

# CUSTOMER CARE

LifeStyle Builders is proud to offer an extensive Customer Care program which not only provides our Homeowners with the typical 11 Month List but also an interim visit by a LifeStyle Builders representative which is done approximately 60 days after the settlement.

## REPORTING PROCEDURES

- 60 Day List – We know that during the first couple of months, you will want to show your friends and relatives your new LifeStyle Builders home and we want you to be proud of it. We have developed an opportunity for you to submit a list of warranty concerns *approximately 60 to 80 days* after closing. Waiting 60 days after closing allows you sufficient time to become settled in your new home and thoroughly examine all components. *A form for your 60 Day List will be mailed to you.* Please read the “Product Expectations and Warranty” chapter of this guide prior to completing your 60 Day List as some items provide for a “one time repair” and you may want to wait until your 11 Month List to include such items.

The following items will be corrected if listed on the 60 Day List:

1. Door adjustments (sticking or inoperable) for interior and exterior doors
2. Caulking which was missed during installation
3. Installation of any back-ordered fixtures or parts

*PLEASE NOTE:* Drywall repairs are a time consuming process. To inconvenience you as little as possible, we ask that you only list these items on one warranty list. They may be listed on either your 60 Day List or your 11 Month List. However, we recommend that you include them on your 11 Month List so that your home can undergo sufficient settlement and complete a full heating/cooling cycle.

The following items will not be corrected if noted on your 60 Day List as they are “appearance” items and should have been listed on the Pre-Settlement Orientation Checklist:

1. Dings, dents, cracks, scratches, holes, and stains which appear on the following: sinks, tubs, plumbing fixtures, countertops, cabinet doors, light fixtures, mirrors, glass, door trim and drywall.
2. Window and screens which are broken or scratched.
3. Tile, carpet hardwood, and resilient flooring which is stained, has a surface defect, holes, scratches or indentations.
4. Doors, trim and hardware with dents, gouges, slices, or scratches.
5. Drywall with respect to gouges, dents or holes in drywall.

6. Paint with marks that require touch-ups. All paint touch-ups should have been listed on the Pre-Settlement Orientation Checklist. No painting will occur after move-in except where drywall repairs have been made by LifeStyle Builders, and those areas will only be painted with the original paint color applied by LifeStyle Builders. Refer to the “Paint and Stain” section in the “Product Expectations and Warranty” chapter.

7. Finish on appliances – no dents, scratches, gouges, etc.

*\* With regard to repairs after settlement, consider the fact that more damage occurs to your walls, trim, countertops, cabinets, tubs, etc. during the actual “moving” process than at any other time. LifeStyle Builders cannot be responsible for these items after you take possession.*

- 11 Month List – During the *ninth month* of your one year warranty, you will receive an “11 Month List”. We will also be happy to discuss any maintenance questions you may have at this time. We *strongly suggest* that you use the *Product Expectations and Warranty* chapter of this guide in compiling your list. *Please return your 11 Month List no later than the last business day of your tenth month.* It is important that we receive your list prior to the “one year” mark as most warranties expire at that point. For your convenience, the form for your 11 Month List **will be mailed to you.**

## SERVICE PROCESSING PROCEDURES

There are three ways to initiate action from our Customer Care Team to ensure that we understand your concerns and expedite them to our Customer Care Team or Trade Partners for expedient service. These procedures help produce documentation that help manage each Customer Care Service experience.

Our THREE ways to better serve you are:

1. E-MAIL: Simply e-mail your requests to [customercare@lifestylebuilders.com](mailto:customercare@lifestylebuilders.com)
2. FAX: Fax your requests to Attn: Customer Care Team @ 804-639-9442
3. MAIL: Mail your requests to Attn: Customer Care Team  
Lifestyle Builders & Developers, Inc.  
4561 Lifestyle Lane  
Midlothian, VA 23112

### ***What you can do . . .***

You can help us to serve you better by including complete contact information on all correspondence (especially on the Post-Settlement and 11 Month List)

1. Name, address, phone numbers and e-mail where you can be reached during business hours
2. Your lot number, subdivision (neighborhood name), and street address
3. A complete description of the problem item

### ***What we do . . .***

1. Upon receipt of your 60 Day List and 11 Month List, our office will mail you an acknowledgement postcard. A LifeStyle Builders Customer Care Representative will then contact you to set up an inspection appointment.
2. All lists are handled in the order that they are received. All questions concerning the status of lists should be directed to our office.
3. Each list will be reviewed for covered repairs according to the Home Owner's Guide and in accordance with the Residential Warranty Corporation (RWC) Limited Warranty.
4. Appointments with our Customer Care Team are available Monday through Friday, 8:00am to 3:30pm. We realize the inconvenience this may cause, but must insist on these hours due to the types of repairs commonly reported. Most repairs require the assistance of a Trade Partner whose typical hours are that of the business day. No work will be performed on weekends.
5. When Trade Partners are required to complete repairs, our process is to notify the appropriate Trade Partners and be your point of contact for scheduling. In some cases, you may be contacted directly by some to schedule needed work.
6. Access to your house is critical to performing these repairs. Please be prepared to allow adequate access to LifeStyle Builders personnel and Trade Partners.



**This page is to be filled out with your home's specific vendor information and replaced by your Field Manager at your Pre-Settlement Orientation.**

**CUSTOMER CARE SERVICE HOURS: MONDAY-FRIDAY 8AM-3:30PM**

**HOW TO SUBMIT REQUESTS**

1. **Email:** [customercare@lifestylebuilders.com](mailto:customercare@lifestylebuilders.com)
2. **Fax:** 804-639-9442 Attn: Customer Care
3. **Mail:** 4561 Lifestyle Lane; Midlothian, VA 23112 Attn: Customer Care

If your schedule will not allow us access to your home, please wait to submit your request until your schedule permits.

**EMERGENCY SERVICE CONTACTS**

<u>Trade</u>	<u>Vendor</u>	<u>Phone #</u>
PLUMBING	_____	_____
HVAC	_____	_____
ELECTRICAL	_____	_____
	<u>Utility Company</u>	<u>Phone #</u>
GAS	_____	_____
ELECTRIC	_____	_____
WATER	_____	_____

Once you have contacted the appropriate Trade Partner for emergency service, please email us at the address listed above or call us at 804-639-9440 for our records. You can expect a follow up call the next business day in order for us to survey your Customer Care experience.

# PRODUCT EXPECTATIONS AND WARRANTY

To gain the most benefit from this manual, it should be read during the construction process and again after closing on the home. In the “Product Expectations and Warranty” chapter, we have attempted to list all of the components in your home and break down the information on each into three categories:

1. **General Information** – The purpose of this section is to allow you a better understanding of the nature of the material or product used in your home.
2. **Expectations and Warranty** – We believe that the key to successful home ownership is understanding as much as possible about the products which are assembled to become your home. This section of the manual explains *what you can expect* from each product. We are committed to informing you *up front* about what to expect.

## **IMPORTANT • IMPORTANT • IMPORTANT • IMPORTANT**

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**APPLICABLE WARRANTIES:** LifeStyle Builders acknowledges its liability to our purchasers arising under and pursuant to the provisions of Virginia Code 55-70.0, (“One Year Warranty”). We also agree to furnish our purchasers with a limited warranty issued by a third party, such as the Residential Warranty Company (“RWC”) or a comparable company. Other than the “One Year Warranty” and the RWC Limited Warranty, LifeStyle Builders provides no warranties or representations as to the condition of the property, and makes no warranty expressed or implied, whether of merchantability, fitness for a particular purpose, habitability or otherwise. Any reference to the “One Year Warranty” in this guide shall refer to the warranty implied by the codes of Virginia above, and shall not be construed to imply any other warranty.

In addition to the information contained in the limited warranty itself, LifeStyle Builders has included supplemental details about one year material and workmanship standards. The purpose of this section is to let you know what our quality standard is for the common concerns that typically come up in a new home. For most items, the standards are described, along with what we will do to remedy items which do not meet the standards. ***Please be advised that LifeStyle Builders reserves the right to determine the method of repair for any and all items in your home or yard which require attention.***

If you purchase a Model Home, be advised that the one year warranty does not cover full wall painting or guarantee paint touch-ups to match as the home will have been completed for some time. This also applies to hardwood floor stain colors. Over time paint and stain colors oxidize and change slightly.

While we strive to build a defect-free home, we are realistic enough to know we sometimes make mistakes. When we do, we will take the necessary actions to either correct or minimize the mistake. In support of this valuable commitment, LifeStyle Builders provides you with a ***Residential Warranty Company (“RWC”) Limited Warranty.***

You will receive the signed Limited Warranty documents at your closing. We suggest that you carefully read through this information as well as the service procedures that are discussed in this section of your guide. If you have questions regarding standards or procedures, please contact us.

In the event that a variation or conflict exists between the information contained in this guide and the warranty provisions of the RWC standards or the Manufacturer's printed literature, the RWC or Manufacturer's policies will prevail.

3. **Care and Maintenance** – A home is one of the last “hand built products” left in the world. Although quality materials and workmanship have been used in your home, this does not mean that it will be free from care and maintenance. A home, like an automobile, requires care and attention from day one. General homeowner maintenance is essential to providing a quality home for a lifetime.

*Periodic maintenance by the homeowner is necessary for of a number of factors, including normal wear and tear, climatic condition, the inherent characteristics of various materials used in your home (such as wood), and normal service required by the mechanical systems. Over time, natural variations in temperature and humidity may also impact your home. This section of the guide gives tips on the maintenance and care necessary for preserving the quality of your home. Many times a minor adjustment or repair done immediately by you saves a more serious, time consuming, and sometimes costly repair later. Note also that negligence of routine maintenance can void applicable limited warranty coverage on all or part of your home.*

# ***APPLIANCES***

General Information – Operation of your appliances will be explained to you at your Pre-Settlement Orientation. The manufacturer's warranty and other appliance information will also be given to you at this time. It is important for you to take the time to fill out and mail in the registration cards for each appliance. You can expect your appliances to operate correctly and last for years with the proper care.

Expectations and Warranty – LifeStyle Builders warrants all appliances through their manufacturers, in accordance with the terms and conditions of the written warranties supplied by the manufacturers. Usually the warranty period is for one year. Refer to literature on each appliance for details and limitations. Additional information about appliance operation can also be found under the “Electrical” and “Plumbing” sections of this chapter.

\* Please notify LifeStyle Builders immediately of any appliance or electronics issues as the manufacturer will not cover any issue beyond 1 year of your closing date.

Care and Maintenance – Each appliance will come with literature explaining the best methods for preservation and cleaning. Please follow the manufacturer's instructions. If a problem arises with an appliance, call the customer service number listed in the manufacturer's warranty and be prepared to supply the following:

- a) the date of purchase (closing); your name, lot number, etc.
- b) the serial and model numbers (found on a metal plate on the side or bottom of each appliance)
- c) a description of the problem

# ***ASPHALT PAVING***

General Information – In certain locations, LifeStyle Builders driveways are asphalt paved. Asphalt paving is not always possible prior to closing due to weather conditions which may adversely affect the soil. In particular, heavy or constant rains will usually cause a delay. LifeStyle Builders will pave the driveway as soon as conditions permit a quality installation. We realize the inconvenience a delayed driveway installation can create but ask for your patience. If soil conditions exist where a delay will occur in the installation of your asphalt driveway, LifeStyle Builders reserves the right to determine when the conditions are correct for paving.

Expectations and Warranty – Asphalt paving is warranted for ***90 days after closing***. As the ground settles, “spider” cracks may occur in your driveway. These cracks are perfectly normal due to the nature of asphalt. As with many exterior features of your home, your driveway will fade as it ages. LifeStyle Builders is not responsible for “spider” cracks or fading that can occur in your driveway. If your driveway is repaired during the 90 day warranty period, LifeStyle Builders will patch the area but will not guarantee a perfectly matching finish as this is impossible to obtain due to the nature of the material. If your driveway is on an incline, it is not unusual for drainage to exit through any “spider” cracks that may be present. LifeStyle Builders considers this a natural occurrence and will make no repair.

