



Homeowner Manual:
A Model for Homeowners

Introduction

Congratulations on your decision to purchase a new home from PCS Homes. We share your excitement about your new residence and look forward to having you work with us to have you're home built.

The *PCS Homes Homeowner Manual* has been designed to assist you during and after the purchase of your home. The information presented here will answer many questions and prepare you for each step of the new home experience, making this exciting time easier. In addition to guiding you through the process of purchasing and building, this manual provides you with maintenance guidelines and a description of our limited warranty program.

Please take time to review this material thoroughly. We suggest that you bring this manual to all meetings. As we progress, you will add items to it. When complete, your manual will provide a useful record of information about your new home.

If you need clarification or additional details about any topic discussed, please give us a call at (410) 697-2000. We are delighted to welcome you as part of the PCS Homes family and are always ready to serve you.

Sincerely,

PCS Homes

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PCS Homes

The Thomasson family has successfully built more than 2,500 homes in over 35 communities with one lasting principle - build genuine value into each home and in every community. This philosophy prevails today. Owned and operated by the Thomasson family, PCS Homes continues its long-standing commitment to deliver affordable, well built homes of outstanding quality. You will see these attributes at every stage of the construction process. From the accuracy of our computer aided design to the careful selection of high-grade materials. PCS Homes also understands that discerning buyers are as concerned about tomorrow's investment as they are about today's quality of life. That's why you'll find the area's most comprehensive home warranty program combined with preservation of open space and wooded areas in all of our communities.

Whether you are the new owner of a luxury single family home, a spacious townhome, an exciting garden condominium home, or a luxury villa, you should expect nothing short of excellence when it comes to the construction, the service and the special amenities of your new home. With PCS Homes, that is precisely what you will find.

What Happens Next?

An Overview of Your New Home Experience

Purchasing a new home is an exciting experience. The process is also complex, with many details to be decided and arranged. While PCS Homes is building your new home, you participate by taking care of several important aspects of your purchase. The chronological list that follows outlines the events that typically take place in the purchase of a new home. Where time frames are specified, you need to observe them in order for us to deliver your home on schedule.

Purchasing Your Home

The purchase agreement and various addenda constitute the legal understanding regarding the purchase of your new home. Please read the purchase agreement and all attachments carefully. As with any legal agreement, you may wish to have your attorney review them. Once all the paperwork is signed, we suggest you insert those documents in Section 2 of this manual, Purchasing Your Home.

Applying for Your Loan

Once you have signed the purchase agreement, finalizing the details for financing is next. To assist you, we may suggest lenders appropriate for your specific financial situation. Section 3, Applying for Your Loan, contains hints and information on the loan process.

Your New Home Selections

New Home Selections, Section 4 of this manual, will assist you in the exciting process of personalizing your new home with your selections.

Construction of Your Home

We invite you to tour your new home with us at certain points during construction at the scheduled meeting times. Please read Section 5, Construction of Your Home, for guidelines on safety, security, and work in progress. Please bring this manual to all our meetings.

Homeowner Orientation

The homeowner orientation has two purposes. The first is to demonstrate the features of your home and discuss maintenance and our limited warranty program. Equally important, we want to confirm that we have delivered your new home at the quality level shown in our model homes and with all your selections correctly installed. For detailed information, please review Section 6, Homeowner Orientation.

Closing on Your Home

Closing on Your Home, Section 7 of this manual describes the documents you will sign and other important details about the closing process. We have included guidelines to assist you in preparing for closing and move-in.

Caring for Your Home

Many of your responsibilities as an owner and PCS Homes responsibilities under the terms of our limited warranty are discussed in Caring for Your Home, Section 8. Begin now to become familiar with the home maintenance you should provide and our warranty service commitment to you.

Your Feedback and Suggestions

Our desire to maintain open communication with you extends through the buying process and after your move-in. In an effort to improve the product and service we provide, we welcome your comments on how we've performed. We survey our customers after move-in. Our goal is to build the best home and the best customer relationship possible. Your feedback helps us reach that goal.

As time passes, if your housing needs change, we are ready at any time to build you another home. We also appreciate your referrals, and you will too, with the \$500 gift you will receive upon your referral settling on one of our homes. Our office is always happy to provide you with information about where we are currently building and the products we offer.

Who's Who?

Some Names You Should Know

Two-way communication is vital to a mutually satisfactory relationship. Understanding what is happening and knowing who to contact can smooth the home-buying process. We believe that it is our responsibility to establish and maintain clear lines of communication. The professionals listed below are glad to assist you or find the answers to your questions.

Community Sales Manager:

Telephone #:

Administrative office, Settlement Dept:

Telephone #:

Lender:

Telephone #:

Title Company:

Telephone #:

Purchasing Your Home

You will use several standard forms when you buy your new home. These include the purchase agreement and several addenda. All parties must sign all forms and attachments before the purchase agreement becomes binding.

Purchase Agreement

The purchase agreement is the legal document that represents your decision to purchase a home. It describes your home (both a legal description and the street address), financing information, condominium and/or homeowners association information, if applicable, and additional legal provisions. Several documents are typically attached to the purchase agreement. The features of the community determine the specific items, but the list below is typical.

Addenda

Options Selection Sheets outline details of your finish material choices, such as color, brand, model, and so on. Please plan to complete these within signing of your contract. See Section 4, New Home Selections, for more information.

Quality Builders Limited Warranty, a specimen copy for your study, with the actual warranty executed at closing.

Condominium or Homeowner Association Documents, where applicable.

Community specific documents and disclosures about the local community.

Buyer's Checklist confirms that we remembered everything.

Buyers' Checklist

Purchasers _____ Date _____

- _____ Purchase Agreement
- _____ Option Selection Sheet
- _____ Limited Warranty
- _____ Condominium/Homeowner Association documents, if applicable
- _____ Initial Deposit \$ _____
- _____ Sales Center Office Hours:
 - Buyers' preferred contact _____ Telephone # _____
 - Monday through Friday _____ Telephone # _____
 - Saturday _____ Telephone # _____
- _____ Homeowner Manual

Other Comments/Notes

Purchaser _____ Purchaser _____

Builder _____

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Note to Home Buyer:

Insert the completed purchase agreement and addenda here.

Applying for Your Loan

The first item you'll need to take care of is completion of a mortgage application. We have arranged approved lenders to service your needs in order to ensure a smooth transaction. Plan to accomplish this within five (5) business days of signing your purchase agreement. Bring the completed purchase agreement with you when you first visit your lender.

Your lender's job is to understand your particular financial circumstances completely. You will review all information on the application at your meeting with the loan officer. A situation rarely arises that your loan officer has not encountered in the past. Do not hesitate to discuss any questions you have regarding your assets, income, or credit. By providing complete information, you prevent delays or extra trips to deliver documents.

Loan Application Checklist

The amount of documentation and information required for a mortgage can seem overwhelming. You can facilitate the application process by collecting as much of the needed information as you can before your appointment. The checklist that follows is a general guide to assist you with the loan application. Some of the items listed may not apply to you and your lender will probably request some items that we have not mentioned, but this list will get you off to a good start.

Property Information

___ The purchase agreement will include the legal description of the property and the price.

Personal Information

- ___ Social Security number and driver's license for each borrower
- ___ Home addresses for the last two years (landlord address, if applicable)
- ___ Divorce decree and separation agreements, if applicable
- ___ Trust agreement, if applicable
- ___ Certificate of Eligibility or DD214 (VA Loans only)

Income

- ___ Most recent pay stubs to cover one month.
- ___ Documentation on any supplemental income such as bonuses or commissions.
- ___ Names, addresses, and phone numbers of all employers for last two years.
- ___ W-2s for last two years.

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- ___ If you are self-employed or earn income from commissioned sales, copies of last two years of tax returns with all schedules and year-to-date profit and loss for current year, signed by an accountant.
- ___ Documentation of alimony or child support, if this income is considered for the loan.

Real Estate Owned

- ___ Names, addresses, phone numbers, and account numbers of all mortgage lenders for the last seven years.
- ___ Copies of leases and two years of tax returns for any rental property.
- ___ Market value estimate.

Liquid Assets

- ___ Complete names, addresses, phone numbers, and account numbers for all bank, credit union, 401K, and investment accounts.
- ___ Copies of the last three months statements for all bank accounts.
- ___ Copies of any notes receivable.
- ___ Value of other assets such as auto, households goods, and collectibles.
- ___ Cash value of life insurance policies.
- ___ Vested interest in retirement funds or IRAs.

Liabilities

- ___ Names, account numbers, balances, and current monthly payment amounts for all revolving charge cards.
- ___ Names, addresses, phone numbers, and account numbers for all installment debt and approximate balances and monthly payments for such items as auto loans and mortgages.
- ___ Alimony or child support payments.
- ___ Names, addresses, phone numbers, and account numbers of accounts recently paid off, if used to establish credit.

