

**ATLANTIC BUILDERS**  

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**GIVING YOU MORE**

**ATLANTIC BUILDERS  
HOMEOWNER GUIDE**



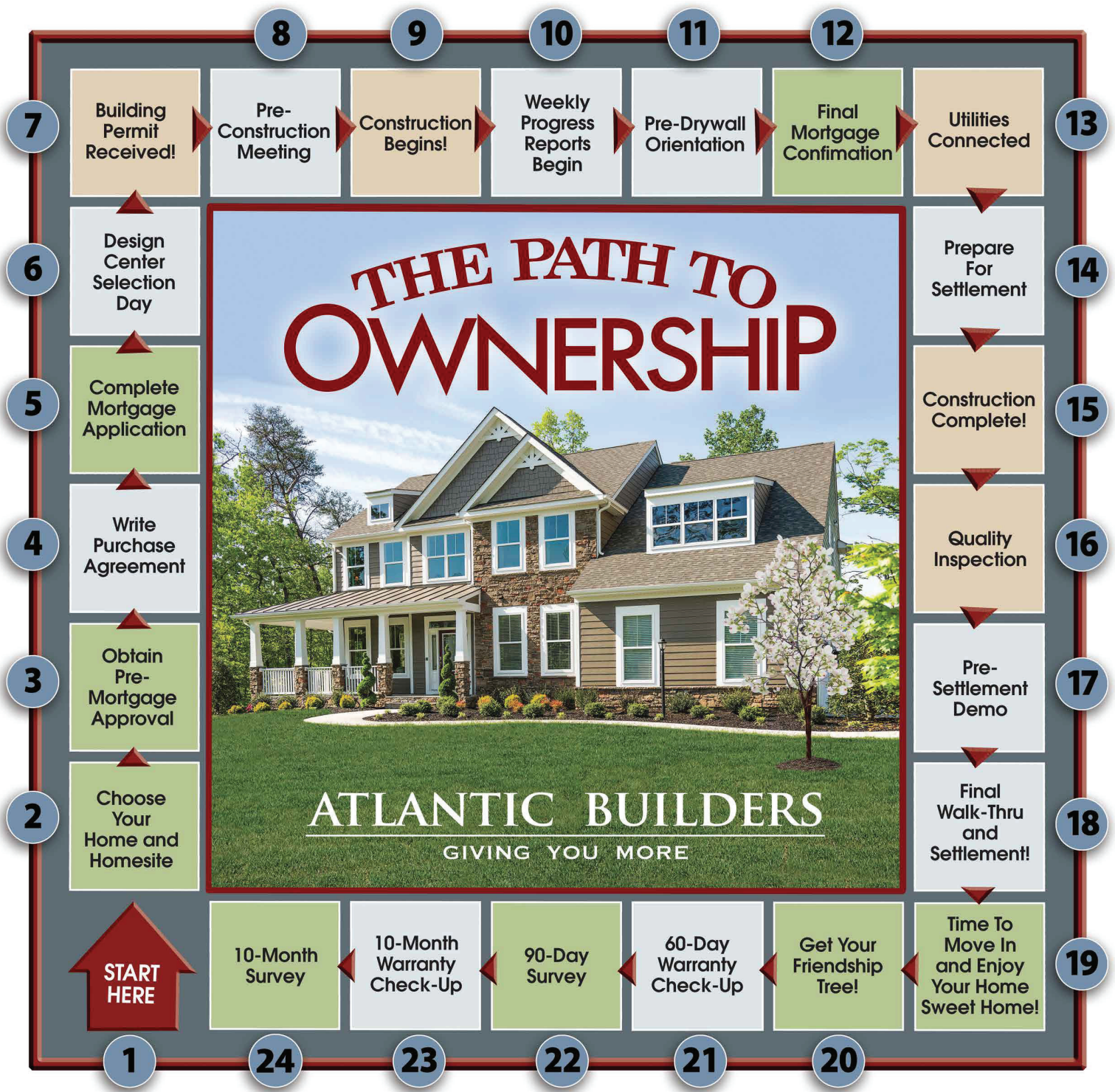
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**COLOR KEY**

 Atlantic Builder Action Square

 Homeowner Action Square

 Both Atlantic Builder And Homeowner Action Square





# INTRODUCTION

## ATLANTIC BUILDERS

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

The *Atlantic Builders Homeowner Guide* 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, component by component.

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. We are delighted to welcome you as part of the Atlantic Builders family and are always ready to serve you.

Sincerely,

Atlantic Builders

# 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 Atlantic Builders 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. See also [The Path to Ownership](#).

### **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. Once your selections have been finalized, your Sales Manager will arrange a Pre-start review meeting with you to ensure that all options and selections have been completed. This process will help ensure that all information is correct and avoid delays in the start of construction of your new home.

### **Construction of Your Home**

Prior to the commencement of construction, we invite you to join us for a Start Meeting to be held with your Sales Manager and Project Manager. At this meeting you will review various construction items including how your new home will be sited on your lot, review of the options selected as well as a general idea of the construction schedule.

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We offer you a Pre-Drywall Orientation so you can see what went in behind the walls of your new home. This meeting is not mandatory, and due to the construction schedule on your new home, we will only be able to provide 24 - 48 hours notice to schedule this orientation.

We expect you will want to visit your new home during the construction process. Please read Section 5, Construction of Your Home, for guidelines on visitation safety, security, and work in progress. **Please be sure to bring this guide to all meetings.**

### Quality

Our company will build your new home to the quality standards demonstrated in our model homes and outline within this guide. 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

### Homeowner Orientation (Pre-settlement Demonstration)

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, outlines in this manual 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 Atlantic Builders 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. 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.

---

*Sales Manager*

---

*Project Manager*

---

*Walk-thru Representative*

---

*Lender*

---

*Title Company*

---

*Warranty Service Manager*



# 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, homeowner's association information, if applicable, and additional legal provisions. Several exhibits are typically attached to the purchase agreement. The features of the community determine the specific items, but the list below is typical.

## Addenda

**Exhibit A:** Standard Features list.

**Exhibit B:** Optional Selections list.

**Exhibit C:** Color Selection Sheet.

**Exhibit D:** Quality Builders Warranty, a specimen copy for your study, with the actual warranty executed at closing.

**Exhibit E:** Homeowner Association Documents, where applicable.

**Exhibit F:** Atlantic Builders Homeowner Guide.

**Buyer's Checklist** confirms that all information has been completed or reviewed.

***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 the visit to your lender and completion of a mortgage application. Plan to accomplish this within five business days of signing your purchase agreement. Atlantic Builders will mail a fully ratified copy of your purchase agreement to 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 drivers license for each borrower.
- Home addresses for the last two years.
- Divorce decree and separation agreements, if applicable.
- Trust agreement, if applicable.

#### ***Income***

- Most recent pay stubs.
- 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.
- 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.

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### *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, household 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.

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.

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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. 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. This allows us to start the home even though final approval is still pending. 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 if your new home is not complete in time to close within the lock period. We are happy to update you throughout the process of construction on the expected delivery date. ***The decision to lock your loan rests with you, the home buyer.***

# DOWN PAYMENT WORKSHEET

## Available Funds

|  |              |
|--|--------------|
| Equity in present home                       | \$ _____     |
| Savings, savings certificates                | \$ _____     |
| Investments                                  | \$ _____     |
| Insurance (cash value)                       | \$ _____     |
| Other funds (such as a cash gift)            | \$ _____     |
| Total Available Funds                        | \$ _____     |
| <br>Minus Amount You Want to Keep in Savings | <br>\$ _____ |
| <br><b>Adjusted Total Available Funds</b>    | <br>\$ _____ |

## Expected Expenses

|  |              |
|--|--------------|
| Settlement costs (estimate 5 percent of loan amount) | \$ _____     |
| Moving costs   |              |
| Other Expected Expenses                              | \$ _____     |
| <br><b>Total Expected Expenses</b>                   | <br>\$ _____ |

## Down Payment

|  |              |
|--|--------------|
| Adjusted total available funds               | \$ _____     |
| Minus total expected expenses                | \$ _____     |
| <br><b>Amount Available for Down Payment</b> | <br>\$ _____ |



## NEW HOME SELECTIONS

Part of the fun of buying a new home is selecting finish materials and colors. You will make these choices at the Atlantic Builders model home.

### Selection Hints

Atlantic Builders provides you with selection sheets that list the choices you need to make. Schedule time to make your selections as soon as possible in accordance with the contract revision policy stated below. Your prompt completion of these selections helps prevent delays caused by backorders.

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 homeowners association 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 Atlantic Builders 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 are useful for matching paint colors, tile grout, and replacement items in your home.

### Contract Revisions and Change Orders

All options, structural and non-structural, are to be selected and finalized in writing as of the contract date with exceptions as noted below.

After the contract date of the house, only colors and selected option changes or additions will be authorized up to 21 calendar days after the contract date or the pre-start sales review meeting, whichever comes first. The selected option changes or additions are specifically: electrical light options and upgrades, low voltage prewires, appliance upgrades, cabinet and

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countertop upgrades, carpet, vinyl, and hardwood selections and upgrades, fireplace surrounds, roofing upgrades, siding upgrades, and decks.

In the event a home is sold for which the construction start date has already passed, no structural option changes will be authorized, and no changes to the selected options listed above will be authorized after the foundation walls are poured or 14 calendar days after the contract date, whichever comes first. Once the home has started construction, cabinet, counter top, vanity top, and roofing colors cannot be changed. All other colors must be selected by the time the foundation walls are poured.

Any request for a change in any completed selections is a Change Order and if acceptable under terms of the revision policy, may delay construction completion. All requests for construction will be submitted to the builder on a change order form. The builder will review the requested changes and determine the acceptability of the request. All requested change orders must be accompanied with a \$500.00 non refundable deposit.





*Note to Home Buyer:*

Insert your records of your new home selections here.

# 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.
- Because of the time required for construction, you have many opportunities to view your home as it is built, ask questions, and discuss details.

