

Homeowner's Manual



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WELCOME

Thank you for joining the Southern Homes family. We're glad to have you with us.

This manual will serve as your guide to Southern Home ownership. It's packed with a lot of useful information, including warranty points, maintenance guidelines, safety alerts and general tips for the care and enjoyment of your new home. Read it thoroughly and keep it handy for reference.

ATTENTION

We built a house. You make it a home. Your Style Selection Sheets.

Everything you picked to make a house your home can be found in your Style Selection Sheets. They serve as a record of every brand, color and style of countertop, cabinet, fixture, appliance and floor in your home. Keep these for reference should you need to make repairs. We cannot guarantee it will all be in stock, but at least you know where to start.

SOUTHERN HOMES WARRANTY & SERVICE

At Southern Homes, we take pride in the homes we build and stand by every one. We even help protect your investment by purchasing a 2-10 Home Buyers Warranty[®] for you. 2-10 is one of the largest and best-rated homeowner's warranties in the world and offers 1-year protection against workmanship issues, 2-year protection against mechanical and electrical system issues, and 10-year protection against structural issues.

Many 2-10 warranty points are covered under the **What We Do** sections of this manual. The **What You Do** sections offer general maintenance guidelines to prevent the need for a claim, as well as tips that help keep aspects of your warranty from being accidentally voided. For the most detailed information on warranty coverage, read the accompanying 2-10 literature.

Warranty Service Requests

In the event that your home requires warranty service, please visit our website at www.SouthernHomes.com. Click the tab marked Southern Home Owners at the top of the page; you will automatically be directed to our online Warranty Request Form. Simply complete the form and click Submit.

If you do not have computer access, you can fax your Warranty Request Form to (985) 643-6364. Blank Warranty Request forms are available at your neighborhood Sales Office or in the back pocket of this Homeowner's Manual.

**Please remember that all Warranty Requests must be made in writing.

For more on Warranty Request procedures, please call (985) 326-0439 or toll free 1(800) 349-1910.

Warranty Service Processing Procedures

When a Warranty Service Request is received, you will be contacted within twenty-four (24) business hours to schedule an appointment. Warranty appointments can be scheduled Monday through Friday, 8a.m. - 3p.m. Generally, reported items fall into one of three categories:

- Items to be completed by Southern Homes warranty personnel
- Items to be completed by trade subcontractors
- Items to be completed by homeowner (routine homeowner maintenance)

If an item is to be repaired by Southern Homes warranty service personnel, the appointment will be scheduled during the initial phone call.

If an item is to be repaired by a trade subcontractor, we will schedule the service for you based on your stated available times.

If the item is considered routine homeowner maintenance, we will review the maintenance steps with you and provide informational assistance.

Emergency Service Requests

If your home requires emergency service, please contact Southern Homes through our Emergency Service beeper toll free at 1(800) 349-9620. This number is for emergency service requests only.

What is an "Emergency Service Request"?

As defined by the warranty, "emergency" includes situations such as:

- Total loss of air conditioning or heating
- Total loss of electricity (Call electric company FIRST)
- Total loss of water (Call water company FIRST)
- Plumbing leak that requires the entire water supply to be shut off
- Plumbing problems that cause all bathroom facilities to be inoperable
- Gas leak (Call gas company FIRST)

If an emergency arises at any time during or after business hours, please call toll free 1(800) 349-9620.

EMERGENCY SHUT-OFFS

During your pre-closing orientation, a Southern Homes Associate will show you the location of the emergency shut-offs for your new home. It is important that everyone sharing your home knows where these shut-offs are located and how to use them. It can save both lives and property.

Gas Shut - Offs

Never attempt to turn on or off your gas main yourself. To turn off or re-establish gas to your home, call your gas company. The service technician will confirm your system is in safe working order, relight all pilot lights, and be available for any emergencies that may arise.

Independent Gas Shut - Offs

An independent shut-off valve is located on the gas supply line to each gas appliance in your home. These shut-off valves can be operated by hand. Turning the handle crosswise to the supply line turns the gas *Off*. Turning it in line with the supply line turns the gas *On*.