Please note that you will be asked to pay for a credit report and an appraisal upon signing the application.

Loan Processing

Once you have given all preliminary information to your loan officer, your lender sends verification forms to your employers, banks, and current mortgage company or landlord and also orders a credit report and appraisal. You sign a release to authorize these steps. Your lender will provide you with a Good Faith Estimate and a Truth-in-Lending Disclosure.

The Good Faith Estimate lists the costs you will incur at closing. Some of the numbers listed on this form are prorations, subject to change based on the actual date of the closing. Others are set fees that should remain the same. If you have not selected an approved lender, please have your lender contact our settlement department for proper fees on your Good Faith Estimate.

The Truth-in-Lending Disclosure shows the total cost to you, over the term of the loan, for your specific financing. The calculation is based on the assumption that you own the home and make regular payments throughout the term of the loan.

The lender sends Verification of Employment (VOE) forms to all employers for the last two years. The employers complete, sign, and return the forms to the lender. The forms show the dates of employment, the amount of money you earned last year, and how much you have earned so far this year. The VOE documents bonuses and overtime you earned.

Verification of Deposit (VOD) forms go to each banking institution listed on your application. The institutions indicate the date you opened each account, average balances for the last three months, and the amount of money you have in each account on the day they complete the form. Any loans or overdraft accounts you have with the bank will also be shown.

Mortgage companies and landlords complete Verification of Mortgage (VOM) forms. These show the lender how much you owe, the amount of your monthly payment, and whether you make your payments by the due date.

Your credit report shows the amounts of money you owe to each of your creditors, minimum monthly payments, and your payment history. The appraisal confirms the value of the home you are purchasing for you and your lender.

Typically, several weeks pass as these reports and forms are returned to the lender. If any delays are encountered, the loan officer may contact you for assistance. It is your responsibility and obligation under the terms of your contract to fully cooperate with the lender. You must promptly submit information, provide documentation, and take whatever action is necessary in order to complete the processing of your loan in a timely manner. The credit reporting agency may call you to verify that the information they have gathered is correct.

Once the loan processor has collected this standard documentation, you may be asked to write letters describing your assets, income, or credit. Few loans are finalized without requests for additional information just before the package is submitted to the underwriter for final approval. At this point you may become frustrated with the loan process. Please remember that your lender requests these letters to assist you in obtaining your financing. Do not hesitate to discuss your concerns with your loan officer. Perhaps he or she can provide some additional insight on what may seem to be redundant requests.

Before the processor submits your file to the underwriters for final approval, he or she will verify the final sales price. Make sure that copies of all addenda such as change orders signed after the original purchase agreement was completed have been sent to the lender. This assists the lender in determining the exact loan amount. If change orders affect the total price after this point, you may have to resubmit your loan application for the higher amount or the lender may ask you to pay for the additional items in cash.

Loan Approval

During your first meeting, you and your lender determine the timing to obtain prequalification. If you have selected an approved lender, this allows us to start your new home even though final approval is still pending; otherwise we must receive final approval to start your new home. You will discuss additional items that you may need to obtain final loan approval. Several weeks after your first meeting with the lender, you should receive loan approval. If any of the documents requested have not been returned to the lender in a timely manner, approval may take longer.

Contingencies

Loan approvals often carry conditions of approval. The sale of a previous home or proof of funds are two examples. Discuss any concern you may have about such conditions with your loan officer and obtain any requested documentation as soon as possible. Once all contingencies are met, the final loan can be approved.

Loan Lock

The only thing anyone knows for certain about interest rates is that they will change. Do not rely on anyone's predictions regarding rates. Locking your rate prematurely can result in extra expense to you if your new home is not complete in time to close within the lock period. *Until we reach a point in construction where factors outside our control can no longer affect the delivery date, the decision to lock your loan is at best a gamble. Please wait until written notice of settlement is received before locking in loan rates. Written notice does not guarantee delivery settlement on the stated date, but gives you reasonable assurance barring any unforeseen delays. Please leave room for possible delays in your lock period.*

Down Payment Worksheet

Note to Homebuyer:

Insert down payment worksheet here.

New Home Selections

Part of the fun of buying a new home is selecting finish materials and colors. You will make some of these choices at the PCS Homes Sales office and others at our suppliers' showrooms.

Selection Hints

PCS Homes provides you with selection sheets that list the choices you need to make. Schedule time to visit both our office and our suppliers' showrooms to make your selections as soon as possible. Plan to finalize your selections at the signing of your purchase agreement. Final selections at supplier's showrooms should be made as soon as possible and should not exceed 30 days from signing of your purchase agreement. Your prompt completion of these selections helps prevent the delays caused by backorders.

Please be thorough. Our selection sheets are very detailed. Fill in all blanks completely. Costly errors arise from assumptions and incomplete selection sheets. Custom choices, such as those for floor coverings, countertops, light fixtures, or other such items will require additional payment. Although such amounts can be credited to you at closing and may be subsequently added to your mortgage, they are not refundable.

You are welcome to bring cushions or swatches to showrooms to coordinate colors. View color samples in both natural and artificial light to get an accurate impression of the color. Variations between samples and actual material installed can occur. This is due to the manufacturer's coloring process (dye lots) and to the fact that over time, sunlight and other environmental factors affect the samples.

Your Condominium Association, Homeowners Association, governmental requirements and selections your future neighbors have already made may limit some of your choices for exterior finish materials. The sooner you can make your selections, the greater the number of choices you have. Driving through the area to view existing homes is one way to select exterior colors. Selections often look different on a full-size home.

We reserve the right to place a hold on your selections until your lender has approved your loan and all contingencies are released. If suppliers have discontinued any of your selections, we will contact you and ask you to make an alternate selection within five days. Occasionally, a home is already under construction and PCS Homes has made some or all of these choices. Upon completion of this form, double-check all color numbers and names and sign and date each page.

Please retain your selection sheets for future reference. They may be useful for replacement items in your home.

Custom Changes

The possibilities for your new home far exceed the popular ideas we suggest on our option and upgrade lists. In addition to the available options, you may have custom features you want us to incorporate into your new home. Think, dream, imagine, look—we will assist you in any way that we can to make these decisions as early as possible.

Please keep in mind that your new neighbors have this same opportunity and may request still other features. We will be happy to provide you with pricing on duplicating such items in your home, but make no claim that we have mentioned or offered every possible idea.

In order to deliver your home as close as possible to the target date, we order many items well in advance of installation. Once a particular item is ordered, making further changes may involve an adjustment in the planned delivery date and additional costs. By working within the boundaries of the change order schedule, you can usually avoid both.

Cutoff Points for Changes

By completing any change orders according to the schedule below, you will save additional costs and avoid adding days to the construction schedule.

Changes affecting	Should be made prior to
(1) Foundation	Engineering and permit application
(2) Windows, doors, elevation, and framing	Foundation
(3) Mechanical systems, cabinets, and appliances	Framing
(4) Texture, hardware and lighting	Mechanical rough-ins
(5) Interior trim and floor coverings	Insulation
(6) Landscape design	Interior trim

Note to Home Buyer:

Insert your records of your new options selections here.

Need pocket Insert

Construction of Your Home

The construction of a new home differs from other manufacturing processes in several ways. By keeping these differences in mind, you can enjoy participating in the construction process and assist us in building your new home:

- As a consumer, you rarely have the opportunity to watch as the products you purchase are created. Your new home is created in front of you.
- You have more opportunity for input into the design and finish details of a new home than for most other products. Our success in personalizing your home depends on effective communication.

With single-family homes you have the opportunity to meet with us at several points in this process. The first of these is a preconstruction conference, where we review your home plans, selections, and the changes you have requested. At that time, we provide an overview of the construction process and answer your questions.

We also schedule a routine construction review. At this meeting, you will have our undivided attention. We discuss questions you have and confirm that we have correctly installed your selections or change orders. Please bring this manual to each scheduled meeting.

When you are on site for a scheduled visit, we ask that you keep the following points in mind.

Safety

A new home construction site is exciting, but it can also be dangerous. Your safety is of prime importance to us. Therefore, we must require that you contact PCS Homes before visiting your site. We reserve the right to require that you wear a hard hat and that a member of our staff accompany you during your visit. You will be asked to sign a waiver of liability & claims form prior to entering the property. Please observe common-sense safety procedures at all times when visiting:

- Make arrangements to leave children elsewhere when visiting the site.