You have the opportunity to meet with us during this process. At the Start Meeting, we review your home plans, decor selections, and the optional extras you have requested. At that time, we provide an overview of the construction process, visit the site, and answer your questions. We also offer a Pre-Drywall Orientation after all rough trades are complete so you can get a “behind the walls” look at your home. Please bring this guide to the Start Meeting and to all scheduled meetings.

We understand that you will want to visit your new home during the construction process. We require that you contact your Atlantic Builders Sales Representative prior to visiting to arrange for an authorized Atlantic Builders representative to accompany you. Please note that the home will be unavailable for visits during the two weeks prior to your Pre-settlement Demonstration date. Whether you are on site for a routine meeting or a casual 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 reserve the right to require that you wear a hard hat and that a member of our staff accompany you during your visit. Please observe common-sense safety procedures at all times when visiting:

- Keep older children within view and younger children within reach, or make arrangements to leave them 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.

## Visitation Policy and Site Safety Procedures

“Atlantic Builders, Ltd. is dedicated to becoming the preeminent provider of world class service to our homeowners, trade partners and employees”

By signing below, all parties agree to adhere to the Atlantic Builders, Ltd. Visitation Policy and Site Safety Procedures.

1. Visits to any property under construction must be arranged through your sales office and authorized by the Project Manager.
2. An Atlantic Builder employee must accompany you at all times during your visit.
3. Hard hats must be worn from the moment you step out of your vehicle until you safely return to your vehicle.
4. Any visits other than those identified below must be scheduled in advance.
5. All construction activity on the property is halted while visitors are on site.
6. Authorized and pre-arranged appointments to visit your home while accompanied by your sales and construction team are as follows:
  - a. Pre-construction Meeting
  - b. Pre- drywall Meeting
  - c. Pre-settlement Demonstration
  - d. Sign off Meeting prior to settlement

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Purchaser

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Sales Manager

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Purchaser

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Sales Assistant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Realtor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Project Manager

**Our Service Standards state;** It is the responsibility of all employees to ensure the safety & security of our customers. Be sure that all buildings are locked prior to leaving the workplace each day. Immediately report all safety concerns to the safety team so they are corrected.

## **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 Atlantic Builders 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 Atlantic Builders 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 assemble 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 and outlined within this guide. 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:

- Contact your Sales Manager and schedule a construction review.
- 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 contact 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 our construction staff and 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 Atlantic Builders employees are permitted to perform work in your home.

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

## **Schedules**

The delivery date for your new home begins as an estimate. Until the roof is on and the structure is enclosed, weather can dramatically affect the delivery date. 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 tradespeople 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.

### ***Construction and Delivery Date Updates***

We will update you on the estimated delivery date and stage of construction 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 closing date no later than 15-30 days before delivery.

We suggest that, until you receive this notification, 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. Every effort will be made to deliver the home as scheduled, should circumstances beyond our control cause a delay, you will be notified immediately. 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 trades 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 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 installation
- Form and pour walls
- Waterproof
- Perimeter draitile if applicable
- Plumbing Groundworks
- Backfill
- Inspection
- Pour Concrete Slab

### Framing

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

### Roofing

- Felt or paper
- Valley flashing
- Shingles

### ***Exterior***

#### Exterior trim

- Fascia (boards at ends of rafters)
- Windows and doors
- Finish materials
- Trim
- Deck, if applicable

#### Exterior paint

- Concrete or asphalt
- Fine grading
- Landscaping
- Gutters and downspouts

## *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

- Finish

Interior trim

- Doors

- Baseboards, casings, other details

Paint and stain

Finish work

- Floor coverings (except carpet)

- Cabinets

- Countertops

- Tile

Finish of mechanical systems

- Heating & Air Conditioning System (HVAC)

- Plumbing fixtures

- Electrical Fixtures

- Hardware

- Drywall and Paint Touch-up

- Carpet

- Appliances

- Screens

Certificate of occupancy

Construction cleaning

Quality Inspection

Homeowner orientation

Closing

Home maintenance

# OUR HOMEBUYER WANTS TO KNOW . . .

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Subdivision & Lot #: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Buyer: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Question:

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RESPONSE:

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Completed by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



# HOMEOWNER ORIENTATION

(Pre-Settlement Demonstration)

Your homeowner orientation is an introduction to your new home and its many features. This meeting 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, starting at 9:00 a.m., Monday through Friday. We meet at your new home. The orientation occurs several days before closing. Expect your orientation to take approximately two to three hours.

## Preparation

Allow enough time. We expect the orientation to take two to three 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. Although we appreciate that friends and relatives are eager to see your new home, it would be best if they visit at another time. Similarly, we suggest that, if possible, children and pets 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. Due to the Atlantic Builders home site visitation policy, 3<sup>rd</sup> party inspections must be conducted at a time that is different from the homeowner orientation. While we welcome home inspectors to view your home, we will not accept any list generated by them. We will however, discuss any items that you bring to our attention from their list. Please do not put our personnel in the precarious position of having to tell you they will not accept your home inspector's list.

## Acceptance

In addition to introducing you to your new home, the orientation is also an opportunity for you and Atlantic Builders 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**

Atlantic Builders 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, construction personnel are available for appointments Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Under normal circumstances, you can expect us to resolve all items within 10-15 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 Atlantic Builders.**

## **Future Service**

Atlantic Builders 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 phone numbers for critical trade contractors, such as heating and plumbing, who might be needed after hours or on weekends.
- The manufacturer's literature for the furnace, water heater, and other consumer products. Copies of this material for standard items are available for your review in our sales office. You may also find them on the manufactures website.
- Copies of completed orientation forms. We suggest you insert them here.





# CLOSING ON YOUR HOME

Atlantic Builders recognizes that timing is vitally important in planning your move and locking in your loan. We schedule your settlement 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. Atlantic Builders will notify you of the date of closing 15 or more days before the settlement appointment. We set this appointment with at least three days notice. Typically, the closing process takes from 45 minutes to an hour.

## Location of Closing

The closing on your new home takes place at one of several local title offices. We notify you of the location and phone number when we schedule the settlement.

## 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 Atlantic Builders may require other documents to be signed. The principal documents typically include the following:

- ***Special Warranty Deed*** The special 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, we will deliver to you a standard form for an Affiliated Land Title Association (ALTA) 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 ALTA 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.

- ***Professional Builders 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 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 Title Company) 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.

- ***Atlantic Builders 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*** Atlantic Builders will have utility service removed from its name three days 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 in the letter you will receive from us scheduling your settlement.



# CARING FOR YOUR HOME

Atlantic Builders has constructed your home with quality materials and the labor of experienced craftsmen. Before our using of any material, it must meet our specifications for quality and durability. All work is done under our supervision to attain 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 followed by Professional Warranty Service Corporation guidelines. 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 apprized of such coverages.

## **Atlantic Builders 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, Atlantic Builders provides you with a limited warranty through Professional Builders Warranty Corporation. In addition to the information contained in the limited warranty itself, this manual includes details about one-year material and workmanship standards. 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 manual 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 at the end of this section 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 non-emergency service requests should be submitted in writing.

### ***Sixty-Day Report***

After sixty days in your new home you should submit a warranty request; we will mail you a reminder as the time comes near. We will also be happy to discuss any maintenance questions you may have at that time.

### ***10-Month Report***

Near the tenth month of your materials and workmanship warranty, you should submit a year-end report; we will mail you a reminder as the time comes near. 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 45 degrees F.
- Total loss of electricity. (Check with the utility company before reporting this circumstance to Atlantic Builders or electrician.)
- Total loss of water. (Check with the water department to be certain the problem is not a general outage in the area.)
- 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.)

During business hours 7:30am - 4:00pm M-F, call Atlantic Builders office:

**(540) 891-8540**

After hours, or on weekends or holidays, call the necessary trade contractor directly. Their phone numbers are listed on the Atlantic Builders' website and the Community Subcontractors List you receive at orientation. <http://www.atlanticbuilders.com>

### ***Other Warranty Service***

If you wish to initiate nonemergency warranty service between the 60-day and 10 month, you are welcome to do so by sending in a service request form, submitting an electronic request at [www.atlanticbuilders.com](http://www.atlanticbuilders.com) or writing a letter. We will handle these requests according to the same procedures that apply to the 60-day and 10 month reports.

### ***Kitchen Appliance Warranties***

The manufacturers of kitchen appliances will work directly with you if any repairs are needed for these products. Warranty 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.

## **Warranty 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, 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. 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 schedule a date for the warranty items to be repaired. Warranty work appointments are available Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. 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. Atlantic Builders 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.

|   |   |         |   |                          |  |                    |   |
|---|---|---------|---|--------------------------|--|--------------------|---|
| <b>Appliances</b>                             | Contact the manufacturer directly with model and serial number, closing date, and description of problem.   |         |   |                          |  |                    |   |
| <b>Emergency</b>                              | <p>During our business hours (Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. until 4 p.m.), call our main office, (540) 891-8540.</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. The emergency numbers are also located on the Atlantic Builders' website. <a href="http://www.atlanticbuilders.com">http://www.atlanticbuilders.com</a></p>                    |         |   |                          |  |                    |   |
| <b>Non-emergency</b>                          | <p>Mail, E-mail, on-line submission or fax your written list of items to our office. You can find service request forms at the end of this manual or you can request more by calling our office or visiting the Atlantic Builders' website at <a href="http://www.atlanticbuilders.com">www.atlanticbuilders.com</a> and click on the <i>Customer Care tab</i>.</p> <p>1975 Jefferson Davis Hwy.<br/>Fredericksburg, VA 22401<br/>Phone (540) 891-8540<br/>Fax (540) 891-9170</p> |         |   |                          |  |                    |   |
| <b>Storm damage or other natural disaster</b> | Contact your homeowner's insurance agent immediately. Contain damage as much as possible without endangering yourself. In extreme situations, photograph the damage.  |         |   |                          |  |                    |   |
| <b>Hours</b>                                  | <table><tr><td>Office:</td><td>Monday - Friday, 7:30 a.m. until 4 p.m.</td></tr><tr><td>Inspection appointments:</td><td>Monday - Friday 7:30 a.m. until 4 p.m.</td></tr><tr><td>Work appointments:</td><td>Monday - Friday, 7:30 a.m. until 4 p.m.</td></tr></table>   | Office: | Monday - Friday, 7:30 a.m. until 4 p.m. | Inspection appointments: | Monday - Friday 7:30 a.m. until 4 p.m. | Work appointments: | Monday - Friday, 7:30 a.m. until 4 p.m. |
| Office:                                       | Monday - Friday, 7:30 a.m. until 4 p.m.   |         |   |                          |  |                    |   |
| Inspection appointments:                      | Monday - Friday 7:30 a.m. until 4 p.m.  |         |   |                          |  |                    |   |
| Work appointments:                            | Monday - Friday, 7:30 a.m. until 4 p.m.   |         |   |                          |  |                    |   |
| <b>Questions?</b>                             | Call the main office during normal business hours, (540) 891-8540.  |         |   |                          |  |                    |   |

# 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 air flow 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.

## **Homeowner Suggestions**

The following suggestions may help if you encounter difficulties with your heating and cooling systems:

1. Before calling the installing subcontractor (during the Limited Warranty period) or a service company, check: 1) to make sure your furnace switch is in the full "ON" position and 2) to be certain that the circuit breaker is in the full "ON" position. If the breaker has tripped, push it to the full "OFF" position and then back to the full "ON" position. If the breaker should trip a second time, call your subcontractor at the number listed on the subcontractor phone list you received at the pre-settlement orientation.
2. Filters should be replaced every 30 days after during your first 6 months after closing since substantial amounts of dust will normally accumulate as a result of the new materials in your

home and the move-in process. After this initial period, replace your filters as directed by the manufacturer's guidelines.