Care and Maintenance – Sealing your driveway with an asphalt driveway sealer (available at any hardware store) will help to protect it from wear due to weather and activity. Additionally, a sealer will restore some of the “blacktop” finish that may have faded. Apply your first coat of sealer approximately one (1) year after occupancy and reapply every year from then on. Vehicles which are dripping any type of fluid (oil, etc.) should be removed from the driveway as these fluids may have a detrimental effect on the driveway finish.

## ***ATTIC ACCESS***

General Information – The primary purpose of providing access to the attic is to allow maintenance of the mechanical equipment which may traverse this space. A secondary purpose may be to allow *limited* storage in this area. However, not all attics are designed for storage. *(If there is a question as to what type of attic system your house contains, please ask your Field Manager - construction methods can vary from one location to another)*. In house plans which specify "scuttle holes," a regular truss roofing system is typically installed and this type of roofing system is **not** designed for storage. If "Attic Storage" trusses were installed, a limited amount of storage is intended and the area can be floored for this use. Naturally, when performing any needed tasks in the attic, caution should be used not to step off wood members onto the drywall or insulation. Stepping off the wood members and onto the drywall or insulation can result in personal injury and/or damage to the ceiling below.

Expectations and Warranty – Not applicable.

Care and Maintenance – No special care is needed for your attic space other than to periodically check any mechanical systems installed, etc. In attics built for storage, it is wise to refrain from excessive activity, i.e., walking repeatedly in the attic area, as this could possibly cause drywall problems in the ceiling below. Please refer to the "Vents" section of this chapter for information on driving rains and the consequences to your attic. If pull-down attic stairs are installed in your home, always check carefully before use (see label on stairs).

## ***BRICK AND BLOCK***

General Information – If your home has a crawl space, it has been built with a brick and block foundation. Brick is used for its inherent durability and pleasing finish. You also may have optioned to have brick veneer installed on the exterior of your home which should grant you a reasonably "maintenance free" exterior with the exception of your windows, doors and trim work. Basement homes have poured concrete walls that are waterproofed for dryness.

Expectations and Warranty – Since brick and block expand and contract at different rates, small "hairline" cracks due to shrinkage and settlement are common in mortar joints of masonry construction. Refer to your RWC Warranty for the coverage period and limitations.

Care and Maintenance – After several years, face brick may require "tuck-pointing" (repairing the mortar between the bricks). Otherwise, no regular maintenance is required. Efflorescence is a white crystalline or powdery, often fluffy/fuzzy deposit on the surface of masonry materials like concrete, brick, clay tile, etc. It is caused by water which dissolves salts inside the object while moving through it, then evaporates leaving the salt on the surface. Often these salts are water soluble and may disappear of their own accord with normal weathering.

## ***CABINETS***

General Information – LifeStyle Builders installs a high quality grade of cabinet in your home. Like other wood components, your cabinets will react to the humidity and seasonal weather changes but will remain beautiful for years if cared for.

Expectations and Warranty – Cabinets should operate properly under normal use. Doors, drawer fronts,

and handles should be level and even. Warped doors or drawer fronts will be corrected in accordance with RWC standards. Additionally, gaps between cabinets and ceiling, or cabinets and walls will be corrected by caulking or other means if they are in excess of the standard referred to in your RWC warranty. Your cabinets are warranted for one year. Readily noticeable variations in wood grain and color are expected in all style selections and lend character to the cabinet. In particular, variations in wood and stain finish are extremely noticeable in “pickled” finished cabinets. Replacements will not be made due to such variations. ***Chips, scratches and other flaws in the surface will only be corrected if noted on your Pre-Settlement Orientation Checklist.*** If you have selected stain selections to “match” cabinets, be prepared for variations in the finish tint, even where like woods are stained. For more information on stain finishes, see the “Paint & Stain” section of this chapter.

Care and Maintenance – It is recommended that you use a mild soap and water to clean your cabinets, and this solution should be used sparingly (do not saturate the wood). Avoid paraffin-based spray waxes as this will damage the luster of the finish. If hinges catch, or drawer glides become sluggish, a small amount of lubricant will improve their action.

## CAULKING

General Information – Caulking has many functions both inside and outside of your home. Its most important function is as a *sealer* to block water or air. However, it is also used for aesthetic purposes such as joining your trim work to other pieces of trim and to the wall or ceiling. Like so many other products in your home, caulking contains a certain amount of water. ***Time and weather will shrink caulking and dry it out so that it no longer provides a good seal against moisture and air infiltration.*** The most noticeable “failure” of caulking will appear during the first heating cycle of a home. After the heat is turned on, the caulking will dry out and shrink. Caulking will also “fail” due to the normal movement of wood members in your home.

Expectations and Warranty – ***After moving in, caulking becomes the homeowner's responsibility.*** Maintaining the seals inside and outside your home with caulk can be one of the best protective measures you can take. ***Since caulking is a part of home maintenance, LifeStyle Builders will not be responsible for any repair to the home which is a result of the homeowner's failure to caulk.***

Care and Maintenance – As a matter of routine maintenance, we strongly recommend you check the caulking and make repairs as needed. Caulking should be checked around tubs and sinks, since gaps could lead to water leaks. You should periodically (we suggest twice a year) check the exterior of your home for gaps in the caulking, specifically windows and doors. Re-caulk areas as needed. Caulking compounds have different ingredients designed for various purposes. Before selecting any caulk, make sure it is designed for your intended use. Caulking compounds and dispenser guns are available at hardware stores. There are two different types of caulking:

- a) Silicone Caulk      Most caulking that contains silicone will not accept paint but works best where water is present (for example, where the tub meets the tile or a sink meets a countertop). All exterior joints should be caulked with silicone caulk since it is designed to prevent water infiltration.
  
- b) Latex Caulk      Latex caulking is appropriate for an area that requires painting (along the stair "stringer" or where a counter top backsplash meets the wall, or where crown molding meets drywall).

Most homeowners choose to do their own caulking, since it is a relatively simple task. However, if lack of time prevents you from properly addressing this maintenance, we suggest you contact a painting contractor or “handyman.” Caulking is preventative maintenance and should be done on a regular basis to avoid costly repairs in the long run.

## ***CERAMIC TILE AND CULTURED MARBLE***

General Information – Ceramic tile and cultured marble are durable and pleasing to the eye. However, both must be maintained to protect the stability of your installation. Cultured marble has fewer joints and therefore requires less maintenance.

Expectations and Warranty – Refer to the RWC booklet for warranty information. Please note that ***any scratches, gouges, discolorations or any damage to the appearance of the ceramic tile or cultured marble not reported during the Pre-Settlement Orientation becomes the Homeowner's responsibility.*** Your cultured marble and ceramic tile will last for years but periodic maintenance and proper care is critical. Ceramic tile and cultured marble are manufactured in “batches” which can result in color differences between two pieces. This could result in a disparity between the sample shown and the product delivered. Special consideration should be used when selecting a color or pattern. Close inspection of cultured marble may reveal minor color variation, small variation of foreign matter or other conditions which are considered normal when dealing with products of this nature.

Care and Maintenance – The ceramic tile and cultured marble installed on walls, floors or countertops in your home may be washed with any nonabrasive soap or detergent. Abrasive cleaners will dull the finish. Ceramic tiles around bathtubs or countertops may appear to be pulling up after a time. This is caused by normal shrinkage of grout or caulk. If this occurs, the best remedy is to purchase “tub caulk” or premixed grout from a hardware store. Follow directions on the container. This maintenance is important to protect the underlying surface from water damage. Cultured marble products require little maintenance. An occasional waxing or polishing (with automotive paste wax) will help maintain the high-gloss finish.

## ***CONCRETE FLATWORK***

General Information – LifeStyle Builders uses concrete for footings and flatwork. Flatwork includes basement and garage floors, porch floors, patios, driveways and sidewalks. Concrete flatwork is “floating”, i.e., it is not attached to the home’s foundation walls. Flatwork is not a “structural” element of the home and is not covered by the RWC structural warranty. Cracking or “pop-outs” in the concrete flatwork are often caused by extreme cold. Most “pop-outs” occur within the first year of concrete placement and are generally considered a cosmetic flaw, not affecting the service life of the concrete.

Expectations and Warranty – Concrete flatwork is warranted for ***90 days after closing.*** Although we use accepted construction procedures for the installation of concrete flatwork, ***some cracking in concrete occurs in almost all homes.*** In most flatwork installations, control joints or “expansion joints” are created. A control joint is purposely designed to provide an area for cracking during the inevitable movements in concrete. However, not all cracks will occur along the control joints. Since the majority of concrete cracks are not serious, the 90 day warranty does not cover most concrete cracks. Where cracking is covered by the 90 day warranty, the repair provided consists of sealing with concrete caulk. During the first 90 days after closing, any concrete driveway, patio and sidewalk cracks will be caulked

if they do not occur at the control joint and exceed 1/4" in width or vertical displacement. ***Concrete is not replaced due to cracking unless*** as described in the RWC Limited Warranty. If replacement is required, the repair will be done within the control joint or "expansion joint" boundary. Replacement of the entire concrete area will not be done. Please refer to RWC guidelines for specifics on the coverage of your concrete work. It is important to note that proper landscaping around the flatwork (the objective of which is to prevent moisture from pooling) can minimize movement. Minimizing movement may reduce the potential for cracking. When LifeStyle Builders graded your lot, proper drainage was initially achieved. If a Homeowner's changes in the grading, drainage, landscape design or failure to perform needed maintenance has caused the damage, corrective measures will be suggested, but the homeowner will be responsible for their implementation.

Repeated hosing of concrete for cleaning, animal urine, radiator overflow, fertilizer, failure to shovel snow and ice, ice melting agents, and road salts from vehicles are some of the causes of spalling or chipping. LifeStyle Builders is not responsible for repair of spalling caused by these conditions.

Care and Maintenance – To properly care for your exterior concrete, seal any cracks in control joints or surface areas immediately with an approved compound found at local hardware stores. When installing additional landscaping, insure that you have not created a "pool" for water in an area adjacent to your concrete surface.

Remove ice and snow from concrete slabs as promptly as possible after snowstorms. Protect concrete from abuse by chemical agents such as pet urine, fertilizers, radiator overflow, repeated hosing, or de-icing agents, such as road salt that can drip from vehicles. All of these items can cause spalling of concrete. However, sand is a safe material that should not damage concrete in any way.

Do not wash patios, porches, drives, etc. with cold water from an outside faucet when temperatures are extremely high and the hot sun has been shining on the concrete. The abrupt change in temperature can damage the surface bond of the concrete. Sweeping is the preferred method of keeping exterior concrete clean. If washing is necessary, do this when temperatures are moderate.

Permit no heavy vehicles such as moving vans or concrete trucks to drive on your concrete work. It is not intended to bear the weight of this type of vehicle and will void your 90 day warranty.

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

## ***CONDENSATION***

General Information – Condensation on the interior surfaces of windows and frames is the result of high humidity within the home and low outside temperatures, and/or inadequate ventilation. These conditions are significantly influenced by a family's lifestyle.

Expectations and Warranty – Since condensation in your home is created by the temperatures both inside and out, which are out of the control of LifeStyle Builders, no warranty is given. See the "Windows" section of this chapter for further information.

Care and Maintenance – If your home includes a humidifier, closely observe the manufacturer's directions, especially during periods of cooler temperatures.

## ***COUNTERTOPS***

General Information – There are many varieties of countertops available today. Please consult your Manufacturer’s literature for warranty and maintenance requirements. Dings, dents, scratches, stains, gouges, etc. not noted on the Pre-Settlement Orientation Checklist will *not* be covered under warranty.

## ***CRAWL SPACE***

General Information – The crawl space underneath your home is backfilled with controlled fill and a plastic vapor barrier is installed to control moisture.

Expectations and Warranty – Slight dampness may be experienced in the crawl space. Landscaping that is incorrectly installed may cause or contribute to moisture in your crawl space. Please adhere to your landscaper's recommendations when installing plants or shrubs.

There are two methods which LifeStyle Builders can use to insure that water does not stand in your crawl space. The first is the grading of the lot. Your lot has been graded so that water will drain away from your foundation. The second method would be the installation of a foundation drain pipe, which is installed when certain circumstances exist. A foundation drain pipe is designed to direct the flow of water out of the foundation and into the yard. Regardless of the method used, standing water in your crawl space should be reported to LifeStyle Builders for inspection.