When turning on the gas supply to an individual appliance, always relight its pilot lights immediately.

SAFETY ALERT

Gas Odor

The odor of natural gas might indicate a dangerous leak. If you smell gas, leave your home immediately and contact your gas company.



Main Water Shut - Offs

Your main water shut-off valve is located at the water meter outside your home. It can be operated using a water T-wrench or a crescent wrench. Rotating the valve a half turn to the right turns your water *Off*. Rotating it a half turn to the left turns it *On*.

Independent Water Shut - Offs

An independent shut-off valve is located on the water supply line to each plumbing fixture in your home. They can be operated by hand. Rotating the knob clockwise turns the water *Off*. Rotating the knob counter-clockwise turns the water *On*.

Electrical Shut - Offs

Your home's main power breaker is located outside near your electric meter. Breakers that control the individual areas of your home are located within the interior breaker box. The *On* and *Off* positions are clearly marked for both.

For more information on breakers and breaker usage, see page 28 of this manual.

EXTENDED ABSENCE GUIDELINES

Long-term Absences

If your home will be unoccupied for an extended period of time, follow these guidelines so you can find it the way you left it:

- *Drain water supply lines* -- Shut off your home's water supply at the meter and open faucets to relieve pressure.
- *Shut off the gas water heater* -- Turn off your gas water heater at the temperature control then turn off its cold water supply. Run a hose out to your yard from the spigot at the bottom and drain the tank.
- *Prepare gas heaters* -- Set the temperature to its lowest point and leave the pilot lit.

Short-term Absences

If you're only going to be away for a few days, you can leave your water supply on and follow these guidelines instead:

- *Turn water heaters down* -- Set gas water heaters to their Vacation setting. Set electric water heaters to A.
- *Set your thermostat* -- In winter months, set your heater on *Auto* and set the thermostat to 65° F. Open cabinet doors so warm air can circulate around pipes in the event of an unexpected freeze. In warmer months, set your air conditioner on *Auto* and set the thermostat to 85° F.

**HOMEOWNER MAINTENANCE &
WARRANTY COVERAGE**

ALARM SYSTEMS

Home Security System

If your new home has a built-in security system, you get to choose the company you want to provide your security service. Call them when you move in. They'll set an appointment to connect you and show you how the system works. If they discover any problems with the installed equipment, Southern Homes will fix it.

Smoke Detectors

Prior to your pre-closing orientation, Southern Homes tests all smoke detectors to make sure they work properly. We recommend cleaning them once a month to prevent a build-up of dust or dirt. Dirty smoke detectors will lose their ability to sense smoke, which can lead to a dangerous situation.

While cleaning smoke detectors, push their test buttons to make sure their batteries are still charged. Batteries should be replaced at least once a year, even if still working. We suggest changing batteries the same day you set your clocks to Daylight Savings Time as a reminder.

For more detailed information on smoke detector care and operation, refer to the manufacturer's guide or visit their website.

APPLIANCES

Appliances & Serial Numbers

For warranty service on appliances, contact the appropriate manufacturer at the service number provided in the appliance literature. You'll need to supply the model and serial number, which is usually located on a small metal plate or seal attached to the appliance in an inconspicuous area. You'll also need to supply the appliance's date of purchase, which is considered the closing date of your home.

For your convenience, we've included the chart below to record this information for future reference.

Date of Purchase (Home closing date):			
Appliance	Manufacturer	Model Number	Serial Number

ATTIC

Your attic is not intended for storage. Access is provided solely for maintenance purposes.

Attic Insulation

The insulation in your attic either meets or exceeds building codes. Before closing, Southern Homes and a county or parish inspector certify that attic insulation is properly installed.

Insulation works best when evenly installed. If someone enters your attic to work (to install a TV antenna for example), be sure the insulation is smooth and even when work is completed.