3. You may want to have your heating and cooling systems inspected and cleaned at least once a year by a professional serviceman. Refer to the manufacturer's instruction manual for more details.
4. If your home is equipped with an electric heat pump system, clear away accumulations of snow or ice from around and below the outdoor unit immediately after a snowstorm. Also, do not allow grass, leaves, etc., to collect around the unit.
5. Always keep exterior doors and windows closed tightly. Draperies (especially insulated ones) will do much to reduce your operating costs during peak heating or cooling seasons.
6. A good practice for keeping a balanced temperature distribution in your home is to run the fan on your furnace at all times (during the cooling season). This is similar to running your ceiling fan.

### **Atlantic Builders Limited Warranty Guidelines**

The air conditioning system should maintain a temperature of 78 degrees F or a differential of 15 degrees from the outside temperature, measured in the center of each room at a height of five feet above the floor. Lower temperature settings are often possible, but neither the manufacturer nor Atlantic Builders guarantee this.

#### ***Compressor***

The air conditioning compressor must be in a level position to operate correctly. If it settles during the warranty period, Atlantic Builders 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.

#### ***Non-emergency***

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.

## **Atlantic Builders Limited Warranty Guidelines**

Atlantic Builders will correct wiring that does not perform as intended for the alarm system.

# 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.

### *Manufacturers 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.

## **Atlantic Builders Limited Warranty Guidelines**

We confirm that all appliance surfaces are in acceptable condition during your orientation. We assign all appliance warranties to you, effective on the date of closing. The appliance manufacturers warrant their products directly to you according to the terms and conditions of these written warranties.

# 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       |                     |                |                 |                        |

# 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.

## **Atlantic Builders Limited Warranty**

We perform any asphalt repairs by overlay patching. Atlantic Builders is not responsible for the inevitable differences in color between the patch and the original surface. Sealcoating can eliminate this cosmetic condition and is your responsibility.

### ***Alligator Cracking***

If cracking that resembles the skin of an alligator develops under normal residential use, Atlantic Builders 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 three inches 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.

## **Atlantic Builders Limited Warranty Guidelines**

Atlantic Builders and the local building department inspect the attic before your closing to confirm insulation is correct.



# 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 courses 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.

## Atlantic Builders Limited Warranty Guidelines

We check the brick work during the orientation to confirm correct installation of designated materials. Color variations in brick or mortar are a normal occurrence. Atlantic Builders is not responsible for color deviations from the original surface.

### *Cracks*

Atlantic Builders will repair cracks in excess of 3/8 inch by point or patching. These repairs should be made towards the end of the first year of the warranty period to permit the normal settling of the home to stabilize. Atlantic Builders is not responsible for color deviations from the original surface.

# 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.

## **Atlantic Builders Limited Warranty Guidelines**

During the orientation we will confirm that all cabinet parts are installed and that their surfaces are in acceptable condition.

### *Alignment*

Doors, drawer fronts, and handles should be level and even.

### *Operation*

Cabinets should operate properly under normal use.

### *Separations*

We will correct gaps between cabinets and the ceiling or cabinets and the walls by caulking or other means if the gap exceeds 1/4 inch (locations behind appliances are excepted from this repair).

### *Warping*

If doors or drawer fronts warp in excess of 1/4 inch within 24 inches, we will correct this by adjustment or replacement.

### *Wood Grain*

Readily noticeable variations in wood grain and color are normal in all wood or wood veneer selections. Replacements are not made due to such variations.

## **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 soapless 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. Filtration can also occur at walls between rooms and along perimeter walls due to air movement between wall plates from room to room or from outside the home to inside the home.

### ***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 stainproof. 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.

## **Atlantic Builders Limited Warranty Guidelines**

During your orientation, we will confirm that your carpet is in acceptable condition. We will correct stains or spots noted at this time by cleaning, patching, or replacement. Atlantic Builders will not be responsible for dye lot variations if replacements are made.

### ***Edges***

Edges of carpet along moldings and edges of stairs should be held firmly in place. In some areas, metal or other edging material may be used where carpet meets another floor covering.

### ***Seams***

Carpet seams will be visible. Atlantic Builders will repair any gaps or fraying.

# 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. Lack of caulking may cause rot to wood products from the effects of the weather and time. We suggest you perform touch up at the end of your first year in your new home.

### *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, unless specifically indicated on the label that it will; it works best where water is present, for example, where tub meets tile or a sink meets a countertop.

## **Atlantic Builders Limited Warranty Guidelines**

During the orientation we confirm that appropriate areas are adequately caulked.

*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.



## **Atlantic Builders Limited Warranty Guidelines**

During the orientation we confirm that tile and grout areas are in acceptable condition. We will repair or replace cracked, badly chipped, or loose tiles noted at that time. Atlantic Builders is not responsible for variations in color or discontinued patterns. New grout may vary in color from the original.

### ***One-Time Repair***

Cracks appearing in grouting of ceramic tiles at joints or junctions with other materials are commonly due to shrinkage. Atlantic Builders will repair grouting, if necessary, one time during the first year. We are not responsible for color variations in grout or discontinued colored grout.

# **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.

Basement 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.

### ***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.

### ***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. Not cared for, these residues may eventually cause scaling and pitting of exposed concrete surfaces. There are several precautions you can take to minimize this problem:

1. Check the drainage to ensure that water or salt is not trapped on the concrete surface by grass, landscaping or other obstructions along the driveway edges.
2. Clean exposed concrete surfaces as soon as possible after ice and snow have been removed from the streets and any salt residue is removed from your car.
3. Apply a sealer to exposed concrete surfaces twice each year; once just before cold weather and again in April or May after a thorough cleaning of the surfaces.
4. Use clean sand for traction, not salt or chemical solutions.

**Caution: Never use de-icing salts or chemicals on any concrete surface**

### ***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.

## **Atlantic Builders Limited Warranty Guidelines**

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. The limited warranty coverage is for one year unless the requirements of your loan state otherwise.

### ***Color***

Concrete slabs vary in color. No correction is provided for this condition.

### ***Cracks***

If concrete cracks exceed the Quality Builders Warranty specifications in width (3/16 inch) or vertical displacement (1/4 inch), Atlantic Builders will patch or repair them one time during the warranty year. Subsequently, concrete slab maintenance is your responsibility.

### ***Finished Floors***

Atlantic Builders will correct cracks, settling, or heaving that rupture finish floor materials that we installed as part of the home as you originally purchased it.

### ***Disintegration***

Concrete surfaces should not disintegrate to the extent that the aggregate is exposed under normal conditions of weathering and use. If it does, Atlantic Builders will, during the warranty year, take whatever corrective action is necessary to repair or replace defective concrete surfaces. Atlantic Builders is not responsible for color deviations from the original surface nor is it responsible for deterioration caused by salt, chemicals, mechanical implements and other factors beyond Atlantic Builder's control.

### ***Level Floors***

Concrete floors in the habitable areas of the home will be level to within 1/4 inch within any 32-inch measurement with the exception of an area specifically designed to slope toward a floor drain.

### ***Powdering or Chalking***

If powdering or chalking of concrete surfaces that is not surface dust occurs, Atlantic Builders will correct, repair or resurface conditions during the warranty year.

### ***Repairs***

In any instance where Atlantic Builders repairs, replaces, patches or fixes any concrete surface, Atlantic Builders is not responsible for any inevitable differences in the color and texture between the repaired and the original surface.

### ***Separation***

Atlantic Builders will correct separation of concrete slabs from the home if separation exceeds 1 inch.

### ***Settling or Heaving***

Atlantic Builders will repair slabs that settle or heave in excess of 2 inches or if such movement results in negative drainage (toward the house) or hazardous vertical displacement.

### ***Spalling (Surface Chips)***

Causes of spalling include repeated hosing of concrete for cleaning, animal urine, radiator overflow, fertilizer, uncleared snow and ice, ice-melting agents, and road salts from vehicles. Repair of spalling is a home maintenance task.

### ***Standing Water***

Water may stand on exterior concrete slabs for several hours after precipitation or from roof run-off. Atlantic Builders will correct conditions that cause water to remain longer than 12 hours unless it is from roof run-off of melting snow or ice.

# 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.*

## Atlantic Builders Limited Warranty Guidelines

Condensation results from a family's lifestyle and Atlantic Builders has no control over this. The limited warranty coverage excludes condensation.

# 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.*

## **Atlantic Builders Limited Warranty Guidelines**

During your orientation we confirm that all countertops are in acceptable condition. We repair noticeable surface damage such as chips, cracks, and scratches noted on the orientation list. Repair of surface damage that occurs during or after your move-in is one of your home maintenance responsibilities.