- Do not walk backward, even one step. Look in the direction you are moving at all times.
- Watch for boards, cords, tools, nails, or construction materials that might cause tripping, puncture wounds, or other injury.
- Do not enter any level of a home that is not equipped with stairs and rails.
- Stay a minimum of six feet from all excavations.
- Give large, noisy grading equipment or delivery vehicles plenty of room. Assume that the driver can neither see nor hear you.

Plans and Specifications

The building department of the city or county where your home is to be located must review and approve the plans and specifications for your home. We construct each home to comply with the plans and specifications approved by the applicable building department. Your specifications become part of our agreements with trade contractors and suppliers. Only written instructions from PCS Homes can change these contracts.

Regulatory Changes

From time to time, city or county agencies adopt new codes or regulations that can affect your home. Such changes are usually adopted in the interest of safety and are legal requirements with which PCS Homes must comply. The codes and requirements in effect for each area can vary. Therefore, builders may construct the same floor plan slightly differently in two different jurisdictions or at two different times within the same jurisdiction.

Individual Foundation Designs

Another area where variations among homes can appear is in the foundation system. The foundation design is specific to each lot. Based on the results of a soil test, an engineer determines which foundation system to use. Because of variations in soil conditions among lots, your foundation may differ from your neighbors' foundation or that of the same home in another neighborhood.

Changes in Materials, Products, and Methods

The new-home industry, building trades, and product manufacturers are continually working to improve methods and products. In addition, manufacturers sometimes make model changes that can impact the final product. As a result, we may use methods or materials in your home that differ from those in our other homes.

In all instances, any substitution of method or product will have equal or better quality than that shown in our other homes. Since such substitutions or changes may become necessary due to matters outside our control, we reserve the right to make them without notification.

Natural Variations

Dozens of trade contractors have assembled your home. The same individuals rarely work on every home in the same way and, even if they did, each one would still be unique. The exact placement of switches, outlets, registers, and so on will vary slightly from the model and other homes of the same floor plan.

Quality

Our company will build your new home to the quality standards demonstrated in our model homes. Each new home is a handcrafted product—combining art, science, and raw labor. The efforts of many people with varying degrees of knowledge, experience, and skill come together. We coordinate and supervise these contributions to produce your new home.

From time to time during a process that takes several months and involves dozens of people, an error or omission may occur. We have systems and procedures for inspecting our homes to ensure that the level of quality meets our requirements. We inspect every step of construction and are responsible for quality control. In addition, the county, city, or an engineer conducts a number of inspections at different stages of construction. Your home must pass each inspection before construction continues.

We also respect your interest and appreciate your attachment to the new home. Therefore, your input into our system is welcome. However, to avoid duplication of efforts, confusion, misunderstandings, or compounding errors, we ask that you do one of two things:

- Bring your concern up at one of the scheduled construction reviews.
- Between those meetings, complete one of the Our Customer Wants to Know forms included at the end of this section. Simply send or fax the completed form to our office. We will note the date and time it was received and will call you within two business days with a response.

During the construction process, every home being built experiences some days when it is not at its best. Homes under construction endure wind, rain, snow, foot traffic, and activities that generate noise, dust, and trash. Material scraps are a by-product of the process. Although your

new home is cleaned by each trade upon completion of their portion of the work, during your visits you will encounter some messy moments. Keep in mind that the completed homes you toured also once endured these “ugly duckling” stages.

Trade Contractors

Your home is built through the combined efforts of specialists in many trades—from excavation and foundation, through framing, mechanicals, and insulation, to drywall, trim, and finish work. In order to ensure you the highest possible standard of construction, only authorized suppliers, trade contractors, and PCS Homes employees are permitted to perform work in your home.

Suppliers and trade contractors have no authority to enter into agreements for PCS Homes. For your protection and theirs, the terms of our trade contractor agreements prohibit alterations without written authorization from PCS Homes. Their failure to comply with this procedure can result in termination of their contract. See your community Sales Manager if there are alterations or changes you wish to initiate.

Schedules

The delivery date for your new home begins as an estimate. Even after the home itself is past the potential for weather-related delays, weather can severely impact installation of utility services, final grading, and concrete flatwork, to mention a few examples. Extended periods of wet weather or freezing temperatures bring work to a stop in the entire region. When favorable conditions return, the subcontractors go back to work, picking up where they left off. Please understand that they are as eager as you are to get caught up and to see progress on your home.

Delivery Date Updates

We will update you on the estimated delivery date at each of our construction meetings. You are also welcome to check with us for the most current target date. As completion nears, more factors come under our control and we can be more precise about that date. Expect a firm closing date approximately 30 days before delivery.

We suggest that, until you receive this commitment, you avoid finalizing arrangements for your move. Until then, flexibility is the key to comfort, sanity, and convenience. We want you to enjoy this process and avoid unnecessary stress caused by uncertainty that cannot be

avoided. Review the Loan Lock heading in Section 3, Applying for Your Loan, for additional suggestions on this topic.

"Nothing's Happening"

Expect several days during construction of your home when it appears that nothing is happening. This can occur for a number of reasons. Each trade is scheduled days or weeks in advance of the actual work. This period is referred to as "lead time." Time is allotted for completion of each trade's work on your home. Sometimes, one trade completes its work a bit ahead of schedule. The next trade already has an assigned time slot, which usually cannot be changed on short notice.

Progress pauses while the home awaits building department inspections. This is also part of the normal sequence of the construction schedule and occurs at several points in every home. If you have questions about the pace of work, please contact your Community Sales Manager.

Construction Sequence

Although the specific sequence of construction steps varies and overlaps, generally we build your home in the following order:

Foundation

- Excavation
- Footer or caisson installation
- Form and pour walls
- Perimeter drain if applicable
- Waterproof
- Insulation if applicable
- Inspection

Framing

- First floor
- Second floor
- Roof trusses
- Roof sheathing

Roofing

- Felt or paper
- Valley flashing
- Shingles

Exterior

Exterior trim

Fascia (boards at ends of rafters)

Windows and doors

Sheathing

Finish materials

Trim

Deck, if applicable

Gutters, if applicable

Exterior painting or staining

Concrete or asphalt

Fine grading

Landscaping, if applicable

Interior

Rough-in of mechanical systems

HVAC (heating, ventilating, and air conditioning)

Plumbing

Electrical (extra outlets need to be installed at this point)

Rough inspections

Insulation

Drywall

Hang

Inspection

Tape and texture

Interior trim

Doors

Baseboards, casings, other details

Paint and stain

Finish work

Cabinets

Countertops

Tile

Floor coverings

Appliances

Hardware

Screens

Finish work (continued)
 Light fixtures
 Plumbing fixtures
Construction cleaning
Builder's punch list
Improvement survey
Certificate of occupancy
Homeowner orientation
Closing
Home maintenance

PCS Homes

Date _____

Subdivision _____

Lot # _____

Our Customer Wants to Know . . .

Customer _____ Phone _____

Please provide the requested information to superintendent or main office.

Community Sales Manager

Response

By _____

Response forwarded to customer on _____ by _____

Homeowner Orientation

Your homeowner orientation is an introduction to your new home and its many features—a meeting that goes beyond the traditional walk-through to include a detailed demonstration of your home and review of information on its maintenance.

Scheduling

We schedule the orientation with you as your home nears completion. Appointments are available Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. We meet at your new home. The orientation occurs several days before closing. Expect your orientation to take approximately one to two hours.

Orientation Forms

We have included copies of the forms we use at the orientation at the end of this section. In addition, the suggestions that follow will help you derive the greatest benefit from your orientation.

Preparation

Allow enough time. We expect the orientation to take one to two hours. By arranging your schedule so you can use the full amount of time allotted, you will derive maximum benefit from the orientation. If you have questions about home maintenance or the limited warranty coverage, make note of them to bring up at the orientation. If you have not already done so, please read *Caring for Your Home*, Section 8 of this manual, before the orientation.

Past experience has shown that the orientation is most beneficial when buyers are able to focus all their attention on their new home and the information we present. If possible, children and pets should not accompany you at this time.

If a real estate agent has helped you with your purchase, he or she is not required to attend. If you would like to have a friend or real estate agent view the home with you, we encourage you to do this after our scheduled orientation.

Acceptance

In addition to introducing you to your new home, the orientation is also an opportunity for you and PCS Homes to confirm that the home meets the quality standards shown in our model homes and that we have completed all selections and changes. We note details that need attention on the orientation forms.