Care and Maintenance – Please refer to the “Vents” section of this chapter.

## ***DECKS***

General Information – Your deck has been constructed “on-site” using pressure treated lumber. This type of treated wood is used for many residential purposes and in some locations, may be used not only for decking but also for other exterior housing components such as hand rails, etc.

Expectations and Warranty – LifeStyle Builders will replace excessively warped boards if noted during the Pre-Settlement Orientation. Over several months, pressure treated Southern Pine lumber will weather naturally to an appealing silver-gray color. Since decking lumber is “rough” lumber, it will have an uneven, rough appearance. The lumber will “check” as it dries out and is exposed to the sun and elements. Checking is normal and results in splitting, which in most cases is minimal in any one area. Due to its rough appearance, pressure treated lumber which is painted or stained will not have the smooth look that your trim lumber has. As no amount of surface preparation or sanding will smooth the surface, LifeStyle Builders will take no measures to correct the rough appearance.

Care and Maintenance – Pressure treatment of wood does not prevent the passage of moisture in and out of the lumber. Although the treated wood is protected against mold and termite attack, the application of a water-repellent sealer to all exposed surfaces is recommended. This sealer will help control surface checking and provide an attractive appearance. ***It is important to let the decking lumber thoroughly dry out before applying a sealer.*** LifeStyle Builders recommends waiting approximately six months before applying sealer. Over time, reapplication of a sealer is recommended, perhaps every year or two.

Although pressure treated lumber is safe for its intended uses, you should take precautions to ensure it is not ingested by a pet (some dogs, in particular, may chew on decking lumber). Pressure treated lumber should not be burned as firewood.

## ***DOORS - INTERIOR***

General Information – The interior doors of your home are not constructed of solid wood but of a wooden frame to which a composite veneer has been attached. This process produces a door which is less likely to warp or split. All doors are factory primed which seals the door and helps to prevent warping.

Expectations and Warranty – *Chips or other damage in the finish, must be noted on the Pre-Settlement Orientation Checklist to be repaired.* Due to normal settling of the home, over time doors may require adjustment for proper fit. LifeStyle Builders will make such adjustments one time only, during the first year of occupancy, if the door has warped in excess of 1/4" measured diagonally from corner to corner.

Care and Maintenance – The most common cause of a sticking door is the natural expansion of lumber due to changes in humidity. When sticking is due to swelling during a damp season, do not plane the door unless it continues to stick after the weather changes. Use sandpaper to smooth the door. Be certain to repaint the area of the door where it was sanded to seal against moisture.

Before planing a door due to sticking, there are two other steps to try: first apply either a paste wax, a light coat of paraffin, or candle wax to the sticking surface; or second, tighten the screws that hold the hinges to the door jamb and/or door frame.

A squeaky door hinge can be remedied by removing the hinge pin and rubbing a lead pencil or spraying a "Teflon" product on it. Do not use oil as it can gum up.

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

Slamming doors can damage both doors and jambs, and can even cause cracking in walls. Teach children not to hang on the doorknob and swing back and forth. This can work hardware loose and cause the door to sag. Additionally, some doors have "hinge pin door stops" installed which prevent the door from banging against a wall. If the door is forced beyond the limits of the hinge pin door stop, a hole in your door could result.

Keep a duplicate "privacy lock" key where children cannot reach it in the event a youngster locks himself/herself in a room. Some types of privacy locks can be opened with a small screw driver or similarly shaped device.

## ***DOORS - EXTERIOR***

General Information – In the past, all doors were made of wood. People liked the look of wood but disliked the inherent features such as warping in humidity, cracking in the heat and splitting in the cold. LifeStyle Builders installs either Masonite or Therma-Tru brand Fiber-Classic® front doors. These doors are designed to outperform wood doors by resisting gouges and scrapes and by eliminating splitting. Yet the aesthetics are not compromised since the door has a wood grain finish. Because they are made of high-impact fiberglass, they insulate far better than a wood door. Other exterior doors of LifeStyle Builders homes are made from durable steel which provides exceptional insulation value and security for your home.

Expectations and Warranty – *Chips or other damage in the finish, must be noted on the Pre-Settlement Orientation Checklist to be repaired.* Due to normal settling of the home, over time doors may require adjustment for proper fit. Lifestyle Builders will make such adjustments one time only during the first year of occupancy, if the door has warped in excess of 1/4" measured diagonally from corner to corner.

Care and Maintenance – Annually, you should lubricate the screws which are securing your threshold to prevent them from rusting. From time to time, your exterior doors may need adjusting to prevent air infiltration. Adjusting the threshold by loosening the screws is one type of adjustment. Loosen the screws until the door fits snugly and you cannot “see” daylight at the bottom of the door. Other adjustments which may reduce air infiltration are to tighten the screws on your hinges or to adjust the strike plate for the door knob so that the door will close more securely.

## **DRYWALL**

General Information – The interior walls of your home are constructed with gypsum wallboard, commonly known as drywall. Due to the width of the drywall material installed in your home, most walls and ceilings will contain seams which are taped. Once taped, the seams receive a coating of drywall “compound” which is smoothed to obtain a clean line. Since drywall is the interior shell of your home, it will react to the movement of the wood members to which it is attached. It is normal to have slight imperfections from this reaction.

Expectations and Warranty – Some slight cracking, nail “pops” and/or drywall seams may become visible in walls and ceilings. These occurrences are normally caused by the shrinkage, settlement or drying out of the wood to which the drywall is attached. We will correct visible nail pops, cracks, and seams *during the first year of occupancy if they meet the criteria set forth in the RWC standards.* Drywall repairs involve a time consuming process. LifeStyle Builders wishes to inconvenience you as little as possible and will therefore *only perform drywall repairs one time during your first year of occupancy.* It is recommended that you include these items on your 11 Month List so that your home can complete a heating and cooling cycle. If a drywall repair is required as a result of poor workmanship (such as blisters in tape), or other warranty-based repair (such as a plumbing leak), LifeStyle Builders will complete the repair of the area. Once the repair has been made, LifeStyle Builders will repaint only the area repaired with the original paint color specified on your Selection Sheet. If the room has been wallpapered or repainted, it will be the Homeowner's responsibility to repaint the area of the drywall repair. *Due to the fading characteristic of paints, LifeStyle Builders will not guarantee that the repainted area will match the surrounding area. LifeStyle Builders will not make repairs on flaws which are only visible under particular lighting conditions.*

Care and Maintenance – Most drywall repairs can be easily made. This work is best done when the room is to be redecorated. To correct a nail pop, reset the nail with a hammer and punch. Cover it with “spackle”, available at paint and hardware stores. Apply two or three thin coats. When dry, sand the surface with fine grain sandpaper before painting.

Indentations caused by sharp objects can be filled with spackle in the same manner. Hairline cracks can be repaired with a coat of paint; slightly larger cracks can be repaired with spackle or caulk.

If the drywall tape becomes bubbled, cut the bubbled piece away from the area. Apply drywall compound, allow to dry and sand. With extreme damage, we recommend you call a professional to do the repairs.

# ***ELECTRICAL***

General Information – The wiring of every LifeStyle Builders home meets the code requirements and safety standards for normal use of electrical appliances. The standard electrical service to a LifeStyle Builders home is single phase, 200 amp, 120/ 240 volt, unless otherwise specified on the Distinctive Included Features for your neighborhood.

Expectations and Warranty – Any electrical wiring that fails to carry its designed load will be repaired to meet specifications. If electrical outlets, switches, or fixtures do not function as intended during the first year, inform us and we will have the electrical contractor listed on your Trade Partner Phone Number List repair or replace them.

Light fixtures are installed in the locations indicated on the house plans and will not be moved by LifeStyle Builders. ***Fixtures which are noted as damaged during the Pre-Settlement Orientation will be repaired or replaced.***

Power surges are the result of local conditions beyond the control of LifeStyle Builders. These can result in burned out bulbs.

Care and Maintenance – The master control panel that contains the electrical breakers for your home includes a “main” shut off that controls all the electrical power to the home. In addition, individual breakers control the separate circuits. Be certain you are familiar with the location of the master control panel.

Each breaker is marked to help you identify which breaker is connected to which major appliance, outlet, or other service. Should a failure occur in any part of your home, always check the breakers in the main panel box.

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

If an outlet is not working, check first to see if it is one that is controlled by a wall switch. Next, check the breaker. Breakers will often trip due to overloading the circuit by plugging too many appliances into it, operating an appliance with a worn cord or defect, or operating an appliance with too high an amperage requirement. The starting of an electric motor can also trip a breaker.

If any circuit trips repeatedly, unplug all items connected to it and reset. If it trips when nothing is connected to it, you need an electrician and the problem should be reported. If the circuit remains on, one of the items you unplugged is defective and requires repair or replacement.

The Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI) is required by building code as a safety feature. The electrical outlets in all bathrooms, the kitchen, the garage, basement, patio or balcony are connected to this breaker (a GFCI is in all areas where an individual can come into contact with water while holding an electric appliance or tool). It is a sensitive system that trips easily to prevent electrical shock in these locations. The test/reset buttons control the entire system. If you experience an electrical problem, reset all GFCI’s prior to calling an electrician.

Each GFCI receptacle has a test and reset button. Once each month the test button should be pressed. This will trip the circuit. To return service, press the reset button. If a GFCI breaker trips during normal use, it may be an indication of a faulty appliance and some investigation is in order. An important point to remember is that one GFCI breaker can control up to three or four outlets. GFCI (Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter) receptacles have a built-in element which senses fluctuations in power. Quite simply, the GFCI is an indoor circuit breaker.

***Please Note: Do not plug a food freezer into any outlet on a GFCI circuit. Food spoilage can result. LifeStyle Builders is not responsible for such an occurrence.***

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

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

Fluorescent fixtures use transformer action to operate them. This action sometimes causes a faint buzzing sound. This is harmless and there is no repair needed.

*Since most areas have underground utilities, before digging or moving large amounts of soil, check the location of buried service leads by calling the local utility. Care should be taken to keep soil around the foundation from settling to protect this service; avoid large amounts of water at this point as well.*

Do not tamper with or add to your electrical system. For any modification that is needed, contact the electrician listed on your Trade Partner Phone Number List or another licensed electrician.

## ***EXPANSION AND CONTRACTION***

General Information – All building materials are subject to expansion and contraction caused by changes in temperature and humidity. Dissimilar materials expand or contract at different rates. This results in separation between materials, particularly dissimilar ones. The effects can be seen in small cracks in drywall and in paint, especially where moldings meet drywall, at mitered corners, where tile grout meets tub or sink, etc. This can alarm an uninformed homeowner, but, in fact, it is very normal. Shrinkage of the wood members of your home is inevitable. This will occur in your home. It will be most noticeable during the first year, but may continue beyond that time. Another example of expansion and contraction is the reaction of block and brick. As it cures, block actually contracts when water evaporates. Brick will expand as it takes in heat in the summer. In a brick and block foundation wall, this occurrence will often cause harmless hairline cracks in the block wall.

Expectations and Warranty – Expansion and contraction will happen to a number of components in your home. See the section on which you are concerned for specific information. Additionally, refer to the “Caulking” section of this chapter.

Care and Maintenance – In most cases, painting and caulking are all that is needed to conceal this minor evidence of a very natural phenomenon. Properly installed caulking will shrink and must be maintained by the homeowner.

# *EXTERIOR VENEER*

General Information – The exterior veneer is a home’s barrier against the elements. There are various types of veneer which can be used, such as brick, simulated stone, siding and Dryvit. Each product has its own characteristics and performs as expected when properly maintained.