### ***Granite***

Granite is a natural product. As such there will be cracks, fissures, pits, depressions, color variations and other qualities within each stone cut. These qualities are what make each and every piece of granite unique to your home. Such qualities are not defects and will not be corrected.

### ***Laminates***

Laminated countertops will have one or more discernible seams. Atlantic Builders will repair gaps or differential at the seams that exceed 1/16 inch.

### ***Manufactured Marble***

Edges should be smooth and even. Where backsplash joints occur at corners, the top edges should be even within 1/8 inch.

### ***Separation from Wall***

Separation of countertops from walls, backsplash, and around sinks results from normal shrinkage of materials. Atlantic Builders will recaulk these areas one time during the materials and workmanship warranty. Subsequently caulking will be your home maintenance responsibility.

# 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 Atlantic Builders for inspection.

*See also Ventilation.*

## Atlantic Builders Limited Warranty Guidelines

During the orientation we will check the condition of soils in the crawl space. Soils in the crawl space may be damp but should not have standing water. Provided that you have not altered the drainage nor caused excessive moisture to accumulate and remain in this area with incorrect landscaping, Atlantic Builders will correct the conditions that result in persistent standing water.

# 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 warpage. Due to natural fluctuations of humidity and the use of forced air furnaces, showers, and dishwashers, interior doors may occasionally require minor adjustments.

### *Bifold Doors*

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

### *Exterior Doors*

To ensure longer life, make sure to caulk joints and clean and paint the doors as necessary.

### *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.

### ***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.



## **Atlantic Builders Limited Warranty Guidelines**

During the orientation we confirm that all doors are in acceptable condition and correctly adjusted. Atlantic Builders will repair construction damage to doors noted on the orientation list.

### *Adjustments*

Due to normal settling of the home, doors may require adjustment for proper fit. Atlantic Builders will make such adjustments.

### *Panel Shrinkage/Garage Doors*

Panels of wood doors shrink and expand in response to changes in temperature and humidity. Although touching up the paint or stain on unfinished exposed areas is your home maintenance responsibility, Atlantic Builders will repair split panels that allow light to be visible.

### *Warping*

Atlantic Builders will repair doors that warp in excess of 1/4 inch. Atlantic Builders will not replace any interior door that warps and still closes until year-end inspection. If problem persists, door will be replaced.

# **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.

## **Atlantic Builders Limited Warranty Guidelines**

Some separation between moldings and adjacent surfaces, including casing is normal and should be expected within certain tolerances. Separation in excess of 1/4 inch will be repaired by caulking or other methods. Slight imperfections such as nail pops, seam lines and cracks not exceeding 1/8 inch in width are common in gypsum wallboard installations and are considered acceptable. Any interior paint/drywall items agreed upon by Atlantic Builders will be corrected after pre-settlement demonstration only. Atlantic Builders will repair drywall shrinkage cracks and nail pops and touch up the repaired area using the same paint color that was on the surface when the home was delivered. Touch-ups will be visible.

Repainting the entire wall or the entire room to correct this is your choice and responsibility. You are also responsible for custom paint colors or wallpaper that has been applied subsequent to closing. Due to the effects of time on paint and wallpaper, as well as possible dye lot variations, touch-ups are unlikely to match the surrounding area.

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.

***During the first year or two in your new home, additional drying of framing materials and settlement will occur. This movement may cause settlement cracks, tape tears, and nail pops on your interior walls and ceilings. These are considered to be normal repairs and are a home maintenance responsibility.***

Nail pops are simply nails protruding from framing materials. The result is a bump or blister in the drywall surface. To repair a nail pop, drive the protruding nail all the way through the gypsum board or remove it entirely. Then drive another drywall nail an inch or two above or below the nail pop area, sinking the nail head slightly below the paper surface creating a dimple. Cover the dimpled area heavily with a spackling compound, let it dry, sand it smooth, and repaint the surface.

### ***Plant Ledges***

Some homes have plant ledges that have been incorporated as an architectural design feature. These plant ledges are for decorative uses (e.g. flowers). They have not been constructed to support the weight of an adult or child. Atlantic Builders Homes, therefore, will not be liable for any misuse of plant ledges.

### ***Repairs***

Settlement cracks and tape tears can be repaired in much the same manner as a nail pop. Cut a small “V” joint along the length of the crack about 1/8” deep and 1/8” wide. Fill the “V” joint heavily with spackling compound, and place drywall tape over the joint compound, covering the entire length of the original drywall crack. Allow the joint compound to dry thoroughly, and place subsequent layers of joint compound directly over the taped areas (NOTE: Each subsequent layer of joint compound must dry thoroughly before another layer can be applied). Upon reaching desired finish, lightly sand the surface until smooth and repaint the area.

With the exception of a one-time educational courteous service provided by Atlantic Builders, care of drywall is the homeowner’s responsibility. Most drywall repairs can be easily made. This work is best done when you redecorate the room.

During the pre-settlement orientation, we confirm that drywall surfaces are in acceptable condition. Touch-ups from repairs will be visible. Color and texture variations will occur. One time during the limited warranty period, Atlantic Builders Homes will provide an educational courteous call. This will be an opportunity for you to learn how to perform drywall repairs by observing experiences personnel demonstrate how to repair some of the common drywall repairs, such as, nail pops, corner bead cracks, and drywall cracks.

This Service call is provided as follows:

1. Service is provided in accordance with the guidelines for drywall and framing noted in the limited Warranty Booklet.
2. Service will be provided one time during the first year of occupancy. We suggest waiting until your home has experienced a heating and cooling season before scheduling the Service.
3. The work will be performed during normal working hours.
4. Sanding and painting are the homeowner's responsibility.
5. This Service is not provided on any surfaces with wall coverings.
6. Atlantic Builders will perform service work on walls with custom paint only at the request of the homeowner. Sanding and repainting are homeowner obligations.

NOTE: Custom paints can be very difficult to touch up properly and usually require repainting the entire surface to provide a uniform finish. You may want to avoid this additional work if there are only minor drywall imperfections. Due to the effects of time on wallpaper, as well as possible dye lot variations, repairs are unlikely to match the surrounding area.

### ***Lighting Conditions***

Atlantic Builders does not repair drywall flaws that are only visible under particular lighting conditions.

### ***Related Warranty Repairs***

If a drywall repair is needed as a result of poor workmanship (such as blisters in tape) or other warranty-based repair (such as a plumbing leak), Atlantic Builders completes the repair by touching up the repaired area with the same paint that was on the surface when the home was delivered. If more than one-third of the wall is involved, we will repaint the wall corner to corner. You are responsible for custom paint colors or wallpaper that has been applied subsequent to closing. Due to the effects of time on paint and wallpaper, as well as possible dye lot variations, touch-up may not match the surrounding area.

# 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 substantially in accordance with what you see in the model home(s). Moving fixtures to accommodate specific furniture arrangements or room use is your responsibility. If you have a question about a fixture location, please see your Sales Manager.

### ***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.

## **Atlantic Builders Limited Warranty Guidelines**

During the orientation we confirm that light fixtures are in acceptable condition and that all bulbs are working. Atlantic Builders's limited warranty excludes any fixture you supplied.

### ***Designed Load***

Atlantic Builders will repair any electrical wiring that fails to carry its designed load to meet specifications. If electrical outlets, switches, or fixtures do not function as intended, Atlantic Builders will repair or replace them.

### ***GFCI (Ground-Fault Circuit-Interrupters)***

Atlantic Builders is not responsible for food spoilage that results from your plugging refrigerators or freezers into a GFCI outlet.

### ***Power Surge***

Power surges are the result of local conditions beyond the control of Atlantic Builders and are excluded from limited warranty coverage. These can result in burned-out bulbs or damage to sensitive electronic equipment such as TVs, alarm systems, and computers. Damage resulting from lightning strikes are excluded from limited warranty coverage.

# 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*

Safety and energy conservation are factors to be considered when selecting the water temperature setting of the water heater's thermostat. Water temperature above 125 degrees Fahrenheit can cause severe burns or death from scalding. To find hot water temperature being delivered, turn on a hot water faucet and place a thermometer in the hot water stream and read. Adjust as necessary.

| <b>Temperature</b> | <b>Time to Produce Serious Burn</b> |
|--------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 120 degrees F      | More than 5 minutes                 |
| 125 degrees F      | 1 ½ to 2 minutes                    |
| 130 degrees F      | About 30 seconds                    |
| 135 degrees F      | About 10 seconds                    |
| 140 degrees F      | Less than 5 seconds                 |
| 145 degrees F      | Less than 3 seconds                 |
| 150 degrees F      | Less than 1 ½ seconds               |
| 155 degrees F      | About 1 second                      |

The water heater manufacturer recommends the warm/hot setting as the best combination of hot water and energy efficiency. Setting it higher will not give you hotter water at your showers or tubs as local building codes require temperature limit stops in those locations limiting hot water to 120 degrees.

Hot water will take longer to arrive at sinks, tubs, and showers that are farther from the water heater.

### **Atlantic Builders Limited Warranty**

Refer to the manufacturer's limited warranty for complete information regarding warranty coverage on your water heater.

All water heaters have a limited warranty against leakage. If the water heater tank develops a non-repairable leak during the limited warranty period, the manufacturer will provide a complete replacement. The cost of labor for removal and reinstallation is not included after the first year of occupancy. Appropriate labor charges for removal and reinstallation after one year are a normal homeowner expense. Any alteration of the plumbing system by the homeowner may void this limited warranty.

The electric heating element(s) will also be warranted by the manufacturer. Check the manufacturer's literature provided with your water heater for specific details.



# 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.

## Atlantic Builders Limited Warranty

Atlantic Builders provides one-time repairs to many of the effects of expansion and contraction. See individual categories for details.

# 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.

### *Gas Fireplace*

Atlantic Builders offers direct-vent gas fireplaces. If your home has 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.*

## **Atlantic Builders Limited Warranty Guidelines**

Fireplaces are not intended to be the sole heat source in the home. The fireplace should function properly when Atlantic Builders's and the manufacturer's directions are followed.

### ***Chimney Separation***

Separation of a brick chimney from a newly constructed home may occur. Atlantic Builders will repair separation from the main structure in excess of 1/2 inch in 10 feet. Caulking is acceptable in most cases.