Cosmetic surface damage caused during construction is readily noticeable during the orientation. Such damage can also occur during the move-in process or through daily activities. Therefore, ***after we correct any items noted during the orientation, repair of cosmetic surface damage is your responsibility. This includes paint touch-up. Our limited warranty excludes cosmetic damage to items such as:***

- Sinks, tubs, and plumbing fixtures
- Countertops and cabinet doors
- Light fixtures, mirrors, and glass
- Windows and screens
- Tile, carpet, hardwood, and resilient flooring
- Doors, trim, and hardware
- Paint and drywall
- Finish on appliances

Completion of Items

PCS Homes takes responsibility for resolving any items noted. We will complete most items before your move-in. If work needs to be performed in your new home after your move-in, Warranty Administrator is available to schedule appointments Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Under normal circumstances, you can expect us to resolve all items within 15 working days. We will inform you of any delays caused by back-ordered materials. Please note that we will correct only those items listed. No verbal commitments of any kind will be honored by PCS Homes.

Future Service

PCS Homes responds to warranty items according to the terms and conditions of the limited warranty agreement. For more details, review Section 8, Caring for Your Home.

Note to Home Buyer:

At your homeowner orientation, you will receive:

- A list of emergency telephone numbers for critical trade contractors, such as heating and plumbing.
- Upon settlement, you will receive the manufacturer's literature for the furnace, water heater, and other appliances.
- Copies of completed orientation forms. We suggest you insert them here.

Closing on Your Home

PCS Homes recognizes that timing is vitally important in planning your move and locking in your loan. You will be notified in writing of a delivery date when construction reaches a point at which weather and other factors are unlikely to affect completion of your home. This occurs approximately 30 days before closing. Until then, many factors can influence the schedule:

- Weather can delay getting the foundation in and can affect framing, roofing, and exterior finish.
- Material shortages and labor strikes may also affect the construction schedule.
- If you are delayed in responding to a request from your lender, this can affect work progress.
- Change orders signed after the original purchase agreement has been completed can add to the schedule.

Date of Closing

The closing, or settlement, takes place shortly after your orientation. PCS Homes will notify you of the date of closing approximately 30 or more days before the settlement appointment. Typically, the closing process takes from 45 minutes to an hour.

Location of Closing

The closing on your new home typically takes place at the title company, although it occasionally occurs at the sale's office. We confirm the location with you when we set the appointment.

Closing Documents

At closing, the documents necessary to convey your new home to you and to close the loan from the mortgage company will be executed and delivered. In addition to these standard items, the lender, the title company, and PCS Homes may require other documents to be signed. The principal documents typically include the following:

- **General Warranty Deed**—The general warranty deed conveys the home and lot to you, subject only to permitted exceptions. This does not apply if you already own the lot.
- **Title Commitment**—At or before closing, you will receive a standard form for owner's title insurance commitment to insure salable title of your home to you in the amount of the purchase price, subject to the permitted title exceptions that may be described in the purchase agreement. Review the title commitment carefully. Discuss any questions with your title company. Within 60 days after the closing, the title company mails a standard owner's title insurance policy, insuring you the title to your home in accordance with the commitment you received at closing. Keep the title insurance policy with your other valuable papers.
- **PCS Homes Limited Warranty**—We provide a copy of the limited warranty in this manual for your review. Please read it thoroughly.
- **Promissory Note**—The promissory note is from you, payable to the lender in the principal amount of the loan, plus interest. One-twelfth of your annual taxes and homeowner's insurance will be added to the principal and interest payment to determine your total monthly payment.
- **Deed of Trust**—This encumbers your home as security for repayment of the promissory note.

Closing Expenses

Certain customary items in connection with the property will be prorated to the date of closing such as prepaid expenses, or reserves required by your lender and homeowners association, if applicable. Prorations of general real property taxes and assessments will be based on the current year's taxes and assessments or, if they are unavailable, on the taxes and assessments for the prior year.

"The Final Number"

The final cost figure is available near to the actual closing. Although a reasonably close estimate may be determined before the date of closing, the proration of several items included is affected by the closing date and cannot be calculated until that date is known.

Preparation

Plan to bring cash or certified funds (made out to yourself, which you will endorse at the closing) to the closing table. In your planning, be sure to allow time to arrange for and obtain these funds. In addition, please keep the following items in mind:

- **Documents**—The Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act (RESPA) provides you with many protections. Under this law, you can review the settlement page that lists costs you are paying at closing one day before the closing appointment. Although these documents are not negotiable and thousands of home buyers have signed them, you should read them.
- **Insurance**—You need to provide proof of a homeowner's policy from your insurance company. Your insurance agent should know exactly what is needed. We suggest you arrange for this at least three weeks before the expected closing date.
- **PCS Homes or Lender Issues**—The title company is not authorized to negotiate or make representations on behalf of any of the parties involved in the closing. Therefore, please discuss any questions, agreements, or other details directly with us or your lender in advance of the closing.
- **Utilities**—PCS Homes will have utility service removed from its name after closing. You will need to notify all applicable utility companies of your move so that service is provided in your name. We suggest that you contact these companies well ahead of time to avoid any interruption in service. Utility company phone numbers are provided on the next page to assist you in making these arrangements.

Note: If you have signed the notice of application transfer form as part of your contract, we will take care of this for you. The form in the next page is provided to you to note the utility companies phone numbers. Your community sales manager should be able to assist you with this information.

Utility and Community Services

	Company	Phone #	Date Contacted/Notes
Gas	_____	_____	_____
Electric	_____	_____	_____
Telephone	_____	_____	_____
Water	_____	_____	_____
Sewer	_____	_____	_____
Trash Collection	_____	_____	_____
Recycling	_____	_____	_____
Cable TV	_____	_____	_____
Post Office	_____	_____	_____
Newspaper	_____	_____	_____

Caring for Your Home

PCS Homes has constructed your home with quality materials and the labor of experienced craftsmen. Before use of any material, it must meet our specifications for quality and durability. All work is completed under our supervision to obtain the best possible results for your investment.

A home is one of the last hand-built products left in the world. Once we have assembled the natural and manufactured materials, the components interact with each other and the environment. Although quality materials and workmanship have been used in your home, this does not mean that it will require no care or maintenance. A home, like an automobile, requires care and attention from day one. General homeowner maintenance is essential to providing a quality home for a lifetime.

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

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

We recognize that it is impossible to anticipate and describe every attention needed for good home care, but we have covered many important details. The subjects covered include components of homes we build, listed in alphabetical order. Each topic includes suggestions for use and maintenance. For PCS Homes limited warranty guidelines please refer to your warranty booklet. This manual may discuss some components that are not present in your home.

Please take time to read the literature provided by the manufacturers of consumer products and other items in your home. The information contained in that material is not repeated

here. Although much of the information may be familiar to you, some points may differ significantly from homes you have had in the past.

We make every effort to keep our information current and accurate. However, if any detail in our discussion conflicts with the manufacturer's recommendations, you should follow the manufacturer's recommendations. Activate specific manufacturer's warranties by completing and mailing any registration cards included with their materials. In some cases, manufacturer's warranties may extend beyond the first year and it is in your best interests to be apprised of such coverage.

PCS Homes Limited Warranty Guidelines

While we strive to build a defect-free home, we are realistic enough to know that we may make mistakes or that something in the home may not perform as intended. When either occurs, we will make necessary corrections. In support of this commitment, PCS Homes provides you with a limited warranty. The purpose is to let you know what our quality standard is for the typical concerns that can come up in a new home. The warranty describes our standards for each item and what we will do to remedy items that do not meet our standards.

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

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

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

Reporting Procedures

All service requests should be put in writing.

Ninety-Day Report

In order for our service program to operate at maximum efficiency and for your own convenience, we suggest that you wait 90 days before submitting any warranty list. This allows you sufficient time to become settled in your new home and to thoroughly examine all components.

Year-End Report

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

Emergency Service

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

- Total loss of heat when the outside temperature is below 30 degrees F. Please note that **lack of air conditioning, heat pump continuing to run, noisy ductwork, frozen condensation lines, and blown fuses** do not constitute emergency situations.
- Total loss of electricity. (Check with the utility company before reporting this circumstance to PCS Homes or electrician.) Please note that **blown fuses, tripped circuit breakers, and tripped ground fault interrupters (GFI)** do not constitute emergency situations
- Total loss of water. (Check with the water department to be certain the problem is not a general outage in the area.) Please note that **clogged drains, pipes, backed up toilets, water not supplied to part of the house and luke warm water instead of hot water** do not constitute as emergency situations.
- Plumbing leak that requires the entire water supply to be shut off.
- Gas leak. (Contact your utility company or plumber if the leak is at the furnace or water heater supply lines.)

Call PCS Homes office, during business hours:

(410) 697-2000

After hours, or on weekends or holidays, call the necessary trade contractor directly. Their phone numbers are listed on the Emergency Phone Numbers sheet you receive at orientation.

Other Warranty Service

Kitchen Appliance Warranties

The manufacturers of kitchen appliances will work directly with you if any repairs are needed for these products. Customer service phone numbers are listed in the use and care materials for each appliance. Be prepared to provide the model and serial number of the item and the closing date on your home. Appliance warranties are generally for one year; refer to the literature provided by the manufacturer for complete information.