- **Brick:** Brick is used as an exterior veneer for its inherent durability, pleasing appearance and the relative “maintenance-free” aspect of the product. Available in a variety of textures and colors, brick is a desirable option on homes today.
- **Simulated Stone:** Simulated stone is a cast in place concrete/aggregate product designed to replicate the look of natural stone. Simulated stones are light weight and available in a variety of colors and textures.
- **Siding:** LifeStyle Builders uses two types of siding in the construction of their homes, vinyl and cementitious. *Vinyl siding* is a virtually maintenance-free product made from Polyvinyl Chloride and is available in a variety of colors and styles, as well as accent products, to enhance the curb appeal of your home. *Cementitious siding* is a fiber cement product (such as “Hardiplank®”) that can resemble stucco, wood clapboards or cedar shingles, depending on how the panels are textured. Cementitious siding is more durable than wood or stucco, and is also fire resistant.
- **Dryvit:** Dryvit, also known as EIFS (External Insulation Finish System), is a multilayered exterior finish that offers homeowners unlimited design flexibility in their exterior detail packages, as well as a limitless color palette. Today’s Dryvit systems are drainable systems that are backed by an industry best, 10-year moisture intrusion warranty.

Expectations and Warranty – The performance expectations for each type of veneer will vary from product to product.

## Care and Maintenance

- **Brick:** While the maintenance on brick is minimal, caulking at doors and windows is needed periodically, as is the need to check weep holes regularly to keep free of debris. Power washing may also be done if necessary. Since brick and block expand and contract at different rates, small “hairline” cracks due to shrinkage and settlement are common in mortar joints of masonry construction. Refer to your RWC Warranty for the coverage period and limitations. After several years, face brick may require “tuck-pointing” (repairing the mortar between the bricks). This should be done by a professional Brick Mason. Otherwise, no regular maintenance is required. Efflorescence is a white crystalline or powdery deposit on the surface of masonry materials like concrete, brick, clay tile, etc. It is caused by water which dissolves salts inside an object while moving through it, then evaporates leaving the salt on the surface. Often these salts are water soluble and may disappear of their own accord with normal weathering.
- **Simulated Stone:** Similar to any siding product, an occasional power wash should be performed to remove environmental elements and clean the exterior. Low pressure and no chemicals should be used when power washing.
- **Vinyl Siding:** Vinyl siding is virtually maintenance free since it will not need to be caulked or painted. When properly installed, vinyl siding will feel somewhat loose when moved from side to side. This movement is necessary since the vinyl will shrink and expand. Some shrinkage of siding is to be expected. For specific warranty information, please see your RWC guidelines.

With regard for caring for your vinyl siding, it is recommended that you have your home power washed every three years. Although mildew will not attach to the vinyl, it can attach to the dirt on the vinyl. Having your home power washed will keep the finish looking fresh and clean.

- **Cementitious Siding:** Cementitious siding will require painting and caulking. Please refer to those sections in this guide for further information.
- **Dryvit:** Dryvit is a very low-maintenance exterior siding product. It will never need to be painted, and the only maintenance that needs to be performed is power washing and caulking. Power washing should be done using a mild bleach and water solution, and a PSI range of 400-600. Power wash as needed for aesthetic appearances. Caulking on a synthetic stucco home should be performed by a caulking professional, not a handyman. The type of sealants used on a synthetic stucco home will last an average of 5-7 years.

## ***FIREPLACE***

General Information – Technology of fireplaces has advanced far beyond the masonry unit which was installed 25 years ago. LifeStyle Builders installs direct vent gas fireplaces. No fireplace is intended to be the major heat source in the home. The fireplace should function properly when LifeStyle Builders and the manufacturer's directions are followed.

### Expectations and Warranty

- **Wood Burning (Masonry) Fireplace:** It is not uncommon to experience a down draft during high winds, however this condition should be temporary and occasional. Discoloration of the firebox or brick is the normal result of use and requires no corrective action. Consult the RWC Limited Warranty for specific warranty information.
- **Direct Vent Gas Fireplace:** Because of our support for energy efficient homes, LifeStyle Builders may install a direct vent gas fireplace. A gas fireplace is checked during the Pre-Settlement Orientation Walk-Thru to confirm it is operational. Be aware that there is a delay between turning the switch on and flame ignition. The flames should ignite gently and quietly. ***Read and follow all manufacturer directions for operation.*** If you notice any deviation in this or any gas smell, shut the switch off immediately, shut the gas valve off, leave the house and call the gas supplier from a neighbor's house.

***Damage to glass doors, when included with the home, will be corrected if noted during the Pre-Settlement Orientation.*** The homeowner should follow manufacturer's instructions for using glass doors.

### Care and Maintenance

- **Wood Burning Fireplaces:** The most important maintenance attention you can give your wood burning fireplace is regular cleaning. The timing on having your chimney cleaned will be determined by how often you use your fireplace and the type of wood you burn. Heavy use with soft woods or improperly seasoned woods will result in the need for more frequent cleaning, probably once each year. ***Creosote and other wood-burning by-products accumulate inside the flues over a period of time. This build up can be a fire hazard.*** A qualified chimney sweep should be hired for this cleaning.

Most of us feel a fireplace is an excellent way to create a warm and cozy atmosphere. However, without sufficient information, a Homeowner's use of his fireplace can easily result in much heat (and many dollars) being wasted. To prevent this, consider the following facts and suggestions.

1. Burning a fire should be looked upon as a luxury, adding much to the atmosphere and just a little to the heat in a home. Only about 10% of the heat produced by a fire is radiated into the house. Normally as it burns, the fire draws warm air from the house for combustion as well. This means you pay to heat the air in your home and the fireplace then uses it to burn wood, sending a large percentage of the resulting heat up the chimney.
  2. Ordinarily, the air used by the fireplace for combustion is replaced with cold outside air that is drawn in through cracks around doors and windows. However, your home is constructed so tightly that this does not happen. The fresh air vent has been installed to provide the fireplace with combustion air and help minimize the amount of heated air the fire draws from your house. Open this vent prior to starting the fire as you do the damper.
  3. When not in use the damper and fresh air vent should be closed. Leaving these open is equivalent to having an open window in the house. If the fire is still burning, but you are finished enjoying it, use glass doors to prevent heated air from being drawn up the chimney until the damper can be closed. *One caution on the use of glass doors: Do not close them over a roaring fire, especially if you are burning hard woods (oak, hickory, etc.), because this could result in glass breakage.* When closing the doors over a burning fire, open the mesh screens first. This prevents excessive heat build up on the mesh which might result in warping or discoloration.
  4. Your objective in building a fire should be a clean, steady, slow-burning fire. Always begin with a small fire first to allow the components of the fireplace to heat up slowly. Failure to do so may damage the fireplace and can void the warranty. Starting the fire by burning kindling and newspaper under the grate; two to three layers of logs stacked with air space between, and largest logs to the rear, will work best. One sheet of paper burned on top of the stack will help the chimney start to draw. Any logs 6" in diameter or larger should be split. Do not burn trash in the fireplace and never use any type of liquid fire starter. Old ashes and coals should be removed from under the grate when completely cool. A light layer is desirable as an insulator and will help to reflect heat.
  5. If you have a *pre-fabricated fireplace*, you may smell a slight odor and see smoke coming from the fireplace or from the heat-circulating grilles. This is the paint curing and oil burning off the metal. This is normal and will disappear after the first few uses. Clean the ashes from the firebox before starting each fire.
- **Direct Vent Gas Fireplaces:** LifeStyle Builders installs a gas unit which has a "continuous" pilot light. This light can stay lit all year, however, LifeStyle Builders recommends it be put out during the summer months and relit each Fall.

When lit for the first time, the gas fireplace will emit a slight odor for 1-2 hours. This is due to paint and lubricants used in the manufacturing process. Also, for the first few minutes after each lighting, vapor may condense and fog the glass. This moisture will disappear in a few minutes.

The glass panel on your gas fireplace should be removed and cleaned thoroughly after the first burning. This will prevent a build up on the inside of the glass. The panel should then be cleaned periodically if natural gas, more often if propane.

Your gas fireplace has been vented to the exterior of the house. It is very important that this vent remain unobstructed. If the vent is located in the deck area, be careful to keep all furniture, grills, etc. from blocking the vent. Failure to keep the vent unobstructed can result in a tremendous heat build-up which could possibly cause a fire.

## ***FLOOR COVERING - CARPET***

General Information – Carpets are available in a variety of materials, such as nylon, polyester and wool. Typically, nylon carpets are within the selection specified by LifeStyle Builders and are very durable. Although you may have purchased a “stain resistant” carpet, there is no carpet which is absolutely stain proof. Please refer to the literature on your specific carpet selection to understand the care needed to preserve its beauty.

Expectations and Warranty – Carpet seams will be visible under certain conditions. No obvious gap or fraying is acceptable, however. Edges of carpet along moldings and edges of stairs should be held firmly in place. LifeStyle Builders, one time during the first year of occupancy, will have your carpet re-stretched if it has come loose or if it is bunching in a given area. This determination will be made by a LifeStyle Builders Customer Care Representative or the carpet supplier. In some areas, metal or other edging material may be used where carpet meets another floor covering.

***Only those stains or spots noted during the Pre-Settlement Orientation will be corrected by cleaning, patching, or replacement.*** The method of repair will be determined by a LifeStyle Builders Customer Care Representative or the carpet supplier. LifeStyle Builders will not be responsible for dye lot variations if replacements are made.

Dust molecules, which are part of the normal air movement within any home, may collect in areas of high air circulation and become more visible in white or light colored carpets. Although this occurrence is rare, it is not warranted by LifeStyle Builders. Consult with your carpet supplier for more information.

It is wise to store leftover carpet since it can be used for repairs.

Care and Maintenance – Vacuuming high traffic areas daily will not only keep them clean but will help to maintain the upright position of the nap. Spills should be wiped up and stains spot cleaned immediately. Always dab at the stain, never rub it. Prior to use, stain removers should be tested on an “out of the way” area of the carpet, such as in a closet, to check for any undesirable effects. Professional cleaning should be performed regularly (LifeStyle Builders recommends annually). Always place walk-off mats at entrances to absorb soil and moisture.

Carpet tacking strips are used at walls and along stairs to hold the carpet in place. In rare instances, you may be able to feel the tacks with your bare feet along the wall or stairs. If this causes a nuisance, lightly tap the area with a hammer. This will bend the point of the tack down.

# ***FLOOR COVERING – HARDWOOD***

General Information – The solid oak hardwood floor you have selected is 100 percent natural. Although today's better finishes make caring for hardwood floors easier than ever, you should be aware of the steps required to protect and maintain the pleasing appearance. Wood floors will respond noticeably to changes in the humidity level in the home. This is especially noticeable in the winter when heat tends to dry out the wood. Do not expect your floors to be dust free. Nor will your floor be monotone as wood grain and shades vary from board to board.

Expectations and Warranty – ***Readily noticeable cosmetic defects noted during the Pre-Settlement Orientation will be corrected by LifeStyle Builders.*** Hardwood flooring is a beautiful finish to any home. However, as with any natural product, there will be certain occurrences which LifeStyle Builders cannot control and ***no corrective action will be taken:***

1. *Variations in wood grain and color:* Readily noticeable variations in wood grain and color are expected and lend character to your hardwood flooring.
2. *Small knots:* Some oak floor boards may exhibit small knots which are also part of the character of the wood and not considered a defect. Occasionally, a small hole from the knot may be noticeable or small splinters may be seen. These two traits are natural tendencies of wood and are not considered cosmetic defects.
3. *Minor shrinkage and warping:* Some shrinkage or warping can be expected, especially around heat vents or any heat producing appliances. Warping may occur in the form of cupping or crowning. Cupping occurs when wood gains or loses moisture on one side faster than the other. This is a natural property of a wood floor and is determined by household climatic conditions and personal living habits.
4. *Cracks and gaps from humidity fluctuations:* Finished wood floors will expand and contract due to humidity changes in your home. Cracks and gaps between the boards are the result of this climatic change and are considered normal. Consult your RWC warranty for specific thresholds of coverage.
5. *Wearing of finish:* A dulling of the finish in heavy traffic areas is likely.
6. *Filmy appearance:* A white, filmy appearance is generally caused by moisture (often from wet shoes or boots).

Care and Maintenance – Wood floors will respond noticeably to changes in humidity in the home, especially in the winter. A humidifier will help but will not completely eliminate this reaction. Dimples or scratches can be caused by moving furniture, dropping heavy or sharp objects, etc. In daily care of hardwood floors, preventive maintenance is the primary goal.