### ***Cracks***

Normal shrinkage of mortar results in hairline cracks in masonry. Atlantic Builders will repair cracks that exceed 1/8 inch in width. The repair consists of pointing or patching and the mortar color will be matched as closely as possible, but expect some variation.

Exterior masonry may have chips, irregular surfaces, and color variations, which occur during manufacturing, shipping, or handling. Unless such conditions affect the structural integrity of the home, no repair is provided.

### ***Discoloration***

Discoloration of the firebox or brick is a normal result of use and requires no corrective action. Mortar-style fireplaces may develop cracks due to temperature changes and other factors.

### ***Downdraft***

Although extremely high winds can result in a downdraft, this condition should be temporary and occasional. We will determine and correct continuous malfunction if caused by a construction or design defect.

### ***Glass Doors***

During the orientation we confirm that glass fireplace doors, when included with the home, are in acceptable condition.

# FIXTURES

## **Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines**

The manufacturer treats 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 oil rubbed bronze, chrome or brushed nickel and resulting in spotting and discoloration.

### *Cleaning*

Care of these products requires only periodic cleaning with a mild, nonabrasive soap and rinsing with warm water, followed by drying with a soft cloth. Please do not use bleach, ammonia or other chemicals on the metal finishes.

### *Corrosion*

The finish on your fixtures is a coating on top of a base metal. Water having a high mineral content may be corrosive to any coating or finish on the fixtures.

## **Atlantic Builders Limited Warranty Guidelines**

During the orientation we will confirm that fixtures are in acceptable condition. Atlantic Builders does not warrant against corrosion damage to the external surfaces or internal workings of plumbing fixtures.

# 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. Atlantic Builders does not warrant that you will be able to obtain such a permit because of the possibility that building codes may change.

## **Atlantic Builders Limited Warranty Guidelines**

The foundation of your home has been designed and installed according to the recommendations of an engineer. The walls of the foundation are poured concrete with steel reinforcing rods.

### ***Cracks***

Shrinkage or backfill cracks are not unusual in foundation walls, especially at the corners of basement windows. Atlantic Builders will seal cracks that exceed 1/8 inch in width.

### ***Cosmetic Imperfections***

Slight cosmetic imperfections in foundation walls, such as a visible seam where two pours meet or slight honeycombing (aggregate visible), are possible and require no repair unless they permit water to enter.

### ***Leaks***

Atlantic Builders will correct conditions that permit water to enter the basement, provided you have complied with the drainage, landscaping, and maintenance guidelines.

# **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 overlubricating 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 Atlantic Builders 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.

### ***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.

### **Atlantic Builders Limited Warranty Guidelines**

The garage door should operate smoothly and with reasonable ease. The door can become misaligned and require adjustment, which Atlantic Builders will provide unless the problem is caused by the installation of a garage door opener subsequent to closing on the home.

### *Light Visible*

Garage overhead doors cannot be air tight. Some light will be visible around the edges and across the top of the door. Severe weather conditions may result in some precipitation entering around the door.

## **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.

### **Atlantic Builders Limited Warranty Guidelines**

The gas company is responsible for leaks up to the meter. Atlantic Builders will correct leaks from the meter into the home.

# 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 by the local building authorities as well as Atlantic Builders.

### *Drainage*

Typically, the grade around your home should slope a minimum of 6” in the first 10 feet. 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. When we replace and compact 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.*

## Atlantic Builders Limited Warranty Guidelines

We established the final grade to ensure adequate drainage away from the home. Maintaining this drainage is your responsibility. If you alter the drainage pattern after closing, or if changes in drainage occur due to lack of maintenance, the limited warranty is void.

### ***Backfill Settlement***

Backfilled or excavated areas around the foundation and at utility trenches should not interfere with the drainage away from your home. If these areas settle during the first year, Atlantic Builders will fill the areas one time and subsequently will provide you with fill dirt to maintain positive drainage.

### ***Erosion***

Atlantic Builders is not responsible for weather-caused damage to landscaped yards after the compliance department's release of the erosion or yard bond held on the lot. While it remains your responsibility to water your newly sodded or hydroseeded yard after your closing date we will return to repair bare patches and wash out areas prior to the receipt of the release of the erosion or yard bond.

### ***New Sod***

New sod installation and the extra watering that accompanies it can cause temporary drainage problems, as can unusually severe weather conditions.

### ***Recommendations***

Atlantic Builders documents the grades that exist at the time of delivery of your home or as soon thereafter as possible. The ground must be dry and free of frost to make these determinations. Once final grades are set, Atlantic Builders will inspect drainage problems reported in writing during the warranty period, compare grades to those originally established, and advise you on corrective actions you might take.

### ***Swales***

Atlantic Builders does not alter drainage patterns to suit individual landscape plans. Typically, a lot receives water from and passes water on to other lots, so changes in grade often affect adjacent or nearby lots. Atlantic Builders advises against making such changes. After heavy rain or snow, water may stand in swales up to 48 hours.

Standing or ponding of water should not remain in your yard 48 hours after a rain, except in swales. Swales are likely to have some standing or ponding of water after a rain or due to sump pump discharge. No grading determination will be made while there is frost or snow on the ground, or while the ground is saturated. The possibility of standing water after an unusually heavy rainfall should be anticipated. The homeowner is responsible for maintaining grades and swales once they have been properly established and stabilized by Atlantic Builders.



### ***Under Concrete***

Atlantic Builders will fill visible sunken areas under concrete during the first year.

### ***Winter Grading***

Due to weather conditions, especially during winter and early spring, the final grade may not have been established at the time of closing. We document the status of your grading at the time of delivery. When conditions permit, grading work will continue.

We try to go in order of settlement; however, if your lot is too wet to grade we cannot follow that order. Also, early spring deliveries may be finished ahead of you. We try to minimize this because we understand it is very frustrating to wait through the winter without a finished yard only to see new construction receiving yards. Occasionally variables such as soil conditions, the need to finish certain yards together, or county standards on completion, which change through the year will drive out a schedule that differs slightly from first come, first serve. Completing your yard is a priority for us!

Please confirm that we have completed your grading before beginning any custom landscaping work.

## **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.

### ***Color***

Gutters and downspouts are matched as closely as possible to the trim of your home. Due to the relatively limited amount of aluminum colors in which gutters and downspouts are available, there may be a variation between the gutter color and your trim color.

### ***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.

### **Atlantic Builders Limited Warranty Guidelines**

Gutters over 3 feet long are installed with a slight slope so that roof water will flow to the downspouts.

### ***Leaks***

We correct leaks that occur during the warranty period.

### ***Overflow***

Gutters may overflow during periods of excessively heavy rain. This is expected and requires no repair.

### ***Standing Water***

Small amounts of water (up to one inch) will stand for short periods of time in gutters immediately after rain. No correction is required for these conditions.

## **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.

### **Atlantic Builders Limited Warranty Guidelines**

We confirm that all hardware is in acceptable condition during orientation. The limited warranty excludes repairs for cosmetic damage subsequent to the orientation.

Atlantic Builders will repair hardware items that do not function as intended.

# 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 moisture 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.

### *Potted Plants*

Do not set potted plants directly on the hardwood floor.

### ***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 on a pre-

finished floor. The preferred maintenance is preventive cleaning and recoating annually or as needed to maintain the desired luster.

### **Atlantic Builders Limited Warranty Guidelines**

During the orientation we will confirm that hardwood floors are in acceptable condition. We will correct any readily noticeable cosmetic defects listed during the orientation. You are responsible for routine maintenance of hardwood floors.

#### ***Separations***

Shrinkage will result in separations between the members of hardwood floors. If these exceed 1/8 inch, Atlantic Builders will fill them one time. Atlantic Builders is not responsible for removing excess filler that appears on the surface if the boards expand due to subsequent changes in humidity and expel the filler.

## **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.

### ***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***

Filters should be replaced every 30 days after during your first 6 months after closing since substantial amounts of dust will normally accumulate as a result of the new materials in your home and the move-in process. After this initial period, replace your filters as directed by the manufacturer's guidelines. 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.

If you have an electronic air cleaner, read the manufacturers literature and follow all instructions for efficient operation and maintenance of your system.

### ***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.

### ***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.

### ***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.

## **Atlantic Builders Limited Warranty Guidelines**

We will install heating systems according to local building codes, as well as to engineering designs of the particular model home.

Adequacy of the system is determined by its ability to establish a temperature of 70 degrees F, as measured in the center of the room, 5 feet above the floor. In extremely cold temperatures (10 degrees below or colder), the system should be able to maintain a temperature differential of 80 degrees from the outside temperature.

### ***Duct Placement***

The exact placement of heat ducts may vary from those positions shown in similar floor plans.

### ***Ductwork***

Although the heat system is not a sealed system, the ductwork should remain attached and securely fastened. If it becomes unattached, Atlantic Builders will repair as needed.

### ***Furnace Sounds***

Expansion or contraction of metal ductwork results in ticking or popping sounds. While eliminating all these sounds is impossible, Atlantic Builders will correct oilcanning. (Oilcanning occurs when a large area of sheet metal like those found in air ducts makes a loud noise as it moves up and down in response to temperature changes.)

### ***Thermostat***

Thermostats are calibrated to plus or minus 5 degrees.

## **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.

### ***Emergency 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 emergency 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 air flow 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.

## **Atlantic Builders Limited Warranty Guidelines**

Refer to the manufacturer's limited warranty for information regarding warranty coverage.

# **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.

## **Atlantic Builders Limited Warranty Guidelines**

Refer to the manufacturer's limited warranty for information regarding coverage of the humidifier.

# **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.

## **Atlantic Builders Limited Warranty Guidelines**

Atlantic Builders will install insulation to meet or exceed the building codes applicable at the time of construction and outlined as part of your purchase agreement.

# LANDSCAPING

## Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

### *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 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 any spout 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 Atlantic Builders.

### ***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.

### ***Limits of Clearing***

Fallen trees and undergrowth in outside the limits of clearing and undisturbed areas will be left in their natural state. Trees in these limits of clearing and undisturbed areas that die after settlement will also be the homeowner's responsibility to remove.