Service Processing Procedures

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

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

When we receive a warranty service request, we may contact you for an inspection appointment. Warranty inspection appointments are available Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. depending on what community you reside in. We inspect the items listed in your written request to confirm warranty coverage and determine appropriate action. Generally reported items fall into one of three categories:

- Trade contractor item
- In-house item
- Home maintenance item

If a trade contractor or an in-house employee is required to complete repairs, we issue a warranty work order and the customer service department will contact you to schedule the work. Warranty work appointments are available Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. We intend to complete warranty work orders within 14 workdays of the inspection unless you are unavailable for access to the home. If a back-ordered part or similar circumstance causes a delay, we will let you know.

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

Reporting Warranty Items

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

Appliances	Contact the manufacturer directly with model and serial number, closing date, and description of problem. See page 39.
Emergency	<p>During our business hours (Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. until 4:00 p.m.), call our main office, (410) 697-2000. See page 34.</p> <p>After business hours or on weekends or holidays, contact the trade or appropriate utility company directly using the emergency numbers you receive at your orientation.</p>
Nonemergency	<p>Mail or fax your written list of items to our office. (See page 87 & 88.) You can find service request forms at the end of this manual or you can request more by writing or calling our office:</p> <p>1516 Jabez Run Millersville, MD 21108 Phone (410) 697-2000 x 2010 Fax (410) 697-2037</p>
Storm damage or other natural disaster	Contact your homeowner's insurance agent immediately. Contain damage as much as possible without endangering yourself. In extreme situations, photograph the damage.
Hours	<p>Office: Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. Inspection appointments: Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. until 4 p.m. Work appointments: Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. until 4 p.m. (Depending on what community you reside in)</p>
Questions?	Call the main office during normal business hours, (410) 697-2000.

Air Conditioning

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

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

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

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

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

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

Adjust Vents

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

Compressor Level

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

See also Grading and Drainage.

Humidifier

If a humidifier is installed on the furnace system, turn it off when you use the air conditioning; otherwise, the additional moisture can cause a freeze-up of the cooling system.

Manufacturer's Instructions

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

Temperature Variations

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

Compressor

The air conditioning compressor must be in a level position to operate correctly. If it settles during the warranty period, PCS Homes will correct this.

Coolant

The outside temperature must be 70 degrees F or higher for the contractor to add coolant to the system. If your home was completed during winter months, this charging of the system is unlikely to be complete and will need to be performed in the spring. Although we check and document this at orientation, your call to remind us is welcome in the spring.

Nonemergency

Lack of air conditioning service is not an emergency. Heating and air conditioning contractors in our region respond to air conditioning service requests in the order received.

Alarm System

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Appliances

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Manufacturer's Service

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

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

Registration

Mail warranty registration cards directly to the manufacturer.

Appliance Serial Numbers

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

Closing Date

<i>Appliance</i>	<i>Manufacturer</i>	<i>Model #</i>	<i>Serial #</i>	<i>Service Phone #</i>
Range				
Range Hood				
Cooktop				
Oven				
Microwave				
Dishwasher				
Disposal				

Asphalt

Homeowner Care and Maintenance

Asphalt is a flexible and specialized surface. Like any other surface in your home, it requires protection from things that can damage it. Over time, the effects of weather and earth movement will cause minor settling and cracking of asphalt. These are normal reactions to the elements and do not constitute improperly installed asphalt or defective material. Avoid using your driveway for one week after it is installed, by keeping people, bicycles, lawn mowers, and any other traffic off of it.

Chemical Spills

Asphalt is a petroleum product. Gasoline, oil, turpentine, and other solvent or petroleum products can dissolve or damage the surface. Wash such spills with soap and water, and then rinse them thoroughly with plain water.

Hot Weather

Avoid any concentrated or prolonged loads on your asphalt, particularly in hot weather. High-heeled shoes, motorcycle or bicycle kickstands, trailers, or even cars left in the same spot for long periods can create depressions or punctures in asphalt.

Nonresidential Traffic

Avoid nonresidential traffic such as heavy trucks on your driveway; it was designed for residential use only.

Sealcoating

Exposure to sunlight and other weather conditions will fade your driveway, allowing the surface gravel material to be more visible. This is a normal condition and not a material or structural problem. You do not need to treat the surface of your asphalt driveway. However, if you choose to treat it, wait a minimum of 12 months and use a dilute asphalt emulsion, rather than the more common coal tar sealant.

Alligator Cracking

If cracking that resembles the skin of an alligator develops under normal residential use, PCS Homes will repair it. If improper use, such as heavy truck traffic, has caused the condition, repairs will be your responsibility.

Settling

Settling next to your garage floor of up to 1-1/2 inches across the width of the driveway is normal. Settling or depressions elsewhere in the driveway of up to one inch in any eight-foot radius are considered normal. We will repair settling that exceeds these standards.

Thermal Cracking

Your driveway will exhibit thermal cracking, usually during the first 12 months. These cracks help your driveway adapt to heating and freezing cycles. Cracks should be evaluated in the hottest months—July or August. We will repair cracks that exceed 1/2 inch in width.

Attic Access

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

The attic space is neither designed nor intended for storage. We provide access to this area for maintenance of mechanical equipment that may traverse the attic space. When you perform needed tasks in the attic, use caution and avoid stepping off wood members onto the drywall. This can result in personal injury or damage to the ceiling below. Your limited warranty does not cover such injury or damage.

Brass Fixtures

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

The manufacturer treats brass fixtures with a clear protective coating, electrostatically applied, to provide beauty and durability. This coating is not impervious to wear and tear. Atmospheric conditions, sunlight, caustic agents such as paints, and scratches from sharp objects can cause the protective coating to crack or peel, exposing the brass and resulting in spotting and discoloration.

Cleaning

Initial care of these products requires only periodic cleaning with a mild, nonabrasive soap and buffing with a soft cloth.

Corrosion

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

Polish

When peeling, spotting, or discoloration occurs, you can sometimes restore the beauty of the metal by completely removing the remaining coating and hand-polishing the item with a suitable brass polish. Applying a light coat of wax and buffing with a soft cloth helps maintain the gloss.

Tarnish

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

Brick

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Efflorescence

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

Tuck-Pointing

After several years, face brick may require tuck-pointing (repairing the mortar between the bricks). Otherwise, no regular maintenance is required.

Weep Holes

You may notice small holes in the mortar along the lower row of bricks. These holes allow moisture that has accumulated behind the brick to escape. Do not fill these weep holes or permit landscaping materials to cover them.

Cracks

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

Cabinets

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Cleaning

Products such as lemon oil or polishes that include scratch cover are suggested for wood cabinet care. Follow container directions. Use such products a maximum of once every 3 to 6 months to avoid excessive build-up. Avoid paraffin-based spray waxes and washing cabinets with water, as both will damage the luster of the finish.

Hinges

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

Moisture

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

Carpet

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Cleaning

You can add years to the life of your carpet with regular care. Carpet wears out because of foot traffic and dirt particles that get trampled deep into the pile beyond the suction of the vacuum.

The dirt particles wear down the fibers like sandpaper and dull the carpet. The most important thing you can do to protect your carpet is to vacuum it frequently.

Vacuum twice each week lightly and once a week thoroughly. Heavy traffic areas may require more frequent cleaning. A light vacuuming is three passes; a thorough job may need seven passes. A vacuum cleaner with a beater-bar agitates the pile and is more effective in bringing dirt to the surface for easy removal.

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

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

Burns

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

Crushing

Furniture and traffic may crush a carpet's pile fibers. Frequent vacuuming in high-traffic areas and glides or cups under heavy pieces of furniture can help prevent this. Rotating your furniture to change the traffic pattern in a room promotes more even wear. Some carpets resist matting and crushing because of their level of fiber, but this does not imply or guarantee that no matting or crushing will occur. Heavy traffic areas such as halls and stairways are more susceptible to wear and crushing. This is considered normal wear.

Fading

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

Filtration

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

Fuzzing

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

Pilling

Pilling or small balls of fiber can appear on your carpet, depending on the type of carpet fiber and the type of traffic. If this occurs, clip off the pills. If they cover a large area, seek professional advice.

Rippling

With wall-to-wall carpeting, high humidity may cause rippling. If the carpet remains rippled after the humidity has left, have a professional restretch the carpeting using a power stretcher, not a knee-kicker.

Seams

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

Shading

Shading is an inherent quality of fine-cut pile carpets. Household traffic causes pile fibers to assume different angles; as a result, the carpet appears darker and lighter in these areas. A good vacuuming, which makes the pile all go in the same direction, provides a temporary remedy.