## a) Spills

Food spills should be cleaned up in a timely manner using a very dry cloth. For spot cleaning, use Bruce Dura-Luster No-Wax Floor Cleaner applied to a clean cloth and rub onto the spot. Ideally, keep as much moisture off of your floor as possible. This means that when mopping up spills, or in daily cleaning, the mop should be DAMP. Never saturate a wood floor with a dripping mop!



depending on the vinyl pattern. Certain vinyl patterns will make repairs less visible than others. In any situation which requires replacement, LifeStyle Builders will not be responsible for discontinued selections. However, in most cases, remnants of vinyl will be left in the house for future repairs if needed. Seams will occur and are sealed at the time of installation. There should be no gaps or curling at seams. With regard to repairs and replacement, the final determination will be made by a LifeStyle Builders Customer Care Representative or the vinyl supplier.

Care and Maintenance – Although resilient floors are designed for minimum care, they do vary in maintenance needs. All resilient floors require some regular application of a good floor finish. This assures you of retaining a high gloss. However, no cleaning or finishing agents should be used on the new floor until the adhesive has set thoroughly. This takes about two weeks.

- a) No Wax                      The resilient flooring installed in your home is the “no wax” type. “No-wax” means it is coated with a clear, tough coating which provides both a shiny appearance and a wearing surface. Even this surface will scuff or mark. Follow any manufacturer's specific recommendations for care and cleaning of all your hard surface floors.
  
- b) Limit Water                      Wipe up spills and vacuum crumbs instead of washing resilient floors frequently with water. Mopping or washing with water should be limited; excessive amounts of water on resilient floors can penetrate seams and get under edges causing the material to lift and curl.
  
- c) Scrubbing                      Frequent scrubbing or electric buffing is harder on floors than regular foot traffic. Use acrylic finishes if you scrub or buff.
  
- d) Moving                      Use extreme caution when moving appliances across resilient floor covering. Tears and wrinkles can result. Coasters should be installed on furniture legs to prevent permanent damage.
  
- e) Nail Heads                      Raised nail heads are the result of movements of the floor joist caused by natural shrinkage and deflection. Special nails and glue have been used and the underlayment has been glued to help minimize this movement. If a nail head becomes visible through resilient flooring, place a block of wood over it and hit with a hammer to reset the nail.
  
- f) Seams                      Seams can lift or curl if excessive moisture is allowed on the floor. A special caulking can be used at tub or floor joints to seal seams at those locations. Precautionary measures should be taken to avoid getting water on the floor from baths and showers. Floors of any type will shrink and seams may actually separate due to this shrinkage.
  
- g) Ridges                      The joints of underlayment have been sanded and filled to minimize the possibility of ridges showing through resilient floor coverings. Some ridging is unavoidable, however, and there is no recommended maintenance attention for this condition.
  
- h) More Care                      Refer to manufacturer's recommendations for additional information on the care of all floor covering products.

i) Repairs

Although the surface can be damaged by furniture, high heel shoes, etc., most vinyl can be easily repaired. A repair is made by cutting out the damaged section, tracing/cutting that section onto a remnant of the vinyl, gluing down the piece and seal the adjoined edges with silicone caulk. Repairs are easy if the pattern is geometrical.

## ***GARAGE OVERHEAD DOOR***

General Information – Unless otherwise specified on the Distinctive Included Features for your neighborhood, the garage door installed in your home contains polystyrene insulation which is chemically bonded to 25 gauge galvanized steel. This type of door provides more durability for additional resistance to denting and also increases the insulation value of the door.

Expectations and Warranty – The garage door should operate smoothly and with reasonable ease. Consult the RWC Limited Warranty for coverage information. Garage overhead doors cannot be air tight and typically some light will be visible around the edges and across the top of the door. Severe weather conditions may result in some precipitation entering around the door.

Care and Maintenance – The door can become misaligned and require adjustment. If this happens, contact a professional repair company to complete the adjustments. Since LifeStyle Builders installs a door which operates on nylon tires and solid steel shafts, no lubrication of the tract is necessary. However, we suggest you keep a can of spray lubricant (which does not contain water) on hand to periodically lubricate the hinges between the panels and the overhead spring(s).

1. Do not allow anyone except the operator near the door when it is in motion. Keep hands and fingers away from all parts of the door except the handle. Do not allow children to play with, or around, the door.
2. For your safety, have any needed adjustments made by a qualified specialist. The door springs are under a considerable amount of tension and require special tools and knowledge for accurate and safe servicing. Have the door inspected by a professional garage door technician after any significant impact to the door.
3. The garage door should be repainted, if applicable, when the home is repainted or more often if needed to maintain a satisfactory appearance.
4. If the lock becomes stiff, a graphite lubricant will make it work more easily. Do not use oil on a lock as it will stiffen in winter and make the lock difficult to operate.

## ***GAS SHUT OFFS***

General Information – There is a shut off on the gas line at or near its connection to each item that operates on gas. In addition, there is a main shut off at the meter. These are pointed out during the Pre-Settlement Orientation. ***IF YOU SUSPECT A GAS LEAK, TURN THE GAS OFF; if safe and possible, EXIT THE HOME and CALL THE GAS COMPANY IMMEDIATELY for emergency service.***

## ***GUTTERS AND DOWNSPOUTS***

General Information – Gutters and downspouts are a key element to the drainage system around your home and must operate as intended to fulfill their function. An improperly functioning gutter system may adversely affect the moisture content around your home.

Expectations and Warranty – Gutters may overflow during periods of excessively heavy rain. No correction is required for these conditions. Downspouts are placed to carry water to the ground. Materials that accumulate in gutters can slow the process of water draining from the roof, cause overflows, or clog the downspouts. Excess snow should be cleaned away from downspouts as soon as possible to allow the gutter to drain and prevent damage.

Care and Maintenance – As part of normal maintenance, the Homeowner should keep gutters clear of debris which might clog them and cause the water to run over the downspouts. The homeowner should check gutters periodically to insure proper functioning; excess snow should be brushed off gutters with a broom as soon as possible. Severe ice or snow build up can damage gutters.

- |                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| a) Ladders              | Do not lean ladders against gutters.  |
| b) Leaks                | If a joint between sections of gutter drips, caulk the inside joint using a commercial gutter caulking compound available at hardware stores. Do not use roofing tar. |
| c) Downspout Extensions | Should not be removed. Doing so may void site work warranty as defined in Section 3.16 of the RWC Limited Warranty.   |

## ***HARDWARE***

General Information – The hardware on your home consists of all door knobs, locks, hinges, mirrors, and cabinet handles. Additionally, hardware can include towel racks, toilet tissue holders, and robe hooks.

Expectations and Warranty – Doorknobs and locks should operate correctly. Some slight adjustments may be needed due to normal shrinkage of the framing. These adjustments will be made by LifeStyle Builders one time only during the first year of occupancy. Use care when opening doors with “hinge stops” as excessive pressure can damage the trim and the door.

***Only dents, chips, scratches, etc. in door hardware, towel bars, shower doors, etc., which are noted during the Pre-Settlement Orientation, will be repaired.***

Care and Maintenance – Periodic cleaning of chrome fixtures with mild non-abrasive soap and buffing with a soft cloth should keep your fixtures looking good. If adjustments are needed, see appropriate section in this guide, i.e., “Doors” for door adjustments.

# *HVAC*

**General Information:** LifeStyle Builders considered three major factors in choosing the proper heating and cooling systems for your new home:

1. The comfort needs of the customer.
2. The performance of the systems with regard to heating and cooling needs on MOST of the calendar days. These needs are based on historical temperature data relevant to the geographical area in which the home is located. It is important to realize that the systems chosen are not designed to comfort the homeowner in extreme temperatures to the same degree that they would in moderate or average temperatures, which are prevalent on MOST calendar days. A system which would guarantee maximum comfort in all weather conditions, in this geographical area, would not be cost efficient with respect to installation, performance and monthly operating costs. For this reason, you can be assured that the HVAC system which is installed in your home is of the highest quality and value. Good maintenance of the furnace can save energy dollars as well as prolong the life of the furnace itself. *Carefully read and follow the manufacturer's literature on use and care. The guidelines here include only general information.*
3. The size of the house. Depending on the size and layout of the house, either a One-Zone, Two-Zone, or Three-Zone unit was installed. Each plan is carefully reviewed by our HVAC contractor so that this determination can properly be made. Please consult your contract specifications with regard to the type of unit installed. *Finished rooms over the garage will typically feel cooler/warmer than the rest of the house, depending on the season, since they are located directly over a space which is not heated or cooled.*

## Expectations and Warranty

- **Air Conditioning:** Excessive temperatures may limit the unit from cooling to the thermostat level. However, if the system is not adequately cooling, contact LifeStyle Builders. Lack of air conditioning service is not an emergency. Problems will be handled by the heating and air conditioning contractor in the order received. It is important to maintain the A/C compressor in a relatively level position. If it “settles” during the first year, LifeStyle Builders will correct this. After the first year, the Homeowner must maintain it.
- **Heating System:** Heating systems will be installed in accordance with local building codes, as well as engineering designs of the particular model home.

## Care and Maintenance – (FOR BOTH AIR CONDITIONING AND HEATING SYSTEMS)

Since the air conditioning system is combined with the heating system, the maintenance suggested for your furnace should be followed. In addition, the manufacturer’s Owners Manual specifies maintenance for the “condenser” unit. This should be reviewed and followed. Air conditioning can add much to the comfort of your home, but it can be used improperly or inefficiently, resulting in wasted energy and frustration. These hints and suggestions are provided to help you maximize your air conditioning system.

To fully and efficiently utilize your HVAC system, you must understand that it is a total, whole-house system. The HVAC system involves everything inside your home including, for example, drapes and windows. Additionally, your HVAC system is a closed system, which means that the interior air is continually recycled and cooled or heated until the desired air temperature is reached. Outside air

disrupts the system and makes heating and cooling impossible. Therefore, you must keep all windows closed when in operation. The heat from the sun shining through windows with open drapes is intense enough to overcome the cooling effect of the air conditioning unit. Drapes must be closed on these windows. The same can be said for exceptionally cold days when the sun is not shining in. Closing your drapes can add another layer of “insulation” between the inside and outside of the home. The HVAC system design was planned with a furnished home in mind. If you move in during the cooler part of the year and have not yet acquired all of your draperies and furnishings, the home may seem cooler to you than you would expect.

Time is of paramount importance in your expectations of an HVAC system. Unlike a light bulb which reacts instantly when you turn on a switch, the HVAC unit only begins a process when you set the thermostat. For example if you come home at 5:30pm on a day when the temperature has reached 90 degrees, and then set your thermostat to 75 degrees, the air conditioning unit will begin cooling, but will take much longer to reach the desired temperature. During the whole day the sun has been heating not only the air in the house, but the walls, the carpet, and the furniture. At 5:30pm the air conditioning unit starts cooling the air, but the walls, carpet, and furniture release heat and nullify this cooling. By the time the air conditioning unit has cooled the walls, carpet, and furniture, you may well have lost patience.

If evening cooling is the primary goal, you should set the air conditioning thermostat at a moderate temperature in the morning while the house is cooler, allowing the unit to maintain the cooler temperature through the day. The temperature setting may then be lowered slightly when you arrive home, with better results. Setting the thermostat at 60 degrees will NOT cool the home any faster and can result in the unit “freezing up” and not performing at all. Extended use under these conditions can damage the unit. Likewise, setting the thermostat to a higher temperature will not heat the home faster.

You will find it advantageous to adjust the vents to maximize air flow to occupied parts of the home. In addition to the vents, your home will have an air intake (return) register. Neither this nor the vents should ever be obstructed. Heat register covers are removable and adjustable. Homeowners are responsible for adjusting the dampers to regulate the air flow within the home. In particular, attention is drawn to the fact that rooms further away from the furnace will need to have vents opened more.

If a humidifier is installed on the furnace system, it should be turned off when using air conditioning. Otherwise, the additional moisture can cause a “freeze up” of the cooling system.

For maximum efficiency and clean service, the furnace filter should be changed or cleaned once each month, but definitely changed at the beginning of each season. A clogged filter can slow air flow and cause cold or hot spots in your home. Although it takes less than one minute to change the filter, this is one of the most frequently overlooked details of normal HVAC care. Buy filters in large quantity for the sake of convenience. The instruction manual for the system will tell you the location of the filter and how to clean and replace it. Expansion or contraction of metal ductwork will typically result in some ticking or popping sounds. It is not possible to eliminate these sounds. Loud “oilcanning” will be corrected by the HVAC contractor. Some popping or pinging sounds are the natural result of ductwork heating and cooling in response to air flow as the system operates.