SAFETY ALERT

Attic Access

If you ever need to enter your attic, use extreme caution. It has no floor. Move along visible wood joists only and always hold onto rafters for balance and support. Never step onto insulation or drywall ceilings. You'll injure yourself, the insulation and your ceiling. Southern Homes does not provide warranty coverage for such damage.

CERAMIC TILE BACKSPLASH

General Care

Ceramic tile is one of the easiest wall coverings to maintain. A mild solution of warm water and dishwasher crystals cleans tile well without leaving a difficult-to-remove lather on the grout. Rinse thoroughly after cleaning. For tougher jobs, such as soap scum or mildew, a commercial bathroom tile solution can be used.

Tile on your backsplash may begin pulling up over time. This is due to the normal shrinkage of grout or caulk, as well as the curing of underlying wood surfaces. If this occurs, the best remedy is premixed grout from your local hardware store. Follow directions on the container. This maintenance is important to protect underlying surfaces from water damage.

For more information on grout and grout care, see page 18 of this manual.

CERAMIC TILE BACKSPLASH MAINTENANCE

What You Do

- *Repair loose tiles* -- Repair loose tiles using tub caulk or a premixed grout available from your local hardware or home improvement store. Read and follow all directions carefully.

What We Do

- *Confirm ceramic tiles are in acceptable condition* -- During your pre-closing orientation, Southern Homes will inspect all ceramic tile and repair or replace any cracked, chipped, or loose tiles noted. Southern Homes is not responsible for variations in color or discontinued patterns. New grout may vary in color from the original.

CLIMATE CONTROL SYSTEMS (Air Conditioning and Heating)

General Operation

To use your climate control system, set the thermostat to cool or heat and set a desired temperature. The system will automatically turn off and on to reach and maintain that temperature.

Your thermostat also serves as your climate control system's temperature gauge. The cooling and heating units operate in response to the temperatures at the gauge. Southern Homes installs thermostats in the best possible places to cool and heat your home evenly, but temperatures will vary a bit from room to room. You can minimize these variations by adjusting vents and using ceiling fans to more efficiently distribute and circulate the climate-controlled air.



Your thermostat also controls the fan of the climate control system. Setting the fan to *On* means it will run continuously. This can help circulate air between cooling and heating cycles, but it can also increase humidity. Southern Homes suggests setting the fan to *Auto*, which keeps humidity levels lower and saves energy by running only when the system cools or heats.

For more information and instructions regarding your thermostat, refer to the manufacturer's guide.

INDIVIDUAL COMPONENTS

Cooling System

Your cooling system works best when the outside influences on inside temperatures are minimized. Keeping doors and windows closed is essential, but closing drapery and blinds to prevent sunlight from heating your walls, floors, and furniture is also important.

Heating System

Your heating system is designed for a furnished home. Furnishings fill empty space, leaving a smaller area to be heated. If you do not have all furniture or window treatments in place, your home might seem cooler than expected.

During the first fall or winter, be careful not to heat your new home to extremes. Heating units produce dry heat that can shrink new framing lumber and cause damage. Moderate heat will allow these timbers to cure at a more natural rate. The heat can gradually be increased over time if necessary.

Adjusting Vents

Adjusting the vents of your climate control system will help regulate airflow throughout your home. For maximum comfort and energy efficiency, make sure these vents are clear of furniture and draperies. This also applies to the air return.

As a general rule, airflow should be increased to rooms that share a common wall with your home exterior. This creates an insulating barrier that protects against outside temperatures while helping cool or heat interior rooms. Airflow should also be increased to rooms that are farther away from the unit in use. This compensates for temperature and pressure losses that occur as climate-controlled air travels any distance. Just remember, these settings vary seasonally since your cooling and heating units are located separately.

Airflow can be decreased to interior rooms and rooms that are seldom used.

SEASONAL PREPARATION

Test heating or cooling units before you need them. The last thing you want is to end up in the middle of a heat wave with a cooling unit that needs service. The same can be said for a heating unit in a sudden cold snap. Conducting a trial run a few weeks before either unit is needed means that problems can be addressed before they become emergencies.