Shedding

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

Snags

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

Sprouting

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

Stains

No carpet is stain proof. Although your carpet manufacturer designates your carpet as stain-resistant, some substances may still cause permanent staining. These include hair dyes, shoe polish, paints, and India ink. Some substances destroy or change the color of carpets, including bleaches, acne medications, drain cleaners, plant food, insecticides, and food or beverages with strongly colored natural dyes as found in some brands of mustard and herbal tea.

Refer to your care and maintenance brochures for recommended cleaning procedures for your particular fiber. Pretest any spot-removal solution in an inconspicuous area before using it in a large area. Apply several drops of the solution, hold a white tissue on the area, and count to ten. Examine both tissue and carpet for dye transfer and check for carpet damage.

Static

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

Caulking

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Colored Caulk

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

Latex Caulk

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

Silicone Caulk

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

See also Countertops, Expansion and Contraction, Stairs, and Wood Trim.

Ceramic Tile

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Cleaning

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

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

Grout Discoloration

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

Sealing Grout

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

Separations

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

Tile around bathtubs or countertops may appear to be pulling up after a time. This is caused by normal shrinkage of grout or caulk and shrinkage of wood members as they dry out. If this occurs, the best remedy is to purchase tub caulk or premixed grout from a hardware store. Follow directions on the container. This maintenance is important to protect the underlying surface from water damage.

Concrete Flatwork

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

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

We install a flexible collar around the top of the furnace plenum. Gas and water lines include flexible connections, and drain lines have slip joints. The basement stairs do not rest on the floor and the support posts under the I-beam are separated from the floor slab. PCS Homes incorporates all of these details in the construction of the basement floor because we know the floor will move in response to the soils. Movement of the basement slab or any concrete slab results in cracking. Minimize this movement by following PCS Homes landscaping recommendations, the objective of which is to prevent moisture from reaching soils around and under the home.

Cleaning

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

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

Cracks

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

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

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

Expansion Joints

We install expansion joints to help control expansion. However, as the concrete shrinks during the curing process, moisture can penetrate under the concrete and lift the expansion joint. When this occurs, fill the resulting gap with a gray silicone sealant, which you can purchase at most hardware stores.

Heavy Vehicles

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

Ice, Snow, and Chemicals

Driving or parking on snow creates ice on the drive, which magnifies the effects of snow on the concrete surface. Remove ice and snow from concrete slabs as promptly as possible after snow storms. 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 (chipping of the surface) of concrete.

Sealer

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

Condensation

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

See also Ventilation.

Countertops

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Caulking

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

Cleaning

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

Mats

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

Wax

Wax is not necessary, but it can be used to make counters gleam.

See also Ceramic Tile.

Crawl Space

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

The crawl space is not intended as a storage area for items that could be damaged by moisture. Wood stored in a crawl space can attract termites.

You may notice slight dampness in the crawl space. Landscaping that is correctly installed helps prevent excessive amounts of water from entering crawl spaces. Report standing water to PCS Homes for inspection.

See also Ventilation.

Doors and Locks

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Bi-fold Doors

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

Exterior Finish

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

Failure to Latch

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

Hinges

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

Keys

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

Locks

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

Slamming

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

Shrinkage

Use putty, filler, or latex caulk to fill any minor separations that develop at mitered joints in door trim. Follow with painting. Panels of wood doors shrink and expand in response to changes in temperature and humidity. Touching up the paint or stain on unfinished exposed areas is your home maintenance responsibility.

Sticking

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

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

Warping

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

Weather Stripping

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

Drywall

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Slight cracking, nail pops, or seams may become visible in walls and ceilings. These are caused by the shrinkage of the wood and normal deflection of rafters to which the drywall is attached.

Repairs

With the exception of the one-time repair service provided by PCS Homes, care of drywall is your maintenance responsibility. Most drywall repairs can be easily made. This work is best done when you redecorate the room.

Repair hairline cracks with a coat of paint. You can repair slightly larger cracks with spackle or caulk. To correct a nail pop, reset the nail with a hammer and punch. Cover it with spackle, which is available at paint and hardware stores. Apply two or three thin coats. When dry, sand the surface with fine-grain sandpaper, and then paint. You can fill indentations caused by sharp objects in the same manner.

Lighting Conditions

PCS Homes does not repair drywall flaws that are only visible under particular lighting conditions.

Electrical Systems

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Breakers

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

Breaker Tripping

Breakers trip due to overloads caused by plugging too many appliances into the circuit, a worn cord or defective appliance, or operating an appliance with too high a voltage requirement for the circuit. The starting of an electric motor can also trip a breaker.

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

Buzzing

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

Fixture Location

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

GFCI (Ground-Fault Circuit-Interrupters)

GFCI receptacles have a built-in element that senses fluctuations in power. Quite simply, the GFCI is a circuit breaker. Building codes require installation of these receptacles in bathrooms, the kitchen, outside, and the garage (areas where an individual can come into contact with water while holding an electric appliance or tool). Heavy appliances such as freezers or power tools will trip the GFCI breaker.

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

Each GFCI receptacle has a test and reset button. Once each month, press the test button. This will trip the circuit. To return service, press the reset button. If a GFCI breaker trips during normal use, it may indicate a faulty appliance and you will need to investigate the problem. One GFCI breaker can control up to three or four outlets.

Grounded System

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

Light Bulbs

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

Modifications

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

Outlets

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

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

Underground Cables

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

Electric Water Heater

Homeowner Care and Maintenance

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

Drain Tank

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

Element Cleaning or Replacement

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

No Hot Water

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

Pressure Relief Valve

At least once each year, manually operate the pressure relief valve. Stay clear of the discharge line to avoid injury. See manufacturer's literature for diagrams and detailed instructions.

Safety

Keep the area around a water heater clear of stored household items. Never use the top of the water heater as a storage shelf.

Temperature

Temperature settings on an electric water heater will produce approximately the temperatures listed below:

Hot	120 degrees F
A	130 degrees F
B	140 degrees F
C	150 degrees F
Very hot	160 degrees F

The recommended setting for operation of a dishwasher is B, or 140 degrees. Higher settings can waste energy dollars and increase the danger of injury from scalding. Hot water will take longer to arrive at sinks, tubs, and showers that are farther from the water heater.

Expansion and Contraction

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

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

Fireplace

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Most of us feel a fireplace is an excellent way to create a warm, cozy atmosphere. However, without sufficient information, your use of the fireplace can result in heat (and dollars) being wasted. To help prevent that, consider the following points.

Look upon burning a fire as a luxury that adds much to the atmosphere but just a little to the heat in a home. About 10 percent of the heat produced by a fire is radiated into the house. In many older homes, the air used by the fireplace for combustion is replaced with cold outside air drawn in through cracks around doors and windows. However, your home is constructed so tightly that

this does not happen. We install a fresh air vent to supply the fireplace with combustion air and reduce the amount of heated air the fire draws from your house. Open this vent before starting the fire as you do the damper.

Close the damper and cold air vent when not in use. 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 your 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 (such as oak or hickory) because this could break the glass. Also, 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.

Your objective in building a fire should be a clean, steady, slow-burning fire. Begin with a small fire to allow the components of the fireplace to heat up slowly. Failure to do so may damage the fireplace and can void the warranty. Start the fire by burning kindling and newspaper under the grate; two to three layers of logs stacked with air space between, largest logs to the rear, works best. One sheet of paper burned on top of the stack will help the chimney start to draw. Any logs 6 inches in diameter or larger should be split.

Do not burn trash in the fireplace and never use any type of liquid fire starter.

Remove old ashes and coals from under the grate when completely cool. A light layer is desirable as an insulator and will help to reflect heat.

Chimney Cleaning

Creosote and other wood-burning by-products accumulate inside the flue over a period of time. This build-up can be a fire hazard. The way you use your fireplace and the type of wood you burn determine the frequency of your chimney cleanings. For instance, burning soft woods or improperly seasoned woods necessitates more frequent cleaning. Hire a qualified chimney sweep for this cleaning.

Spark Arrester

If the spark arrester becomes clogged, the diminished air flow will affect the performance of the fireplace and may be a fire hazard. Have the arrester cleaned professionally when needed.

Gas Fireplace

PCS Homes offers direct-vent gas fireplaces. If you ordered this type of fireplace, it is demonstrated during the orientation. Read and follow all manufacturer's directions.

A slight delay between turning the switch on and flame ignition is normal. The flames should ignite gently and silently. If you notice any deviation from this and any gas smell, immediately shut off the switch and report it to the gas company.

Excessive winds can cause a downdraft, which can blow out the pilot, requiring you to relight it before using the fireplace.