### ***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.

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, spread soil to level the area.

### ***Settlement***

During the first year of occupancy, you may expect some soil settlement around the foundation walls and utility trenches at your new home. Settlement may interfere with the proper flow of storm water away from your home. Minor corrections are a homeowner Maintenance responsibility.

### ***Tree Removal***

Atlantic Builders will remove only the trees necessary to build your home. Any trees that we remove to build your home will be removed from the lot during the construction process. Even though your site plan shows “limits of clearing” this is an estimate as the area needed to build your home and not an obligation. Based on the characteristics of your lot we may make adjustments to the clearing limits.

### ***Xeriscape***

Atlantic Builders 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.

## **Atlantic Builders Limited Warranty**

Landscape materials (sod, seed, trees, bushes etc.) we install do not carry any warranty. We will confirm the healthy condition of all plant materials during the orientation. Maintaining landscaping is your responsibility.

### ***Lawn Care***

Your lawn was hydroseeded with primarily tall fescue seed or was sodded with either tall fescue or bluegrass, both of which are considered a cool season grass. The lawn care calendar and Maintaining Lawns pamphlet in the binder pocket have good general suggestions for lawn care. More specific information has been accumulated below, but keep in mind the guidelines shown are considered minimum standards of care for a healthy lawn. For complete information, please consult with a lawn care specialist.

## **First Year (applies to hydroseeded and sodded lawns)**

Watering - a newly installed lawn requires 2-3” of water per week, preferably watered every day. This is the single most critical action you need to take to establish your lawn. **Grass seed will not germinate and survive without it and sod will not knit and root without it!** After 30 days, the watering schedule may be reduced to approximately 1” per week. An occasional thorough soaking is far preferable to several light waterings. Also, the best time of day to water is early morning as evaporation is less than in midday and fungus growth is kept to a minimum.

Fertilization - no fertilization is required for at least 30 days after installation as your yard was installed with a 15-30-15 fertilizer (unless sodded, in which case the sod was fertilized at the sod farm). Depending on the time of year your yard was installed, we recommend you do the following:

April-August installations - fertilize in Fall according to schedule as shown in the “Second Year and Thereafter Maintenance” section below.

September-November installations - Fertilize once after 30 days from installation with an 18-5-9 fertilizer applied at approximately 7 lbs. per 1,000 square feet.

December-March installations - fertilize once after 30 days from installation with an 18-5-9 fertilizer applied at approximately 4 lbs. per 1,000 square feet.

Liming - Generally speaking, area soils are acidic. As such, it is necessary to add lime to your lawn. We recommend you apply a pelletized lime at the rate of 50 lbs. per 1,000 square feet either in the Spring or the Fall. It will be necessary to repeat applications every six months until a soil test determines your soil pH to be near 6.2. This can be done through your local Virginia Tech Cooperative Extension office at 899-4020 (Stafford) or 582-7096 (Spotsylvania) for \$6.00 or many area lawn and garden centers such as Roxbury Mills (373-9124).

Mowing - Allow your lawn to grow to 4-5” prior to its first mowing. Adjust your mower to cut at its maximum height and be sure the blade is sharp (replacement blades are available at most local area hardware stores). Do not rake newly established lawns. The straw and grass clippings from your first few mowings are necessary to prevent erosion and retain moisture. Subsequent cuts should be made at a height of approximately 3”. Avoid allowing your lawn to grow taller than 4” from this point forward.

## **Second Year and Thereafter (applies to hydroseeded and sodded lawns)**

Watering - Established lawns need 1” of water per week, preferably with infrequent, deep soakings.

Fertilization - At a minimum, we strongly recommend a Fall feeding for your lawn as follows: (note: if you have contracted with a lawn care provider, please follow their recommendations)

September     Apply an 18-5-9 fertilizer at the rate of approximately 4 lbs. per 1,000 square feet.  
October         Repeat September’s application.  
December       Apply an 18-5-9 fertilizer at the rate of approximately 7 lbs. per 1,000 square feet.

Liming - Continue to lime every six months as described in the “First Year” guidelines.

Mowing - Maintain a 3” height for your lawn as described in the “First Year” guidelines.

Overseeding - You should overseed your lawn annually each Fall until a desired density is obtained and then periodically as needed. Generally speaking, a “light” overseeding would be considered 5 lbs. per 1,000 square feet and a “heavy” overseeding would be considered 10 lbs. per 1,000 square feet.

Trees and Shrubs - Survival of the trees and shrubs planted by Atlantic Builders in your yard is warranted for one year provided that there is evidence of proper care and that they haven’t been transplanted (moved). The first six months after planting is critical to their survival. Water trees and shrubs generously. Fertilizer should be applied during the first year in moderation. It is best to consult a local nursery for fertilization advice.

# **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.

## **Atlantic Builders Limited Warranty Guidelines**

We will remove any mildew noted during the orientation. Atlantic Builders warranty excludes mildew.

# **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.

## **Atlantic Builders Limited Warranty Guidelines**

We will confirm that all mirrors are in acceptable condition during the orientation. Atlantic Builders will correct scratches, chips, or other damage to mirrors noted during the orientation.

# **MOLD**

## **Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines**

Mold is a type of fungus that spreads through the air in microscopic spores. Mold occurs naturally and is found everywhere that life can be supported. Over 100,000 kinds exist in the world and 1000 of these are found in the U.S. In order to grow mold requires food, air, water, and a temperature between 40 and 100 degrees Fahrenheit.

While not all molds are harmful, growth of mold within a home is inappropriate and can potentially cause serious side effects, such as allergic reactions and infections, for the occupants in addition to damaging the material on which it grows. Experts are studying whether more serious side effects are possible. At this point, no agency has been able to set guidelines on how much exposure is harmful because each of us reacts to mold differently.

Designing or building homes that exclude mold spores is impossible. If conditions are right, mold will grow in your home. Items commonly found in all homes--such as wood, carpet, drywall, fabric, and insulation, to name a few--can supply a food source. Likewise, air and temperature in most homes supply the needs of mold spores. If moisture is present and remains on a mold food source, mold can develop within 24 to 48 hours.



Moisture is the only mold growth factor that can be controlled in a home. By minimizing moisture, you reduce or eliminate mold growth. Moisture in your home comes from many sources. The activities of daily living, spills, leaks, overflows, condensation, and high climatic humidity are examples. Good housekeeping and maintenance are essential in your effort to prevent or eliminate mold growth.

### ***Caulking***

**Maintain all caulking around such areas as windows, doors, sinks, and tubs.**

### ***Cleaning***

Mold grows well on dust and dirt. Therefore, vacuum and dust regularly. Clean or replace filters minimally in accordance to the manufacturer's recommendations. Keep weep holes for brick and on windows clear. Most bath tile cleaning products contain chemicals that remove and help protect against mold growth. Wipe up any spills immediately.

### ***Condensation***

Condensation on surfaces inside your home is a sign of high humidity. If you notice condensation, wipe it up and take steps to reduce the humidity level in your home.

### ***Humidifier***

If your home includes a humidifier, operate it in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and clean it as recommended in the manufacturer's literature. If condensation develops, turn the humidifier down or off.

### ***Inspections***

Check your home regularly for signs of water intrusion. These might include a musty odor, staining, or actual standing moisture. Remember to check inside cabinets under all sinks and behind toilets as well as in seldom used closets. If applicable, confirm your sump pump functions correctly. Check weather stripping, caulking, grout, weep holes, and so on. Check the refrigerator pan, air conditioning condensate line, coils, and condenser pan for signs of mold growth.

### ***Landscaping and Drainage***

Maintain positive drain around your home. Avoid changes to the grade or exterior additions that interfere with drainage away from the home; this includes edging or borders that dam water near the home. Regularly inspect any sprinkler system for correct function. Adjust sprinkler heads to avoid their spraying the home and correct any leaks immediately. Keep splash blocks or downspout extensions in place to channel roof water away from your home. Clean gutters as needed to prevent overflow.

### ***Leaks***

Immediately report any leak to Atlantic Builders. This includes roof, window, or plumbing leaks. Failure to report leaks promptly increases your risk and responsibility for repairs.

### ***Purchases or Stored Items***

Carefully inspect items you bring into your home such as boxes that have been in storage or new house plants for any sign of mold, including musty odors.

### ***Tile Grout***

Inspect and maintain grout as a seal to keep moisture from reaching the wall behind the tile.

### ***Valves***

Be familiar with the shut off valves for all water supply lines in your home. In the event of a leak, immediately shut off the water at the appropriate valve to minimize the amount of water that is released. Clean up the water immediately.

### ***Ventilation***

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.
- \_ Turn bath fans on when bathrooms are in use.
- \_ Connect your clothes dryer exhaust to the vent pipe. Clean the exhaust tube as needed to keep it clear and functioning efficiently.
- \_ Air your house by opening windows for a time when weather permits

## **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 to refinish the exterior surface of your home between the first and second year. Then, you will need to repaint 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.*

## **Atlantic Builders Limited Warranty Guidelines**

During your orientation we will confirm that all painted or stained surfaces are in acceptable condition. A defect or blemish will only be addressed if the issue can be noticed when viewed at least four feet from the wall. Atlantic Builders will touch up paint surfaces with the matching color as closely as possible to the surrounding area as indicated on the orientation list. You are responsible for all subsequent touch-up, except painting we perform as part of another warranty repair.

If painting repairs are needed as a result of poor workmanship or other warranty based repair, Atlantic Builders completes the repair by touching up the repaired area with the same paint that was on the surface when the home was delivered. Due to the effects of time on paint, as well as possible dye lot variations, touch-up may not match the surrounding area. If more than 1/3 of the wall is involved in the repair, we will repaint the wall corner to corner. You are responsible for custom paint colors or wallpaper that has been applied subsequent to closing.

The homeowner must maintain caulking. You will need to inspect and correct any deficiencies at all intersections with accessories, corner boards, brick veneer, windows, doors, soffits, stairs, moldings, countertops, tub surrounds, etc.

### ***Cracking***

As it ages, exterior wood trim will develop minor cracks and raised grain. Much of this will occur during the first year. Raised grain permits moisture to get under the paint and can result in peeling. This is not a defect in materials or workmanship. Paint maintenance of wood trim and gutters is your responsibility.