SAVE ENERGY (AND MONEY)

A good rule of thumb for operating your climate control system is to never let your home get too hot or cold. Turning the system off while you're gone means it has to work harder when you return. This not only uses more energy, but also puts a tremendous strain on your system, which can lead to costly repairs.

The most energy-efficient way to use your system is to set the thermostat to a moderate temperature before leaving. On warm days, set it 10° F above a comfortable setting. On cold days, set it 10° F below. Adjust it for comfort when you return.

TRUE OR FALSE?

Setting a thermostat to an exceptionally high or low temperature will heat or cool your home faster.

False. The output air temperatures of heating and cooling units never vary. Setting the thermostat to extremes won't make them work faster, only longer, until the set temperature is reached. Running your climate control system for long periods without interruption will damage its components. This is especially true for your cooling unit, which can freeze and stop working altogether.

NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT

- *Ductwork noise* - Minor popping and pinging in ductwork is normal. This is the natural result of metal materials expanding or contracting in response to temperature changes.
- *Dusty odor* - Heating systems sometimes produce a dusty odor after being first turned on, especially if the system hasn't been used in a while. This is the result of dust settling in the ductwork and should pass quickly.
- *Temperature variations* - Temperatures in individual rooms may vary from thermostat settings by several degrees. This is due to such variables as floor plan, type and usage of window coverings, orientation of the home to the sun, and traffic through your home.

Troubleshooting Your Heating System

If you find your heating system is not working, make sure the blower panel is in place. Your heating unit's blower (fan) is responsible for circulating heated air through your home and, as a safety feature, won't work unless this panel is securely in place.

Also, make sure the blower's power switch is *On*. This switch is used for maintenance purposes. It looks like an ordinary light switch and is located in a metal electrical box beside the unit.

If you find your heating unit is still not working, contact Southern Homes. The necessary service might be covered by your Home Buyers Warranty.

CLIMATE CONTROL MAINTENANCE

What You Do

- *Clean or replace air filters regularly* - Your cooling and heating units depend on clean, unobstructed airflow, so take a few minutes each month to clean or replace air filters. Air filters are available in 1-month, 3-month, and Lifetime varieties, and can be found at your local hardware store and even some large grocery and retail super stores. To clean Lifetime filters, turn off your climate control system, remove the filter and wash it with water only. Never use soaps or detergents as they leave a residue that can make filters clog faster. Let the filter air-dry before reinstalling and restarting your climate control system.

What We Do

- *Confirm climate control systems are in proper working order* -- Your cooling unit should maintain a temperature of 78°F when measured in the center of the room 5' above the floor. If the temperature outside exceeds 95°F, the unit should keep the inside temperature 15° F cooler than the outside temperature. Your heating system should be able to maintain a temperature of 70°F when measured in the center of the room 5' above the floor.
- *Level the cooling unit* -- If your cooling unit is not working properly, settling might have left the compressor off level. Southern Homes will correct any improperly settled cooling unit during the 1-year warranty period.
- *Reattach ductwork* -- All ductwork should remain secure and in place. If any ductwork becomes loose or unattached, Southern Homes will repair the problem during the 1-year warranty period.
- *Correct oil canning* -- Minor popping and pinging sounds in ductwork cannot be eliminated, but oil canning can be corrected. Oil canning is an abnormally loud sound that occurs when large areas of sheet metal move up or down in response to temperature and pressure changes. Southern Homes will correct any oil canning discovered within the 1-year warranty period.

VENTILATION

Your home is well sealed to reduce energy costs. Without proper ventilation, this benefit could become a burden by trapping condensation, cooking odors, indoor pollutants and even radon and carbon monoxide gasses. Lack of ventilation can also promote mildew growth. For your health and safety, use installed ventilation equipment as often as possible.

Ventilation Tips:

- *Run the hood fan when using the stove.*
- *Run bath fans when bathrooms are in use.*
- *Open screened windows and doors as weather permits.*



CONCRETE

Your home's foundation and flatwork (porches, patios, driveways and walkways) are all made of concrete. If water is allowed to collect beneath concrete, it will destabilize the supporting soil and create cracks and uneven settling. Always maintain proper landscaping and positive drainage (drainage away from the home) around concrete to keep your home and property in top condition.