Although the heat system is not a “sealed system,” the ductwork should remain attached and securely fastened. If it becomes unattached, the HVAC contractor will repair as needed during the first two years of occupancy. Please see your RWC Limited Warranty for more specific information. The exact placement of heat ducts may vary slightly from those positions shown in similar floor plans.

Have a trial run early in the fall to test the furnace. (The same applies to A/C in the spring.) If service is needed, it is much less inconvenient to discover it prior to the heating season.

We recommend having your systems serviced annually. Most HVAC service companies offer some type of preventative maintenance plan. This type of plan usually includes site visits from a service technician to service and check your system's performance at least twice a year. In between service visits, we recommend changing filters as noted above and check overflow pans/pipes for clogs and blockages.

Your new home should not be overheated as this can cause excessive shrinkage in framing lumber and may materially damage the home. In the beginning, use as little heat as possible, increasing it gradually.

It is normal for the heating system to emit an odor for a few moments when it is first turned on after an extended period of not being used (such as after the summer months if you do not use air conditioning). This is caused by dust that has settled in the ducts and should pass very quickly.

***IF YOU SUSPECT A GAS LEAK, TURN THE GAS OFF; if safe and possible, EXIT THE HOME and CALL THE GAS COMPANY IMMEDIATELY for emergency service.***

Furnaces that are installed in basements have combustion air vents run to them. Never cover these or block the cold air in any way. Outside air is needed to supply the furnace with sufficient oxygen. Blocking the combustion air vent will cause the furnace to draw air down the vent pipe and pull poisonous gases back into your home.

## ***HUMIDIFIER***

General Information – Humidifiers are intended to maintain a balance of moisture in your home. In addition to the health benefits, a proper moisture balance can help offset the shrinkage of wood components in your home, thereby reducing the maintenance required. A humidifier should only be operated with the furnace, never with the air conditioner.

Care and Maintenance – It is advisable to clean the moisture pad twice a year. To do so, shut off the water supply to the humidifier; drain the reservoir by pulling one end of the U-shaped tube at the bottom; remove the bottom half of the casing (four screws); remove the pan and clean it with warm water. Refer to the manufacturer's instructions for more information.

## ***INSULATION***

General Information – Insulation will be installed to meet or exceed the building codes applicable at the time of construction. The insulation in your home works because of its ability to trap air. This trapped air space acts as a buffer to either the cold or hot climate conditions outside.

Expectations and Warranty – Consult your RWC Limited Warranty.

Care and Maintenance – The effectiveness of blown insulation is diminished if it is uneven. The last step in any work done in your attic (for example, the installation of a TV antenna) should be to check that the insulation lays smooth and even. (Do not step on drywall ceilings, personal injury or damage to drywall can result.) Since insulation actually traps air, it must not be compressed or it will lose its insulating ability and value. Because certain insulation is actually glass wool, proper precautions should be taken when handling. Be sure to wear a breathing filter, gloves and clothes which cover your body.

# ***IRRIGATION***

General Information – The irrigation system (if applicable) in your home has been installed under the direction of a licensed Trade Partner of LifeStyle Builders, in accordance with local building codes and where required, has been inspected by a government authority.

Expectations and Warranty – Your irrigation system is under warranty for one (1) year from date of closing. Work performed by anyone other than the original Trade Partner used by LifeStyle Builders during this time will void your warranty. The warranty will not cover damage caused by weather (i.e. lightning) or power surges, accidents, misuse, lack of maintenance (i.e. failure to winterize), theft, alteration, or acts of God.

Care and Maintenance – Along with the convenience of your new irrigation system comes the need for routine maintenance to the system. This includes the need for you to schedule **winterization before freezing temperatures**. Winterization involves using an air compressor to purge water from the system. This process reduces the possibility of freeze damage over the winter. Failure to winterize, or waiting too long, may cause serious damage to system components; this would not be covered by the warranty.

Many of our customers choose to have the original Trade Partner provide system activation in the Spring. This process is helpful because qualified technicians start the system, adjust irrigation heads to ensure proper coverage, and program the control box.

Many companies also provide maintenance programs after the first year that include mid-season or monthly check-ups on your system.

# ***LOT AND YARD***

This section covers the 3 basic tasks performed to convert your lot into a yard. Your lot is first cleared, then graded 2 times which are referred to as “rough” and “fine” grade. Finally, landscaping occurs.

## **CLEARING**

General Information – LifeStyle Builders clears every lot to insure adequate room for the home, proper drainage away from the home, and a pleasing outdoor environment. Typically, there will be “disturbed” areas and “undisturbed” areas. “Disturbed” areas are the portions of the lot which LifeStyle Builders has cleared in order to build the house, including areas designated for drainage and yard space.

Expectations and Warranty – With the exception of removal of construction debris, the “undisturbed” areas will be left as is. Additionally, power and phone companies have an easement with which to bring services to the home. LifeStyle Builders is not responsible for rough or fine grade of utility easements.

Every buyer of a *Signature Home* will have a Siting Meeting with their Field Manager. At that time, the Field Manager will review how the house is to be sited on the lot. ***The “garage” side of the house will be located on the high side of the lot, if one exists.*** At this meeting, your Field Manager will discuss which trees can remain. Homeowners can give preference to certain trees, however, LifeStyle Builders reserves the right to remove any tree which will compromise the building process. Likewise, no trees will be removed after “clearing” unless they appear to be dead, are within the originally cleared perimeter and noted during the Pre-Settlement Orientation. LifeStyle Builders or its representatives will make the determination if a tree is alive or dead.

It is impossible to predict the life of a tree or to predict to what extent disturbing the surrounding ground will affect the life of a tree. For this reason, trees which are to remain become the Homeowner's responsibility after closing. However, if your home closed during the winter months, when trees are naturally barren, we will allow you until Spring to notify us of a suspected dead tree. In all cases, LifeStyle Builders will make the final determination.

***All trees which are removed after the initial clearing will be “flush” cut with the ground. The stump will not be removed.***

## **GRADING & DRAINAGE**

General Information – There are two types of grading which occur on your lot. The first is “rough grade”. At rough grade, all construction debris is removed from the lot. The second type of grading is the “fine grade”. Fine grade usually occurs towards the end of the building process. At this time, the final grade is established to insure adequate drainage away from the home. To stabilize the grade and to control soil erosion, grass seed and straw, or sod are put down. Inspections are made by the local building authorities, the mortgage lender (if applicable) and your Field Manager.

Expectations and Warranty – LifeStyle Builders’ purpose of performing a “fine grade” is to insure positive drainage away from your foundation. If the drainage pattern is altered either by action taken directly or instigated by the Homeowner or his agent, or as a result of neglect of maintenance, the warranty is void. To insure that the drainage patterns have a chance to settle, grass seed and straw are applied. At certain times during the year, LifeStyle Builders may add a percentage of rye grass to seed being planted. This will typically occur during rainy seasons since rye tends to take root quickly. Once the seed takes root, the Homeowner should take special care initially to keep the seed watered and undisturbed. Since seeding and strawing are required by all lenders to be done prior to closing, it is possible that these actions can occur at inappropriate seasonal times. ***Maintaining the seed and straw put down by LifeStyle Builders is considered lawn maintenance which is a homeowner responsibility.***

Failure of seed typically occurs during unpredictable weather, such as heavy rains or drought. Due to our inability to control weather patterns, LifeStyle Builders cannot guarantee any outcome of the seed and straw which is applied at fine grade. Establishing a healthy lawn is a big responsibility facing the owner of a new home; it is one of the most important efforts an owner can put forth. In most cases, drainage swales, formed during final grade, do not follow property boundaries. LifeStyle Builders will not alter drainage patterns to suit individual landscape plans. Typically a yard will receive water from and/or pass water on to neighboring yards. For this reason, homeowner changes in grade often affect those adjacent or near by. LifeStyle Builders advises homeowners against making such changes.

Due to weather conditions, especially during winter and early spring, it may happen that the final grade has not been established at the time of closing. When conditions permit, grading work will continue. The homeowner should check on the status of his/her grading prior to beginning landscaping. We realize the inconvenience an ungraded yard can cause and will do everything possible to grade the yard as soon as conditions permit. However, we reserve the right to determine when those conditions exist.

LifeStyle Builders is not responsible for weather related damage after the closing date. Examples of this damage may include erosion of drainage ditches, drought caused failure of seed and straw, wash out of seed and straw, and wash out of top soil. It is critical to establish grass in drainage swales as soon as possible to prevent erosion. Additional seeding is advised as conditions warrant. See the “Landscaping & Seeding” section below for tips on getting your lawn started.

Utility trenches are narrow areas of land which have been excavated for the installation of the utility lines. These areas may settle, especially after long or hard rains. This is an unpreventable occurrence and no corrective action will be taken by LifeStyle Builders. The settled trench can easily be repaired by filling and packing with dirt and then reseeded the area.

Some neighborhoods require that sod be installed, rather than seed and straw. The installation of and extra watering required by sod can cause temporary drainage problems, as can unusually severe weather conditions. ***No warranty is provided for sod, once it is installed. See the “Landscaping & Seeding” section below for tips on getting your lawn started.***

It is not uncommon to experience some slight water accumulation in the garage during a heavy or steady rain. Your garage slab has been planed for this and the water will drain out within a short period of time.

With regard to homeowner complaints about grading and drainage... LifeStyle Builders will inspect problems reported in writing ***one time*** during the one year warranty period and advise homeowner as to corrective actions which he/she might take.

Care and Maintenance – During construction, it is necessary to excavate an area larger than the foundation of your home. Some trenching is also necessary for the installation of utility lines. Although the soil is replaced and re-compacted, it does not return to its original density. Some settling will occur, especially after prolonged heavy rainfall or melting of considerable amounts of snow. This can continue to occur for the first few years you are in your home, depending on the amount of precipitation and other factors. Do not remove the splash blocks and/or downspout extensions from under the downspouts. Keep these in place at all times, sloped so the water drains away from your home quickly.

## **LANDSCAPING & SEEDING**

General Information – The foundation of your home is constructed beginning with an excavation into the earth. When the foundation walls are complete, the area surrounding them is backfilled with earth. This area is not as compact and dense as undisturbed ground. Water can penetrate through the backfilled area to the lower areas of your foundation. This can be avoided through proper maintenance of landscaping and good maintenance of backfill drainage. Backfill areas will settle and require prompt attention.

Settlement will not disturb your utility lines; however, you may see a slight depression develop in the front lawn along the line of the utility trench. To correct this, dig up the grass and spread top soil underneath to level the area, then relay the grassed section.

Expectations and Warranty – The weather is unpredictable and out of the control of both LifeStyle Builders and you, the homeowner. Due to this uncontrollable nature, LifeStyle Builders cannot guarantee any outcome of the seed and straw or sod which is applied at final grade. Achieving a beautiful lawn is perhaps the greatest challenge facing the owner of a new home. The seeding and strawing of your lawn is required by all lenders to be done prior to closing. In many instances, this is not the most opportune time to plant a lawn, i.e., during a winter freeze or summer drought. Ground left unlandscaped too long will erode. Any erosion due to the homeowner's un-timeliness in landscaping will not be corrected by LifeStyle Builders.

Prior to the seed being established, it is critical that you inspect your lawn after every heavy rain. If you see small gullies which have developed due to the rain, the seed has more than likely been washed away.

This is referred to as a “washout” and LifeStyle Builders does not warrant this situation. If you see a gully, simply fill with top soil and reseed the area. Washouts, although frustrating, are unavoidable during times of heavy or continuous rain. Keeping a close eye on the area and insuring the seed takes root are the only measures available to avoid washouts.

Care and Maintenance – Downspout extensions should be kept in the down position so that roof run off is channeled well away from the foundation area of the home. Routine inspections of downspouts, backfill areas, and other drainage components is recommended.