### ***Fading***

Expect fading of exterior paint or stain due to the effects of sun and weather. Atlantic Builders limited warranty excludes this occurrence.

### ***Touch-Up Visible***

Paint touch-up may be visible even if the same paint mix is used.

### ***Wood Grain***

Due to wood characteristics, color variations will result when stain is applied to wood. This is natural and requires no repair. Today's water-base paints often make wood grain visible on painted trim. Atlantic Builders does not provide corrections for this condition.

# PHONE/DATA/TELEVISION WIRING

## **Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines**

Your home is equipped with telephone, data, television jacks as shown on the selection sheets (exact locations may vary up to 2-4 feet due to framing or mechanical installation). Initiating these services, additions to these services, and moving phone, data and television outlets for decorating purposes or convenience are your responsibility. The phone, internet, cable/satellite network interface is the property of Service Providing Company and is placed on the exterior of your home.

Atlantic Builders will repair wiring that does not perform as intended from the service provider's box into the home. From the service box outward, care of the wiring is the responsibility of the local Service Company. If you do not have service to your home, please go to the Network Interface on the exterior of your home and see if you have a service there. If there is service at the interface box on the exterior of your home, not inside, please contact the trade contractor noted on the trade contractor list provided to you at settlement. If there is no service at the Network Interface please contact your local service provider.

## **Atlantic Builders Limited Warranty Guidelines**

Atlantic Builders will correct outlets positioned so that a phone cannot be installed due to a cabinet or countertop that is part of the original home.

Atlantic Builders will repair wiring that does not perform as intended from the phone service box into the home. From the service box outward, care of the wiring is the responsibility of the local telephone service company.

# 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 shower heads 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.

Nicks, scratches and other cosmetic defects not noted on the Pre-Settlement Demonstration list are not covered by your Limited Warranty.

## ***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.

If any of your appliances such as the clothes washer or the dishwasher should overflow, check to be sure the trap through which it drains is not clogged. If the cause of the stoppage is not immediately evident, we recommend calling a plumber for professional assistance. Please refer to the Emergency Service guidelines in the Service portion of this Manual before you make your call.

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.

## ***Filters***

If your kitchen sink has a G. E. Smartwater Filter System periodic cleaning of filter will be required. A light on the faucet will remind you of this.

### ***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.

### ***Chrome, Brushed Nickel, Gold or Brass Finish***

Avoid using any abrasive cleaners on chrome, brushed nickel, gold and antique brass fixtures. Use only mild liquid 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 Atlantic Builders does not warrant outside faucets 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.

### ***Septic System***

Your home may be equipped with a septic system rather than a central sewage collection system to dispose of liquid and solid waste. Understanding your septic system and providing proper Maintenance will reduce the risk of system failures.

Waste products drain from your home into a separation tank. In this tank, solids sink to the bottom and fluids either drain or are pumped into the septic field. Solids need to be periodically pumped out of the separation tank by a professional service, approximately every three to five years.

It is natural for a slight amount of odor to be present in the first year of use. This odor will gradually disappear as a purifying culture of bacteria is established in your septic system. Because these bacteria are vital to the natural cleansing process of the septic system, avoid putting lye or other caustic materials into sinks, toilets or drains, as they may damage the bacteria culture. Make an effort to use only biodegradable detergents. White bathroom tissue is recommended since dyes may not be fully biodegradable.

To nurture the bacterial culture in your septic system, we recommend you add baker's yeast to the system periodically. Mix one packet in warm water and pour the solution into a sink drain.

It is also important not to disturb the septic field. Be sure you understand where it is located (refer to your plot plan received at settlement), and never regrade, install irrigation system, plant trees or shrubs, drive or park heavy equipment near the system, or in any other way disrupt the area.

If your septic system is an alternative system such as a PurFlow or Advantek an annual maintenance program is required by a certified maintenance provider. Atlantic Builders pays for the service provider for the first year. It is the homeowner's responsibility to contract with one of these service providers and establish a maintenance program after the first year. The Virginia Department of Environmental Health can provide you with a list of certified service providers.

Additional information pertaining to the operation and Maintenance of your septic system is available at your county office building.

### ***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.

### ***Well***

Your home may be equipped with a private well water system rather than a central municipal water supply. Due to underground geological conditions your well may be at a different depth and have unique characteristics in comparison to other wells. Your system has been tested and approved by the local municipality. The well yield rate will differ well to well.

If your home has been supplied with a water treatment system, this system will be installed in accordance with the findings of your individual water test. Due to the varying characteristics of wells, equipment may vary from well to well.

Additional information pertaining to the operation of your private well water system is available from your trade contractor.

## **Atlantic Builders Limited Warranty Guidelines**

During the orientation we will confirm that all plumbing fixtures are in acceptable condition and that all faucets and drains operate freely. Atlantic Builders will correct clogged drains that occur during the first 30 days after closing. If a household item is removed from a clogged drain during this time, we will bill you for the drain service. After the first 30 days, you are responsible for correcting clogged drains.

Your plumbing system includes a limited warranty (parts and labor except Maintenance and surface damage after occupancy) for one year against manufacturing and installation defects. Defects must be reported to the plumbing contractor immediately. Your limited warranty, however, excludes valve washer wearing and sewer stoppages.

### ***Cosmetic Damage***

Atlantic Builders will correct any fixture damage noted on the orientation list. Repairing chips, scratches, or other surface damage noted subsequent to the orientation list is your responsibility.

### ***Exterior Faucets***

Atlantic Builders will repair leaks at exterior faucets noted on the orientation list. Subsequent to orientation, repair of a broken line to an exterior faucet is your responsibility.

### ***Freezing Pipes***

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

***Frozen Pipes Can Be Prevented.*** Never leave your home without heat during cold weather. Always allow a little heat in unused rooms and be sure to cut off water supply lines to outside hose bibs. ***Drain these lines before cold weather and disconnect all hoses.*** If freezing should occur, we recommend you contact a plumber for advice or assistance.

### ***Leaks***

Atlantic Builders will repair leaks in the plumbing system. If a plumbing leak caused by a warranted item results in drywall or floor covering damage, Atlantic Builders will repair or replace items that were part of the home as originally purchased. We do not make adjustments for secondary damages (for example, damage to wallpaper, drapes, and personal belongings). Insurance should cover these items.

### ***Noise***

Changes in temperature or the flow of the water itself will cause some noise in the pipes. This is normal and requires no repair. Atlantic Builders will repair persistent water hammer. Atlantic Builders will repair any noise problems that are due to faulty workmanship or installation. In normal operation, the plumbing system may knock slightly when certain fixtures operate, particularly appliances such as the dishwasher and clothes washing machine, which have very rapid, mechanical shut-off valves that send a pressure shock back through the pipes of the water system. Most people will have no difficulty in distinguishing between normal water shut-off noise in the plumbing system and any loud knocking, which might indicate that something is broken and should be reported to the plumber for service. Noise resulting from the normal expansion or contraction of waste line piping due to water temperature changes is not unusual and does not require service attention.

### ***Supply***

Atlantic Builders will correct construction conditions that disrupt the supply of water to your home.

### ***Well***

If the property is served by a private well water system as the source of water for domestic consumption, we warrant that we will provide, as of the date of settlement and for a term not to exceed one (1) year from that date, a well water supply system in good working order which meets the water yield, mineral content, bacteriological and chemical quality standards established by the county in which the property is located. It is your sole responsibility to determine if, and to what extent you wish to install a water treatment system, the cost and installation of which will be your sole responsibility after settlement.

# **RADON**

Atlantic Builders makes no warranty; either expressed or implied, and has no liability regarding the presence of radon gas at or in the vicinity of your new home. Radon is a naturally occurring gas emitted by certain types of soil and rock. As a result of natural geologic conditions, some areas may pose a greater risk than others.

We claim no expertise on either the identification of, or methods to reduce radon levels, or the risks associated with radon exposure. According to some experts, exposure to elevated levels of radon for a sufficient period of time may increase the risk of cancer.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and State and local environmental authorities are best equipped to provide advice on the risk that may exist in a particular location, the risks associated with radon exposure, methods available to detect and measure radon levels, and what, if any, remedial measures may be advisable in particular circumstances to reduce the risk of radon exposure.

You may obtain information by calling or writing to the agencies listed below:

The United States Environmental Protection Agency  
Office of Air and Radiation  
EPA Region 3, 841 Chestnut Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19107  
(215) 597-8320

State of Maryland Office of Environmental Programs  
Department of Health and Mental Hygiene  
217 W. Preston Street  
Baltimore, MD 20201  
(410) 659-3130

Council of Environment  
Bureau of Radiological Health  
James Madison Building  
109 Governor Street  
Richmond, VA 23219  
(804) 786-5932

# 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.

### *Floor Mats*

Do not use rubber bottom mats on your resilient floor. A reaction between the petroleum in the rubber and the resilient will cause discoloration that is not covered under the limited warranty.

### *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.

## **Atlantic Builders Limited Warranty Guidelines**

We will confirm that resilient floor covering is in acceptable condition during your orientation. Atlantic Builders limited warranty does not cover damage to resilient floors caused by moving furniture or appliances into the home. We can assist you in contacting professionals who can repair such damage if it occurs in your home. Atlantic Builders is not responsible for discontinued selections.

**CAUTION: Certain footwear (spike heels, athletic cleats, etc.)  
may damage floor coverings.**

### ***Adhesion***

Resilient floor covering should adhere. Atlantic Builders will repair lifting or bubbling and nail pops that appear on the surface.

### ***Ridges***

Atlantic Builders has sanded and filled the joints of underlayment to minimize the possibility of ridges showing through resilient floor coverings. Ridging is measured by centering a 6-inch straight edge perpendicular to the ridge with one end tight to the floor. If the opposite end of the straight edge is 1/8 inch or more from the floor, Atlantic Builders will repair this condition.

### *Seams*

Seams will occur and are sealed at the time of installation. Atlantic Builders will correct gaps in excess of 1/16 inch where resilient flooring pieces meet or 1/8 inch where resilient flooring meets another material. Atlantic Builders will correct curling at seams unless caused by excessive water.