The exterior vent cover for a direct-vent gas fireplace becomes extremely hot when the fireplace is operating.

Foundation

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Cracks

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

Dampness

Due to the amount of water in concrete, basements may be damp. Condensation can form on water lines and drip onto the floor.

Future Construction in Basement

If you decide to perform additional construction in the basement, obtain guidelines from a licensed engineer, obtain a building permit, and comply with all codes and safety requirements. PCS Homes does not warrant that you will be able to obtain such a permit because of the possibility that building codes may change.

Garage Overhead Door

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

30-Weight Oil

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

Lock

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

Opener

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

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

Painting

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

Safety

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

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

Sag

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

Gas Shut-Offs

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Gas Water Heater

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Condensation

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

Drain Tank

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

Pilot

Never light a gas pilot when the water heater tank is empty. Always turn off the gas before shutting off the cold water supply to the tank. To light the water heater pilot, first remove the cover panel on the tank to expose the pilot. Then rotate the on-off pilot knob to the pilot position. When the knob is in this position, the red button can be depressed.

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

Reinstall the cover panel and then adjust the temperature setting with 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.

Safety

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

Temperature

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

No Hot Water

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

Grading and Drainage

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Drainage

Typically, the grade around your home should slope 1 foot in the first 10 feet, tapering to a 2 percent slope. In most cases, drainage swales do not follow property boundaries. Maintain the slopes around your home to permit the water to drain away from the home as rapidly as possible.

This is essential to protect your foundation. Failure to do so can result in major structural damage and will void your warranty.

Roof Water

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

Rototilling

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

Settling

The area we excavated for your home's foundation was larger than the home to allow room to work. In addition, some trenching is necessary for installation of utility lines. Although we replaced and compacted the soil, it does not return to its original density. Some settling will occur, especially after prolonged or heavy rainfall or melting of large amounts of snow. Settling can continue for several years. Inspect the perimeter of your home regularly for signs of settling and fill settled areas as needed to maintain positive drainage.

See also Landscaping.

Gutters and Downspouts

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Check gutters periodically and remove leaves or other debris. Materials that accumulate in gutters can slow water drainage from the roof, cause overflows, and clog the downspouts.

Extensions or Splashblocks

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

Ladders

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

Leaks

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

Snow and Ice

Clear excess snow from downspouts as soon as possible to allow the gutter to drain and to prevent damage. Severe ice or snow build-up can damage gutters, and such damage is not covered by the limited warranty.

Hardware

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Doorknobs and locks should operate correctly with little attention. Over time, they may need slight adjustments due to normal shrinkage of the framing. Occasionally, you may need to tighten screws.

Hardwood Floors

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Cleaning

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

Dimples

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

Filmy Appearance

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

Furniture Legs

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

Humidity

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

Mats and Area Rugs

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

Recoat

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

Separation

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

See also Warping.

Shoes

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

Spills

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

Splinters

When floors are new, small splinters of wood can appear.

Sun Exposure

Exposure to direct sunlight can cause irreparable damage to hardwood floors. To preserve the beauty of your hardwood floors, install and use window coverings in these areas.

Traffic Paths

A dulling of the finish in heavy traffic areas is likely.

Warping

Warping will occur if the floor repeatedly becomes wet or is thoroughly soaked even once. Slight warping in the area of heat vents or heat-producing appliances is also typical.

Wax

Waxing and the use of products like oil soap are neither necessary nor recommended. Once you wax a polyurethane finish floor, recoating is difficult because the new finish will not bond to the wax. The preferred maintenance is preventive cleaning and recoating annually or as needed to maintain the desired luster.

Heating System

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Good maintenance of the furnace can save energy dollars and prolong the life of the furnace. Carefully read and follow the manufacturer's literature on use and maintenance. The guidelines here include general information only.

Adjust Vents

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

Avoid Overheating

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

Blower Panel

You need to position the blower panel correctly for the furnace blower (fan) to operate. This panel compresses a button that tells the blower it is safe to operate. If this panel is not on tightly, the fan will not come on.

Combustion Air

Furnaces we install in basements or in closets over crawl spaces include combustion air vents.

Never cover or block the combustion air vent 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.

Ductwork Noise

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

Filter

Remember to change or clean the filter monthly during the heating season (year-round if you also have air conditioning). A clogged filter can slow air flow and cause cold 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 furnace care. Buy filters in large quantity for the sake of convenience.

If you have a permanent, washable, removable filter, you need to clean this monthly. Use water only to clean the filter, tap to dry or air dry, and leave unit off for a brief period. Do not use soaps or detergents on the filter.

Furnished Home

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

Fuse

Some furnaces have a fuse directly above the on-off switch. This fuse is an S10, S12, or S15 fuse. It absorbs any spikes in the line such as close electrical strikes or power surges. Unlike old fuses that burn out and clearly indicate that they are blown, these fuses, similar to automobile fuses, have a spring that depresses when tripped. Unless you have examined these quite carefully

before, it may be hard to determine if the fuse has blown. We suggest that you buy some extra fuses of the same size to have on hand.

Gas Odor

If you smell gas, call the gas company immediately.

Odor

A new heating system may emit an odor for a few moments when you first turn it on. An established system may emit an odor after being unused for an extended time (such as after the summer months if you do not use air conditioning). This is caused by dust that has settled in the ducts and should pass quickly.

On-Off Switch

The furnace has an on-off blower switch. This switch looks like a regular light switch and is located in a metal box outside the furnace. When turned off, this switch overrides all furnace commands and shuts down the blower. This is usually done only when maintenance service is being performed, although young children have been known to turn the furnace off using this switch. (If your furnace is a high-efficiency model, it does not have a pilot or an on-off switch.)

Pilot

On models with manually lit pilots, lighting the furnace pilot involves several steps. First, remove the cover panel to expose the pilot. Then rotate the on-off pilot knob to pilot. When the knob is in this position, you can depress the red button. 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. If it does not, wait several minutes to allow any gas to dissipate from the furnace area and repeat the entire process. If the pilot stays lit, rotate the on-off pilot knob to the on position. Reinstall the cover panel. You can find these instructions on a sticker on the furnace and in the manufacturer's literature.

Registers

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

Return Air Vents

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

Temperature

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

Thermostat

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

Trial Run

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

Heat Pump

Homeowner Care and Maintenance

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

Air Circulation Across Coils

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

Air Conditioning and Heating

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

Air Temperature at Vents

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

Auxiliary Heat System

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

Defrost Cycle

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

Night Setback

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

Register Adjustment

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

Return Air Vents

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

Humidifier

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Operate a humidifier only with the furnace, not with the air conditioner. If you notice condensation on windows, the humidifier should be adjusted to a lower setting. Clean the moisture pad according to the manufacturer's instructions and suggested timetable.

Insulation

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

The effectiveness of blown insulation is diminished if it is uneven. As the last step in any work done in your attic (for example, the installation of a TV antenna), you should confirm that the insulation lays smooth and even. Do not step on drywall ceilings, because this can result in personal injury or damage to the drywall.

Electrical outlets normally emit noticeable amounts of cold air when outside temperatures are low.

Landscaping

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Additions

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

Backfill

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

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

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

See also Grading and Drainage.

Bark or Rock Beds

Do not allow edgings around decorative rock or bark beds to dam the free flow of water away from the home. You can use a nonwoven landscape fabric between the soil and rock or bark to restrict weed growth while still permitting normal evaporation of ground moisture.

Contractors

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

First 5 Feet

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

Irrigation

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

Planning

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

See also Xeriscape.

Plant Selection

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

Requirements

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

Soil Mix

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

In areas with high clay content, prepare the soil before installing your grass. First cover the soil with 2 inches of sand and 1 inch of manure that is treated and odorless. Rototill this into the soil to a depth of 6 inches (rototill parallel to the swales). Whether you use seed or sod, this preparation helps your lawn to retain moisture and require less water. Installing a lawn over hard soil permits water to run off with little or no penetration and your lawn will derive minimal benefit from watering or rain.

Apply appropriate fertilizer and weed and pest controls as needed for optimal growth. Investigate organic compounds for additional protection of the environment.

Utility Lines

A slight depression may develop in the front lawn along the line of the utility trench. To correct this, roll back the sod, spread top soil underneath to level the area, and then relay the sod.

Waiting to Landscape

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

Xeriscape

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

Mildew

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Mildew is a fungus that spreads through the air in microscopic spores. They love moisture and feed on surfaces or dirt. On siding, they look like a layer of dirt. Cleaning mildew from your home is your responsibility. Solutions that remove mildew are available from local paint or home

improvement stores. Wear protective eyewear and rubber gloves for this task; the chemicals that remove mildew are unfriendly to humans.

