also help make cleaning easier. It is important that you do not wax any surfaces meant for standing or walking.

Shoes should not be worn in a bathtub or shower. The sole of a shoe can carry hundreds of particles that can easily scratch the surface of your bathtub or shower. Hard water can also damage or dull the surface of your tubs and showers. The water in your location is hard and over time can negatively affect your fixtures and surfaces. You may want to consider installing a soft water machine or subscribing to a soft water supplier.

The caulking around the tubs and shower enclosures should be inspected as part of routine maintenance every six months for drying and cracking. Refer to the caulking section of this manual for information on how to care for caulking.

Avoid hanging wet towels on corners of shower doors; as the weight can pull the door out of alignment and cause the shower to leak. To protect floors, be sure that water from swinging doors and your body are captured on a rug or bath mat that you dry after each use.

These enclosures should continue to contain the water within them as long as the drains are open and the sealant joints are regularly and properly maintained. Sealant joint maintenance includes regular (annually or whenever sealant failure is apparent) removal of the existing sealant and replacement according to the sealant manufacturer's recommendations. Sealant and grout joint fillers should be repaired when splits, cracks or holes are noted. Similar sealant maintenance is required with metal-framed and frameless glass enclosures.

## WINDOWS

Windows are installed in your home very early during the construction process. Any windows that are damaged and scratched during the construction process are repaired or replaced prior to your walk through. Please pay special attention to the windows during the walk through, because after you move in you might notice scratches and imperfections. Most scratches on windows are unavoidable because glass is a manmade material that will always be subject to damage. High winds are common to the desert area and can cause windows to become scratched by debris. Any imperfections not noted during the walk through cannot be covered. Glass that is visibly scratched or broken from a line of sight from 11 feet away under daylight conditions (but not direct sunlight) is unacceptable and will be buffed out. Damage to glass/screens after the homeowner takes delivery of the house is not a builder responsibility.

*Note! Many homeowners have their windows/sliders tinted with various products after the close of escrow. Please be advised that any such alterations to your windows/sliders will result in voiding the manufacturer's warranty.*

### *Maintenance Alert!*

Proper maintenance includes monitoring and restoring caulking and weather stripping. Protected areas include the window and window frames. Some caulking and weather stripping may deteriorate over time. Periodically check your caulking to insure that it has not dried and cracked or fallen out. The rate of deterioration depends on the amount of exposure to the elements. Reattach the weather stripping if it becomes loose and replace it if it becomes torn or no longer makes an effective seal.

Although you might not be able to prevent scratches and damages from happening, you are able to keep your windows in good operating condition with proper maintenance. Maintaining the windows includes cleaning the glass and keeping the window tracks free of dust and debris. Please be aware that dust may accumulate on/around the window track without the window being open. Windows can be cleaned with warm soapy water or glass products, and a soft rag. Avoid using window scrapers and abrasive pads that can scratch your windows. Garden hoses should never be used to clean the windows because the windows were not designed to withstand the force of a water hose; the spray can damage the glass and cause water to leak into your home. The window tracks need to be cleaned occasionally to allow the window to open and close properly. Any dust and debris inside of the window track can be removed easily with the use of a vacuum. After each cleaning apply a silicone lubricant.

The windows in your home are designed to open with a force of a ten-pound pull. If the window sticks and is difficult to open, a basic silicone lubricant spray can be applied. Whenever opening a window you should always hold both the front and rear sides of the window frame; by opening the window in this manner, you will prevent the window from separating from the frame or even from coming off track.

## **WINDOWS (Continued)**

Functional windows that open and close come equipped with window screens. The screens will need to be removed and cleaned occasionally to get rid of any dirt and dust that may become trapped. Screens can be removed by pushing the frames back and forth and pulling gently on the tabs. Once removed, clean the screens with a basic detergent and rinse with water. Allow the screens to air-dry and replace the screen on the window.

Weep holes are incorporated into the design of the exterior ledge of the window tracks to allow for water to seep out. Please insure that these holes are left open and clear at all times. If weep holes become plugged, water will accumulate on the ledge and can cause leakage into the home. Condensation between the glass in dual glazed windows is not normal. If this condition exists, please notify us in writing.