## **ROOF**

### **Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines**

The roof of your new home is constructed of quality materials that have been applied according to the manufacturer's specifications. The roofing materials are virtually maintenance free and should last for many years. The roof shingles, vent stacks, flashing, and pipe collars do require inspection at least twice per year.

Occasionally, severe winds may lift some shingles, but rarely will any damage be done. In cold weather, some shingles may remain standing but with warm weather, they often return to their normal positions. Special care should be taken to avoid damaging your roof if you install an antenna; a careless job may cause roof leaks. Check your community covenants to ensure compliance before acquiring an antenna for exterior installation.

### *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 while it is still raining. 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.



## **Atlantic Builders Limited Warranty Guidelines**

Atlantic Builders will repair roof leaks other than those caused by severe weather, such as hail damage, or some action you have taken, such as walking on the roof. Roof repairs are made only when the roof is dry.

### ***Ice Build-Up***

Ice build-up and damming may develop in the eaves during extended periods of cold and snow. Damage that results from this is excluded from warranty coverage. Your insurance may cover this damage.

### ***Inclement Weather***

Storm damage is excluded from warranty coverage. Notify your homeowner insurance company if storm damage is discovered.

# **ROUGH CARPENTRY**

## **Atlantic Builders Limited Warranty Guidelines**

Some floor and stair squeaks are unavoidable. Although Atlantic Builders does not warrant against floor squeaks, a reasonable effort will be made to correct them. Sub-floors in all non-carpeted areas are screwed by the flooring sub-contractor prior to installation. This helps minimize squeaks.

### ***Floor Deflection***

Floors will deflect (bend) when walked on. This will be more noticeable next to hutches, book cases, pianos, chairs, and other heavy furniture. This is not a structural deficiency and Atlantic Builders will take no action for this occurrence.

### ***Floor Level***

Floors will be level to within 1/4 inch within any 32-inch distance as measured perpendicular to any ridge or indentation. Atlantic Builders will correct floor slope that exceeds 1/240 of the room.

### ***Plumb Walls***

Atlantic Builders will correct walls that are out of plumb more than 1/2 inch in an 8-foot distance or walls that are bowed more than 1/4 inch in any 32-inch measurement.

# SIDING

## Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Most homes have some covering of low maintenance vinyl siding. Please refer to the manufacturer's recommendations for instructions for its proper care and maintenance. Should siding damage occur, the affected panel(s) can be removed and replaced by a professional contractor. Color variations may occur if a repair is required. Siding expands and contracts in response to changes in humidity and temperature. Slight waves will be visible in siding this cannot be entirely eliminated.

Never clean the siding with chemicals, steel wool or wire brushes. There is no effective remedy for scuffed or scraped siding except replacement. While replacement may be relatively simple, precaution against damage is clearly more desirable.

Time and weather will shrink and dry the caulking of your siding. Caulking must be maintained by the homeowner, you will need to inspect and correct any deficiencies at all intersections with accessories, corner boards, brick veneer, windows, doors, soffits, etc.

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.*

## Atlantic Builders Limited Warranty Guidelines

Atlantic Builders will caulk cracks between siding, masonry and trim that exceed 3/8 inch. We provide this repair one time only near the end of the first year. Paint or stain touch-up will not match.

Dents, scratches, slight waves, and other cosmetic defects not noted at the pre-settlement inspection are not covered by the Limited Warranty. For warranty claims Atlantic Builders will only replace the affected areas, color match can not be guaranteed. In the event of siding loss due to high winds you will need to contact your homeowner's insurance.

We will correct any separation at joints or where siding meets another material if the separation allows water to enter the home. Atlantic Builders will correct delaminating siding.

We will correct any separation at joints or where siding meets another material if the separation allows water to enter the home during the first year.

You are responsible for obtaining homeowners insurance.

# SMOKE DETECTORS

## Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

These detectors are proven life saving devices. At least one is located on each level of your new Atlantic Builders home. Because of their importance, please read carefully and follow the manufacturer's instructions for testing, maintenance and service. Your detectors are wired into the electrical system of your home and also have a 9-volt battery back up. If a low-volume, single beep occurs on occasion (not the regular sounding of the alarm), the battery may require replacement. Refer to the owner's manual for specifics on replacing batteries. Don't rely solely on the electrical system; you must have fresh batteries in your detectors at all times.

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.

## Atlantic Builders Limited Warranty Guidelines

**Atlantic Builders does not represent that the smoke detectors will provide the protection for which they are installed or intended. We will test smoke detectors during the orientation to confirm that they are working and to familiarize you with the alarm.** You are responsible for obtaining fire insurance.

# 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.

## **Atlantic Builders Limited Warranty Guidelines**

Although Atlantic Builders does not warrant against stair vibration and squeaks, a reasonable effort will be made to correct them.

# TERMITES/INSECTS

## **Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines**

We treat the wood around the perimeter of your home with Sodium Borate. This is a widely used chemical used to prevent termite damage. As there are other methods used for termite treatment such as bait stations and soil treatments. We primarily use the Sodium Borate method unless conditions required an alternative method. You will notice this chemical by the blue/green coating typically 2 feet in/up from the foundation of your home. A certificate for termites will be provided to you at closing 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.

## **Atlantic Builders Limited Warranty Guidelines**

We certify treatment of your foundation for termites at closing. This is our final action for termites. **Atlantic Builders warranty excludes treatment for any other insect (such as ants, spiders, lady bugs, cicadas, bees, wasps, etc.) or animal (such as mice) infestations.**

# 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), gable ends or ridge. 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
- Air your house by opening windows for a time when weather permits.
- Develop the habit of running the hood fan when you are cooking and changing filters regularly.
- Always use the bath fans when bathrooms are in use.
- Inspect and replace filters regularly

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

## Atlantic Builders Limited Warranty Guidelines

Atlantic Builders warranty guidelines for active components (for example, exhaust fans) are discussed under the appropriate headings (such as electrical systems, heating system, and so on).

# **WATERPROOFING**

## **Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines**

We spray your foundation walls with an asphalt 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.

## **Atlantic Builders Limited Warranty Guidelines**

Atlantic Builders will correct conditions that allow actual water to enter the basement unless the cause is improper installation of landscaping or failure to adequately maintain drainage.

# **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 within your home. If your home includes a humidifier, 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.

## **Atlantic Builders Limited Warranty Guidelines**

We will confirm that all windows and screens are in acceptable condition during the orientation. Atlantic Builders will repair or replace broken windows or damaged screens noted on the orientation list. Windows should operate with reasonable ease and locks should perform as designed.

### ***Condensation***

Condensation on interior surfaces of the window and frame is the result of high humidity within the home and low outside temperatures. You influence the humidity level within your home; Atlantic Builders provides no corrective measure for this condition.

Condensation that accumulates between the panes of glass in dual-glazed windows indicates a broken seal. Atlantic Builders will replace the window if this occurs during the warranty period.

### ***Infiltration***

Some air and dust will infiltrate around windows, especially before the installation of landscaping in the general area. Atlantic Builders warranty excludes this occurrence.

### ***Scratches***

Atlantic Builders confirms that all window glass is in acceptable condition at the orientation. Minor scratches on windows can result from delivery, handling, and other construction activities. Atlantic Builders will replace windows that have scratches readily visible from a distance of 4 feet. Atlantic Builders does not replace windows that have scratches visible only under certain lighting conditions.

### ***Tinting***

If you add tinting to dual-glazed windows, all warranties are voided. Damage can result from condensation or excessive heat build-up between the panes of glass. Refer to the manufacturer's literature for additional information.

*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 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.*

## **Atlantic Builders Limited Warranty Guidelines**

### ***Interior***

During the orientation we will confirm that wood trim is in acceptable condition. Minor imperfections in wood materials will be visible and will require no action. Atlantic Builders will correct readily noticeable construction damage such as chips and gouges listed during the orientation.

### ***Exterior***

Atlantic Builders will caulk and apply touch-up paint to cracks in exterior trim components that exceed 3/16 inch. We provide this repair one time only near the end of the first year. Paint or stain touch-up will not match. We will correct any separation at joints that allows water to enter the home.

### ***Raised Grain***

Because of the effects of weather on natural wood, you should expect raised grain to develop. This is normal and not a defect in the wood or paint. Warranty coverage excludes this condition.

# WARRANTY SERVICE REQUEST

With the exception of specified emergencies, all requests for service must be in writing. Please use this form or visit the Customer Care section at [www.atlanticbuilders.com](http://www.atlanticbuilders.com) to notify us of warranty items. We will contact you to set an inspection appointment. Service appointments are available from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Thank you for your cooperation.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Community: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Lot: \_\_\_\_\_

Work No. \_\_\_\_\_ Plan: \_\_\_\_\_

Work No. \_\_\_\_\_ Closing Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Service Requested:

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# SAMPLE MAINTENANCE SCHEDULE

| <u>Item</u>                                   | <u>Monthly</u> | <u>Quarterly</u> | <u>Semiannually</u> | <u>Annually</u> | <u>Comment</u>                                  |
|---|----------------|------------------|---------------------|-----------------|---|
| Clean and test smoke alarms                   | X              |                  |                     |                 |   |
| Test and reset all GFCIs                      | X              |                  |                     |                 |   |
| Clean and change furnace filter               | X              |                  |                     |                 |   |
| Operate heat system                           |                |                  | X                   |                 | <b>early in the fall</b>                        |
| Operate air conditioning system               |                |                  | X                   |                 | <b>early in the spring</b>                      |
| 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                                    |
| Winterize Exterior Hose Bibbs                 |                |                  |                     | X               |   |

## Atlantic Builders Homeowner Guide

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Atlantic Builders, Ltd.  
1975 Jefferson Davis Hwy.  
Fredericksburg, VA 22401  
Phone (540) 891-8540  
Fax: (540) 891-9170

### Homeowner,

We want our Homeowner Guide to be responsive to the needs of our homeowners. If you have suggestions on ways to make this manual more useful, topics we should add, or information we should clarify, please record your thoughts below and mail or fax them to us. We revise this material once each year and will add your comments to the revisions file for our next edition.

Thank you,  
Atlantic Builders

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