Mirrors

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

To clean your mirrors, use any reliable liquid glass cleaner or polisher available at most hardware or grocery stores. Avoid acidic cleaners and splashing water under the mirror; either can cause the silvering to deteriorate. Avoid getting glass cleaners on plumbing fixtures as some formulas can deteriorate the finish.

Paint and Stain

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Colors

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

Exterior

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

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

Avoid having sprinklers spray water on the exterior walls of your home. This will cause

blistering, peeling, splintering, and other damage to the home.

Severe Weather

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

Stain

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

Touch-Up

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

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

Wall Cracks

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

See also Drywall.

Phone Jacks

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Plumbing

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

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

Aerators

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

See also Dripping Faucet.

Basement Construction

If you perform any construction in your basement, ensure that the plumbing lines in the basement or crawl space are not isolated from the heating source without insulation being added.

Cleaning

Follow manufacturer's directions for cleaning fixtures. Avoid abrasive cleansers. They remove the shiny finish and leave behind a porous surface that is difficult to keep clean. Clean plumbing fixtures with a soft sponge and soapy water (a nonabrasive cleaner or a liquid detergent is usually recommended by manufacturers). Then polish the fixtures with a dry cloth to prevent water spots. Care for brass fixtures with a good-quality brass cleaner, available at most hardware stores.

Clogs

The main causes of toilet clogs are domestic items such as disposable diapers, excessive amounts of toilet paper, sanitary supplies, Q-tips, dental floss, and children's toys. Improper garbage disposal use also causes many plumbing clogs. Always use plenty of cold water when running

the disposal. This recommendation also applies to grease; supplied with a steady flow of cold water, the grease congeals and is cut up by the blades. If you use hot water, the grease remains a liquid, then cools and solidifies in the sewer line. Allow the water to run 10 to 15 seconds after shutting off the disposal.

You can usually clear clogged traps with a plumber's helper (plunger). If you use chemical agents, follow directions carefully to avoid personal injury or damage to the fixtures.

Clean a plunger drain stopper—usually found in bathroom sinks—by loosening the nut under the sink at the back, pulling out the rod attached to the plunger, and lifting the stopper. Clean and return the mechanism to its original position.

Dripping Faucet

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

Extended Absence

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

Freezing Pipes

Provided the home is heated at a normal level, pipes should not freeze at temperatures above 0 degrees F. Set the heat at 65 degrees F if you are away during winter months. Keep garage doors closed to protect plumbing lines running through this area from freezing temperatures.

In unusually frigid weather or if you will be gone more than a day or two, open cabinet doors to allow warm air to circulate around pipes. Use an ordinary hair dryer to thaw pipes that are frozen. Never use an open flame.

Gold or Brass Finish

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

Laundry Tub

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

Leaks

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

Low Pressure

Occasional cleaning of the aerators on your faucets (normally every three to four months) will allow proper flow of water. The water department controls the overall water pressure.

Marble or Manufactured Marble

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

Outside Faucets

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

Porcelain

You can damage porcelain enamel with a sharp blow from a heavy object or by scratching. Do not stand in the bathtub wearing shoes unless you have placed a protective layer of newspaper over the bottom of the tub. If you splatter paint onto the porcelain enamel surfaces during redecorating, wipe it up immediately. If a spot dries before you notice it, use a recommended solvent.

Running Toilet

To stop running water, check the shut-off float in the tank. You will most likely find it has lifted too high in the tank, preventing the valve from shutting off completely. In this case, gently bend the float rod down until it stops the water at the correct level. The float should be free and not rub the side of the tank or any other parts. Also check the chain on the flush handle. If it is too

tight, it will prevent the rubber stopper at the bottom of the tank from sealing, resulting in running water.

Shut-Offs

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

Sprinklers

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

Stainless Steel

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

Tank Care

Avoid exposing the toilet to blows from sharp or heavy objects, which can cause chipping or cracking. Avoid abnormal pressures against the sides of the tank. It is possible to crack the tank at the points where it is attached to the bowl.

Resilient Flooring

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Color and Pattern

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

Limit Water

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

Moving Furniture

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

No Wax

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

Raised Nail Heads

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

Scrubbing and Buffing

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

Seams

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

Roof

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Clean Gutters

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

Leaks

If a leak occurs, try to detect the exact location. This will greatly simplify finding the area that requires repair when the roof is dry.

Limit Walking

Limit walking on your roof. Your weight and movement can loosen the roofing material and in turn result in leaks. Never walk on the roof of your home when the shingles are wet—they are slippery.

Severe Weather

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

Siding

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Siding expands and contracts in response to changes in humidity and temperature. Slight waves are visible in siding under certain weather conditions; this cannot be entirely eliminated.

Wood or wood-product siding will require routine refinishing. The timing will vary with climatic conditions.

See also Paint and Wood Trim.

Smoke Detectors

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Cleaning

For your safety, clean each smoke detector monthly to prevent a false alarm or lack of response in a fire. After cleaning, push the test button to confirm the alarm is working.

Stairs

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Stucco

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Drainage

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

Efflorescence

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

Sprinklers

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

Termites

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

We treat the foundation for termites and provide you with a certificate confirming that treatment. Plan to renew this treatment annually or as directed by the literature that accompanies the certificate. Treatment for other types of insects or animal infestations is your responsibility.

Ventilation

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

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

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

Your daily habits can help keep your home well ventilated:

- Do not cover or interfere in any way with the fresh air supply to your furnace.
- Develop the habit of running the hood fan when you are cooking.
- Ditto the bath fans when bathrooms are in use.
- Air your house by opening windows for a time when weather permits.

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

Waterproofing

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

We spray your foundation walls with a waterproofing material. Although we make every effort to assure a dry basement, during times of excessive moisture, you may notice some dampness. Over time, natural compaction of soils in the backfill areas will usually eliminate this condition. Careful maintenance of positive drainage will also protect your basement from this condition.

Windows, Screens, and Patio Doors

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Contact a glass company for reglazing of any windows that break. Glass is difficult to install without special tools.

Cleaning

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

Condensation

Condensation on interior surfaces of the window and frame is the result of high humidity within the home and low outside temperatures. Your family's lifestyle controls the humidity level within your home. If your home includes a humidifier, closely observe the manufacturer's directions for its use.

Door Locks

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

Door Tracks

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

Invisible Glass

Under certain lighting conditions, door glass may be hard to see. If you keep the screen fully closed when the glass door is open, your family will be accustomed to opening something before going through.

Sticking Windows

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

Storing Screens

Many homeowners remove and store screens for the winter to allow more light into the home. To make re-installation more convenient, label each screen as you remove it. Use caution: screens perforate easily and the frames bend if they are not handled with care.

Weep Holes

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.

See also Ventilation.

Wood Trim

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

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

See also Expansion and Contraction.

PCS Homes

1516 Jabez Run Millersville, MD 21108
Phone (410) 697-2000 Fax (410) 697-2037
Warranty Department Extension 2010

90-Day Warranty Service Request

For your protection and to allow efficient operations, our warranty service system is based on your written report of nonemergency items. You may mail, fax or email your list to the address shown above. We will contact you to set an inspection appointment. Service appointments are from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday. Thank you for your cooperation.

Name _____ Date _____

Address _____

Home Phone: _____

Work Phone: _____

Email Address: _____

Service Requested	For Office Use
1.	
2.	
3.	
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12.	

PCS Homes

1516 Jabez Run Millersville, MD 21108
Phone (410) 697-2000 Fax (410) 697-2037
Warranty Department Extension 2010

Year-End Warranty Service Request

For your protection and to allow efficient operations, our warranty service system is based on your written report of non-emergency items. You may mail, fax or email your list to the address shown above. We will contact you to set an inspection appointment. Service appointments are from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday. Thank you for your cooperation.

Name _____ Date _____

Address _____

Home Phone: _____

Work Phone: _____

Email Address: _____

Service Requested	For Office Use
1.	
2.	
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8.	
9.	
10.	
11.	
12.	

Sample Maintenance Schedule

Item	Monthly	Quarterly	Semiannually	Annually	Comment
Clean and test smoke alarms	X				
Test and reset all GFCIs	X				
Clean and change furnace filter	X				
Operate heat system			X		early in the fall
Operate air conditioning system			X		early in the spring
Inspect drainage			X		
Seal concrete cracks			X		
Inspect exterior paint or stain			X		
Touch up caulk			X		
Touch up grout			X		
Lube garage overhead door and tighten bolts			X		
Drain some water from bottom of water heater				X	or as directed by the manufacturer's literature
Clean gutters			X		
Operate pressure relief valve on water heater				X	
Clean window weep holes				X	or as needed
Chimney cleaning				X	or as needed

Maintenance Schedule

Item	Monthly	Quarterly	Semiannually	Annually	Comment