Do not allow edging around decorative rock or mulch beds to dam the free flow of water away from the home. A non-woven membrane, such as Typar or Mirafi, can be used between the soil and rock or bark to restrict weed growth while still permitting normal evaporation of ground moisture. Landscaping that is incorrectly installed may cause or contribute to moisture in your crawl space.

## SOME TIPS FOR GETTING YOUR LAWN STARTED

Please note that because soil conditions vary from location to location, an exact formula for healthy turf is impossible to define in this guide. To achieve a healthy lawn, we recommend you consult your local lawn and garden center about the type of soil surrounding your home. Your local lawn and garden center can guide you in selecting the appropriate seed and fertilizer and can instruct you on the best times to seed, fertilize and apply lime.

1. Other than sunlight, ***your yard will need constant watering of the root system for healthy growth.*** Watering your newly seeded lawn with any type of hand held watering system runs the risk of damaging the newly forming grass or washing it away. Use a sprinkler for gentle consistency. How much and how often will depend on the weather.
2. ***Test the soil's pH level.*** The pH is a measure of acidity and alkalinity and is rated on a scale of 0-14. The lower the number, the more acidic your soil. A pH of 7.0 is neutral. To maintain a healthy lawn, have your soil tested about every two years.
3. ***Adjust the pH with lime.*** In order to raise the level of your pH, you will need to add lime. The following chart will tell you the amount of lime you will need to add to raise your soil to 6.5

### POUNDS OF LIMESTONE PER 100 SQUARE FEET

Current pH	Pounds
4.0	23
4.5	19.5
5.0	15
5.5	10.5
6.0	5.5

4. At least once a year, ***use an aerator*** that removes soil cores to reduce compaction and open the soil for penetration of water, fertilizer and seed. Aerate your lawn only after a good rain or thorough watering. If the soil is dry, the prongs will not penetrate deep enough into the soil.
5. ***Plant grass seed*** recommended by your local lawn and garden center. There are four basic types of seed. Tall fescue, fine fescue, Kentucky bluegrass and turf-type perennial rye grass. Choosing the seed that's right for your lawn takes some consideration. Each type of seed has its recommended rate of application, so you must follow the instructions. Just remember not to go overboard. Too much seed is as bad as too little.

6. Next to choosing the right seed for your lawn, the second most important thing you can do is ***choose the correct fertilizer***. Most of us realize that under-fertilizing will lead to thin grass and weeds, but over fertilizing can be just as harmful.

There are several types of fertilizers available. They can be liquid or granular; fast acting or slow release; synthetic or natural. Liquid fertilizers, such as the type you attach to your hose contain water soluble nitrogen. The nutrients in this type of fertilizer will leach out of soil before they do any good. In this case, using granular fertilizers are still best. Read the label of the fertilizer. The water soluble nitrogen is the quick-fix, and the insoluble nitrogen is released over a period of time, so you want this number to be higher. Some common names for insoluble nitrogen are: ammonium, ammonia, and urea. Nitrate nitrogen is the water soluble form. Reading the instructions will let you know how much to add and this will depend on the type of grass chosen. If you purchase a fertilizer that has a ratio of 20-10-5, this means it has 20% nitrogen, which is always the first number. The second number is phosphorus which encourages root growth. The third number is potassium which will help your grass resist heat and droughts in summer.

The homeowner is cautioned that rototilling the site will often significantly change drainage swales, as will erosion resulting from the site remaining un-landscaped for a long period. If rototilling is done, it should be done parallel to the swales rather than across them.

## ***PAIN AND STAIN***

General Information – LifeStyle Builders’ painting process has been developed to provide interior and exterior finishes of lasting quality.

Expectations and Warranty – LifeStyle Builders will touch-up paint as indicated on the Pre-Settlement Orientation Checklist. ***The homeowner will be responsible for all subsequent touch-ups unless provided as part of another warranty repair.***

Homeowners will receive a sample of each interior paint used for subsequent touch-ups. This paint should be stored so as not to be affected by freezing temperatures. Paint touch-ups are sometimes visible under certain lighting conditions. This can be especially true if the paint touch-up is performed after occupancy due to a warranty item repair. Fading of both interior and exterior paint or stain can be expected due to the effects of sun and weather. No repair is provided for this occurrence.

Unless specified otherwise, your walls and ceilings will be painted the same color.

***Color names, numbers, and paint brands are noted on the color selection sheets. Keep your Selection Sheet with this book for future reference.***

Wood trim will develop some minor cracks and raised grain as it ages and dries. Much of this will occur during the first year. Raised grain can result in peeling paint; however, this is not due to a defect in materials or workmanship. Paint maintenance of wood trim and gutters is the homeowner’s responsibility. When *painted* wood trim displays separation from the adjacent material, caulking is the acceptable method of repair.

If staining of certain interior components is selected, it is important to note that the same color of stain applied to different types of wood, and in some instances, the same type of wood may have a variation

in appearance of color. LifeStyle Builders will permit the homeowner to specify stain colors “to match” another item in the house, like cabinets or hardwood floors. However, LifeStyle Builders will not guarantee or warrant that the colors will match. *The color tone of unstained shoe molding, in particular, will appear different from board to board. An application of stain may enhance this variation.*

### Care and Maintenance

- **Interior:** The walls and ceilings are painted with flat latex wall paint and should be touched-up with matching paint rather than wiped with a wet sponge. Follow the manufacturer’s directions with regard to the washability of the paint in your home. The interior trim has been painted with either a high-gloss or semi-gloss paint and can be wiped with a damp sponge. Spackle may be used to cover any small defects prior to paint touch-up.

When doing paint touch-up, use a small brush, applying paint only to the damaged spot. *Due to the paint’s natural tendency to fade, touch-up may not match the surrounding area exactly, even if the same paint mix is used.*

*Do not attempt to fix drywall cracks or other separations due to shrinkage until after the first heating season.* See the previous “Drywall” section of this chapter for additional information about repairs.

- **Exterior:** Regular painting and repair will preserve the beauty of and add value to your home. Check the painted/stained surfaces of your home’s exterior annually. *If you repaint before there is much chipping or wearing of the original finish, you will save the cost of extensive surface preparation.* It is a wise maintenance policy to plan on refinishing the exterior trim of your home during the first two years of occupancy or as often as your paint manufacturer suggests for your area and climate. The siding is factory primed prior to installation. This insures that the final paint coat applied lasts longer. The chemical structure of the paint used on the exterior is governed by the climatic conditions. Over a period of time, this finish will fade and dull a bit.

In some instances, mildew may form on the exterior surfaces of your home. Mildew is not caused by paint but by airborne spores and is a homeowner maintenance responsibility. Mildew should be removed prior to repainting any exterior surface. Having your home “power washed” will destroy the mildew. However, you can do it yourself by preparing a mixture of ¼ bleach to ¾ water and applying this solution to the surface with a medium soft brush. Thoroughly wash the area after application.

When you wish to repaint exterior wood work on you home, please follow these guidelines for the best possible finish:

1. Nails should be reset. (Note: hardboard siding nails should be driven in so that the nail head does not penetrate the surface. This method prevents moisture from seeping into the siding which can cause warping and rusting.)
2. The blistered or peeling portions of paint should be wire-brushed or scraped off with a putty knife, then sanded.
3. The area should be spotted with primer.
4. Then the entire area can be painted. Be certain to apply a top quality exterior paint that has been formulated for local climate conditions.

# PLUMBING

General Information – The plumbing system in your home has been installed under the direction of a licensed plumber in accordance with local building codes and, where required, has been inspected by government authorities. Drainage from all lines and fixtures was found to be satisfactory when tested.

## Expectations and Warranty

- **DRAINS & SEWER LINES** – Drains and sewer lines should operate freely. Obstruction resulting from construction debris will be corrected by LifeStyle Builders. LifeStyle Builders will correct clogged drains that occur during the first thirty (30) days after closing. Obstructions that occur at any time which are shown to be the result of homeowner action will be corrected at the homeowner's expense.
- **LEAKS** – During the first year of occupancy, LifeStyle Builders will repair leaks in the plumbing system. If a plumbing leak caused by a warranted item results in drywall or floor covering damage, this will be repaired by LifeStyle Builders. ***No adjustments will be made for secondary damages (wallpaper, drapes, personal belongings, water usage, etc.).*** Homeowner insurance may cover these items.
- **FREEZING PIPES** – Provided that the home is heated at a normal level, pipes should not freeze. Heat should be set at 65 degrees if you are away during winter months. Garage doors should be kept closed to protect plumbing lines which may be installed in this area. Additionally, you should close your crawl space door and crawl space vents prior to the first anticipated freezing weather. ***Do not*** re-open your vents until after the last freeze. Outside faucets are subject to freezing. If a hose is left attached, the water that remains in the hose can freeze and expand back into the pipe, causing a break in the line. LifeStyle Builders will repair any problems with these faucets noted during the Pre-Settlement Orientation. Subsequent to the orientation, repairs of broken lines to exterior faucets will be the homeowner's responsibility.
- **NOISY PIPES** – Changes in temperature or the flow of the water itself will cause some noise in the drain pipes as well as supply pipes. This is *normal* and requires no repair. Consistent "water hammer" will be repaired. Temperature and volume/flow variations can be expected if water is being used in more than one location in the home.
- **SINKS, TUBS, TOILETS, SHOWERS** – ***Any damage to sinks and tubs noted during the Pre-Settlement Orientation will be repaired.*** Chips, scratches, etc., reported subsequent to the Pre-Settlement Orientation, will not be repaired. The homeowner is responsible for following manufacturer's directions for caring for fiberglass products.

In accordance with the National Energy Act of 1992, LifeStyle Builders installs "ultra-low flow" toilets. This toilet has a tank capacity of 1.6 gallons rather than 3.5 gallons which were used for almost a decade prior to the enactment of this law. Since this new toilet has been completely re-engineered to conserve water, on occasions there may not be enough water to completely empty your toilet and a second flush will be required.

Care and Maintenance – The location of your main water shut-off will be pointed out during the Pre-Settlement Orientation. ***It is important to know and remember the location of the shut off for emergencies such as a water line freeze or break.*** It is also helpful to know if you install a lawn sprinkler system or if you plan an addition to your home.

Even though your plumbing lines have been flushed out to remove dirt and foreign matter, there are usually small amounts of minerals that enter the line. Aerators on the faucets strain much of this from your water. However, minerals, etc. caught in these aerators may cause the water to be discharged in an inconsistent manner, or inhibit the flow altogether. Cleaning your aerator will usually help this.

- **CLEANING FIXTURES** – Follow the manufacturer’s directions for cleaning fixtures. Abrasive cleansers will remove the shiny finish leaving behind a porous surface that is difficult to maintain. A non-abrasive cleaner or a liquid detergent is usually recommended; brass fixtures come with a protective coating. Please refer to the “Hardware” section of this chapter.
- **PORCELAIN ENAMEL** – Porcelain enamel can be damaged by a sharp blow from a heavy object. It can also be scratched. Do not stand in the bathtub wearing shoes unless you have placed a protective layer of newspaper over the bottom of the tub. If paint is splattered onto the porcelain enamel surfaces during redecorating, it should be wiped up immediately. If some spots dry before being noticed, use a recommended solvent to remove. Use a non-abrasive cleaner on your porcelain enamel. Similarly, avoid exposing the toilet to blows from sharp or heavy objects; this can cause chipping or cracking. Avoid abnormal pressures against the sides of the tank. It is possible to crack the tank at the points where it is attached to the bowl.
- **STAINLESS** – Stainless steel sinks should be cleaned with soap and water to preserve their luster. Do not use abrasive cleaners; these will damage the finish. An occasional cleaning with a good stainless steel cleaner will enhance the finish. Care should be taken to avoid leaving produce on a stainless steel surface since prolonged contact with produce can stain the finish. Stainless steel sinks can rust, therefore, do not leave steel wool cleaning pads or cast iron pans on the surface.
- **DRIPPING FAUCET** – A dripping faucet may be corrected by cleaning the aerator. If this does not work, have the internal workings of the faucet checked.
- **MAJOR PLUMBING LEAK** – If a major plumbing leak occurs, the first step is to turn off the supply of water to the area involved. This may mean shutting off the water to the entire home. Then contact the appropriate contractor.
- **RUNNING WATER IN TOILET** – To stop running water in your toilet, check the shut-off float in the tank. You will most likely find it has lifted too high in the tank, preventing the valve from shutting off completely. In this case, gently bend the float rod down until it stops the water at the correct level. The float should be free and not rub the side of the tank or any other parts. Also, check the chain on the flush handle; if it is too tight, it will prevent the rubber stopper at the bottom of the tank from sealing resulting in running water.
- **GARBAGE DISPOSAL** – Many plumbing clogs are caused by improper garbage disposal use. Always use plenty of cold water when running the disposal. This applies to grease also. Supplied with a steady flow of cold water, the grease congeals and is cut up by the blades. If you use hot water, the grease remains a liquid, then cools and solidifies in the sewer line. Allow the water to run a minimum of 15 seconds after shutting off the disposal. It is recommended that you limit putting grease in the drains and disposal. Most disposals come with a special wrench that will fit in the bottom of the disposal. If the disposal jams, manually turning this wrench (with the disposal turned OFF) will usually free the disposal.