Sweep concrete surfaces to keep them clean. If you need to wash exterior flatwork, do so only on cool days or in the early morning hours of warm days when the concrete will be coldest. Hosing down hot concrete will create a thermal shock that will damage the surface. We do not recommend hosing down garage floors too often because water can penetrate crevices and shift the soil beneath your foundation.

Surface Cracks

Climate changes and the concrete curing process can make minor cracks appear in concrete surfaces. These are known as plastic shrinkage cracks and are only cosmetic. Rest assured, your foundation is built to code, inspected by a local county or parish inspector and doing fine.

Small cracks may also develop in concrete flatwork. If cracks in concrete flatwork grow, seal them with a waterproof concrete caulking. These are available at most hardware and home improvement stores and are designed to prevent moisture from seeping in to make the soil below unstable.

TRUE OR FALSE?

Driveways shouldn't always be driven on.

True. Keep large commercial vehicles like moving trucks and construction equipment off your driveway. This area is designed for family vehicles only and is not covered by the structural warranty.

CONCRETE MAINTENANCE

What You Do

- *Seal concrete floors* -- You can protect unpainted concrete floors with a concrete sealer, available at most hardware and home improvement stores. This will help prevent moisture damage and staining. Be aware that concrete sealers darken and add a slight gloss to concrete. Follow the directions on the container for cleaning and maintenance instructions.
- *Fill in expansion joint gaps* -- We have installed expansion joints in key areas of your concrete flatwork. These are lengths of compressible material that give concrete room to expand and contract without cracking. Expansion joints might lift a little during the curing process or due to changes in climate. If this occurs, gently tap the material back into place with a block of wood and fill any gaps with gray silicone sealant.
- *Prevent surface chipping* -- Frequent washings, radiator overflow, animal urine and chemical fertilizers can create concrete spalling or surface chipping. Avoid such catalysts as much as possible.

What We Do

- *Fill large cracks in flatwork* -- During the 1-year warranty period, Southern Homes offers a 1-time repair to concrete flatwork with cracks greater than 3/16" in width or vertical displacement. We suggest waiting until this period is almost over so we can address all issues at once.
- *Fill large foundation cracks* -- Minor cracks in foundation walls are a normal result of the curing process and cannot be prevented. Southern Homes will fill any foundation crack greater than 1/8" in width during the 1-year warranty period.
- *Level floors* -- Southern Homes will correct concrete floors in habitable areas that are not level to within 1/4" within any 32" measurement.
- *Correct flatwork separation* -- Southern Homes will correct patios and driveways that have separated from your home by more than 1".
- *Fix settling or heaving* -- Southern Homes will correct patios and driveways that settle or heave greater than 2". We will correct for lesser movement that results in negative drainage (drainage toward the house) or hazardous vertical displacement.



- *Correct drainage patterns that result in standing water* -- Southern Homes will correct conditions that cause water to stand on concrete flatwork for more than 12 hours, except in cases created by roof runoff.
- *Correct ruptures in finished floors* -- During the 1-year warranty period, we will correct any cracks, settling or heaving that results in the rupturing of any finished floor installed by Southern Homes.

COUNTERTOPS

Laminate & Ceramic Tile Countertops

Protect countertops with cutting boards when cutting or chopping. Also, use only non-abrasive cleaners on your laminate and ceramic tile countertops. Abrasive cleaners damage the surface.

TRUE OR FALSE?

Laminate kitchen countertops are immune to heat.

False. Laminate countertops are designed for kitchen use but can still suffer burns. Countertop burns are impossible to clean and expensive to repair. Protect them from extremely hot pans. Generally, if it's too hot to touch, it's too hot for the counter. Other ways to avoid countertop burns:

- Never use your counter as an ironing board
- Never lay lit cigarettes on the edge of a counter

Grout

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

Even with slight separations in grout, the attached tile is secure and protecting the underlying surface from water damage. If you want to repair these separations for aesthetic purposes, you can use a premixed grout found at most flooring, hardware or home improvement stores. Simply follow the directions on the package.