- **CLOGGED TRAPS** – Clogged traps can usually be cleared with a plumber's helper (plunger). If you use chemical agents, follow directions carefully to avoid injury or damage to the fixtures or personal injury.
- **PLUNGER DRAIN STOPPER** – Clean a plunger drain stopper, usually found in bathroom sinks, by loosening the nut under the sink at the back, pull out the rod attached to the plunger and lift the stopper out. Clean and return the mechanism to its original position.
- **TOILET CLOGS** – The main causes of toilet clogs are various domestic items such as paper towels, paper diapers, excessive amounts of toilet paper or the wrong type of paper, sanitary supplies, Q-tips, dental floss, children toys, etc. To unclog, try a plunger. If unsuccessful, contact a plumber for assistance.
- **FIBERGLASS** – Use non-abrasive cleaners to avoid scratching the finish. For a longer lasting sheen, apply auto paste wax to the unit.
- **WHIRLPOOL TUBS** – Avoid using bath oil, bath oil beads or bubble bath when the whirlpool motor is running as this substance can clog the jets. Follow manufacturer's instructions for periodic cleaning and safety precautions.
- **WATER HEATER** – With regard to your water heater, it is important that you carefully read the manufacturer's literature for your specific model of water heater.

The area around a gas-fired water heater should be vacuumed as needed to prevent dust from interfering with proper flame combustion. The top of a gas-fired water heater should never be used as a storage shelf. Additionally, you should never store anything which could come into contact with the sides of a gas water heater.

Never light a gas pilot or turn on electricity when the heater tank is empty. Always turn off the gas or electric power before shutting off the cold water supply (located at the top of the tank).

To light the water heater pilot,

1. Remove the cover panel on the tank to expose the pilot. Then rotate the on/off/pilot knob to "pilot." When the knob is in this position, the red button can be depressed.
2. While depressing the red button, hold a match at the pilot. Once the pilot lights, continue to hold the red button down for 30 to 60 seconds. When you release the red button, the pilot should stay lit.
3. If it does not, turn off the gas and wait several minutes to allow the gas to dissipate from the tank and repeat the entire process again. After three attempts, call the gas company or plumber for assistance.
4. If it stays lit, rotate the on/off/pilot knob to the "on" position. Reinstall the cover panel and then adjust the temperature setting with the regulating knob on the front of the tank.

Water heaters sometimes collect small quantities of dirty water and scale in the main gas lines which may put out the pilot light.

While away from home for an extended period of time, set the temperature to its lowest point and leave the pilot lit.

Condensation inside your new water heater will, in many cases, cause a small drip onto the burner flame. This is normal, will causes no harm, and in most cases will disappear in a short period of time.

Review and follow the manufacturer's timetables and instructions for draining several gallons of water from the bottom of the water heater. This helps to prevent build up of chemical deposits from the water and prolongs the life of the tank as well as saving energy dollars.

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

## ***ROOF***

General Information – The standard roofing material on LifeStyle Builders homes is asphalt shingles. Asphalt shingles, also known as composition shingles, are widely used because of their light weight, durability and ease of installation.

Expectations and Warranty – Roofing and flashing should not leak. During the first year of occupancy, LifeStyle Builders will repair roof leaks other than those caused by severe weather (such as hail damage) or some action by the homeowner. ***It is important that roof leaks be corrected immediately, so please call your roofer immediately upon discovering a leak.*** Problems will be handled by the roofing contractor in the order received. Roof repairs are only made when the roof is dry. During the first year of occupancy, LifeStyle Builders will only replace lifted, torn or curled shingles if due to improper installation. The roof should be checked after extreme weather which might have caused damage. Such damage can occur when water seeps under shingles, freezes and then melts.

Ice build-up may develop in the eaves during extended periods of cold and snow. Additionally, ice can form in drainage valleys and act as a dam which backs up the water and allows it under flashing to cause a leak. Damage that results from this is not a warranty item but may be covered by homeowner insurance.

Spaces between cedar shake shingles are required by code and some flashing will be visible.

Care and Maintenance – Consistent inspection and maintenance of your roof can save you time and money in the long run. Follow these steps to eliminate costly roofing repairs:

1. Limit walking on your roof. The weight/movement may loosen and break the roofing material which can result in a leak. Never attempt to walk on the roof of your home when shingles are wet. They are extremely slippery.
2. After severe storms, a visual inspection of the roof for damages is called for. Notify your homeowners' insurance company if damage is noted.
3. Maintain the gutters and downspouts so that they are free of debris and able to quickly and efficiently drain precipitation from the roof.

4. When a leak is noticed, try to detect the exact location; this will greatly simplify locating the area that requires repair when the roof is dry.
5. Be careful not to puncture the roof covering when installing guide wires and television antennas.
6. Most reported roof leaks are in fact flashing leaks. *It is the homeowner's responsibility to inspect and reseal flashing annually.*

## ***ROUGH CARPENTRY***

General Information – The rough carpentry in your home refers the construction components which you cannot see, such as your sub-flooring and wall studs.

Expectations and Warranty – Some floor squeaks are unavoidable. Although LifeStyle Builders does not warrant against floor squeaks, we will attempt to correct the situation *one time* during the first year of occupancy in carpeted areas, if caused by a defective joist or improperly installed sub-floor and contained on one of the warranty lists.

Floors may deflect when walked on. This will be more noticeable next to hutches, book cases, chairs, or other heavy pieces of furniture. This is not a structural deficiency and LifeStyle Builders will take no action for this occurrence. For specific warranty situations, consult your RWC guidelines.

Prior to siding being installed, any holes detected in the exterior sheathing will be repaired with a plastic patch. This is an acceptable repair and will not compromise the structural integrity of the wall or significantly lessen any insulation value.

It is important to remember that your house is framed with wood which will react to heating, cooling and moisture. You may see some settlement in the forms of drywall cracks as a reaction to this occurrence. Please refer to the previous “Drywall” section of this chapter for more information.

Consult your RWC Limited Warranty Standards for information on bulging or bowing walls.

Care and Maintenance – Not applicable.

## ***TREES***

See the “Lot and Yard” section within this chapter.

## ***VENTS***

General Information – A house needs outside air to prevent moisture from building-up by allowing air to move over insulation such as in the attic. Any restrictions of this ventilation can cause wood members to rot. LifeStyle Builders is not responsible for rotting wood members due to poor ventilation.

Expectations and Warranty – Occasionally, depending on the force and direction of the wind, rain or snow may infiltrate through the attic gable vents causing spotting on the ceiling. LifeStyle Builders is not responsible for such weather damage and will not make repairs in these instances.

## ***WATER HEATER***

See the “Plumbing” section within this chapter.

## ***WINDOWS***

General Information – Unless otherwise specified in your neighborhood’s Distinctive Included Features, LifeStyle Builders has installed windows in your home which feature “grilles between the glass”. By placing the grilles between the glass, these windows will provide years of enjoyment with simplified cleaning.

Expectations and Warranty – ***Damaged windows and damaged screens noted during the Pre-Settlement Orientation will be replaced.*** Windows should operate with reasonable ease and locks should perform as designed. LifeStyle Builders is not responsible for broken windows after occupancy unless they were noted on the Pre-Settlement Orientation Checklist. If condensation appears BETWEEN the two panes of glass, LifeStyle Builders will replace the window if reported within the one year warranty period. Any film (such as tinting) applied to windows will void any and all warranties per the manufacturer.

Care and Maintenance – In heavy rains, water may collect in the bottom channel of window frames. Weep holes are provided to allow excess water to escape to the outside. Keep the bottom window channels and weep holes free of dirt and debris for proper operation. If the window tends to stick, you can spray the track with a silicone lubricant, available from any hardware store. Another suggested method to alleviate sticking windows is to rub the track with white candle wax. Do not use a petroleum base material.

It is important to inspect around your windows for caulk which has shrunk. Driving rains can easily find this vulnerable location and if the area is not re-caulked the rain can cause severe damage. Please refer to the “Caulking” section within this chapter for additional information.

# WOOD TRIM

General Information – The interior and exterior of your home may have wood trim composed of both interior and exterior moldings. Unless specified otherwise, the trim is intended for paint.

Expectations and Warranty – Minor imperfections may be visible. ***LifeStyle Builders will correct only those defects, i.e., chips, gouges, etc., noted on the Pre-Settlement Orientation Checklist.*** Separation of wood trim from the adjacent material is a normal result of shrinkage which can require caulking as a repair. This is a homeowner maintenance responsibility. Because of the effects of weather on natural wood, you can expect raised grain to develop on exterior trim. This is normal and not a defect in the wood or paint. White or light colors will more readily show grain and cracks and require more maintenance.

Shrinkage may occur during the first two years or longer depending on weather, the temperature you maintain in your home, and whether or not you have a humidifier. You can correct the gaps by caulking, which is explained earlier in this chapter, under “Caulking”.

During a damp period, some swelling may occur. In most cases, this will not be noticeable except where a door may fit more tightly than usual. When the dampness disappears, usually the trim will readjust.

Care and Maintenance – Separation of wood trim from the adjacent material is a normal result of shrinkage which can require caulking and/or touch-up painting as a repair. It is a good idea to wait until after the first heating season and make all such repairs at one time when redecorating.

Wood will shrink less lengthwise than across the grain. All lumber is more vulnerable to shrinkage during the heating season.

Shrinkage may cause a piece of trim to pull away from the wall. Drive another nail in close to the existing nail hole (but not in it). Fill the old nail hole with putty and touch-up with paint as needed.

If the base shoe (small trim between base molding and the floor) appears to be lifting from the floor, this is probably due to slight shrinkage of the floor joists below. Similar to a piece of trim that is pulling away, this can be corrected by removing the old nails and re-nailing. It is best to wait until you are redecorating to do this.

# RESIDENTIAL WARRANTY COMPANY

When you purchase a new home with the RWC Limited Warranty, you own a home with a well-defined warranty. LifeStyle Builders has taken special steps to secure this written warranty for you.

Unlike some implied warranties or handshake promises, the RWC Limited Warranty is very detailed and specific. The following pages are a sample copy of the warranty that you will be receiving on your new home. ***Please review this information carefully.***

At closing, you will be given your personalized copy of this Warranty book. At that time, you can discard the sample pages and replace with your personalized copy.

Within 90 days after receiving your Warranty book (at closing), you should receive a validation sticker from Residential Warranty Company (RWC). If you do not receive this sticker, please contact LifeStyle Builders and Developers to verify that the forms were properly processed and sent to RWC. You ***do not*** have a warranty without this validation sticker. Please place the validation sticker on the front page of your Warranty book.

## WHAT DOES THE WARRANTY COVER?

The RWC Limited Warranty identifies what is warranted, what is excluded and the duration of the Warranty. Please read this information carefully.

***In the first year,*** the Warranty applies generally to workmanship and materials.

***For the first two years,*** portions of the major systems in you home are warranted. These systems include wiring, ductwork and pipes.

***In addition to the above first and second year items,*** the Warranty includes protection on warranted structural elements in your home as defined in your Warranty book.

## IS THE WARRANTY TRANSFERABLE?

Yes. If you sell your home, the remaining term of the RWC Warranty automatically transfers to subsequent homeowners.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

Residential Warranty Company  
5300 Derry Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17111-3598  
717-561-4480