For extra protection, you may also choose to use a grout sealant. Just be aware that these sealants require regular maintenance and void your warranty.

Quartz Countertops

Quartz countertops are durable, non-porous, heat-resistant and exceptionally easy to maintain. Cutting or chopping on the surface won't damage the countertop but will damage your knives, so you may want to use a cutting board.

For information on the care and cleaning of your quartz countertops, refer to the manufacturer's guide or visit their website.

COUNTERTOP MAINTENANCE

What You Do

- *Use caulking and grout to repair separations* -- Keep an eye on areas where the sink meets the countertop and backsplash, and where countertops meet the wall. If slight separations occur, repair with caulking or grout as needed. Maintaining a good seal protects the underlying wood from water damage and warping. Note that new grout may vary in color from old grout.

What We Do

- *Confirm all countertops and ceramic tiles are in acceptable condition* -- Southern Homes will repair chips, cracks, scratches or loose tiles found during your pre-closing orientation. We also offer a 1-time repair on faulty grout or caulking during the 1-year warranty period. We suggest waiting until this period is almost over so we can address all issues at once. Please note that tile colors and patterns, as well as grout colors and textures may vary from lot to lot. Some materials may be discontinued entirely. We will do our best to match existing work, but a perfect match is not guaranteed.
- *Repair seams in laminated countertops* -- During the 1-year warranty period, Southern Homes will repair laminated countertops that have gaps or seams greater than 1/16".
- *Repair cultured marble* -- During the 1-year warranty period, Southern Homes will repair cultured marble countertops and backsplashes that have rough or uneven edges, or joint differences greater than 1/16".

Troubleshooting

- *Sticking doors* - If you find a door sticking during hotter months, try applying paste wax to the area that is catching. Also try tightening the door frame screws. If the door continues to stick after cool weather arrives, you might need to hire a professional to plane and repaint the door.
- *Squeaking hinges* - Remove the hinge pin and apply a silicone lubricant. Avoid using oil, as it can gum up or attract dirt. A small amount of powdered graphite also works well.
- *Sticking locks* - Lubricate door locks with powdered graphite only. Oil-based lubricants attract and hold dust that only make the lock worse. They make your keys greasy, too.
- *Misaligned latches* - If a door doesn't latch due to minor settling, hire a professional to create a new opening in the doorjamb and raise or lower the latch plate accordingly (known as re-mortising).

ATTENTION

No need to slam.

Door slamming not only damages the door and doorjamb, it can also crack walls. This type of damage is not covered by your warranty.

SAFETY ALERT

Children and doors

Small children sometimes accidentally lock themselves in rooms. To avoid a crisis situation, always hide duplicate keys above the doors and away from little hands. Some interior doors use *Privacy Locks*. These locks have a small, round hole on the exterior knob face in which a small screwdriver or long, thin object can be inserted to act as a makeshift key.



DOOR MAINTENANCE

What You Do

- *Repair minor separations* -- Repair separations that occur at mitered joints in the door trim with putty, filler or latex caulk. Follow with touch-up paint.
- *Touch-up exposed areas with paint or stain* - Over time, doors can shrink and expose bare wood. Touch-up with paint or stain to protect against moisture damage.
- *Care for exterior doors* -- To ensure a long life for your exterior wood doors, plan to refinish them at least once a year. Stained exterior doors with clear finishes weather faster than painted doors. Prevent drying and cracking of clear-finished doors by using a wood preservative every 3 months. Reseal stained doors if their finish begins to show signs of cracking.

What We Do

- *Confirm all doors are in acceptable condition* -- During the pre-closing orientation, Southern Homes confirms all doors are correctly adjusted and in acceptable condition. We will repair any construction damage noted during this time.
- *Fix major warping* -- If a door warps slightly, keeping it closed as much as possible often returns it to normal. If the warp is more than 1/4", we'll fix it.
- *Adjust doors to accommodate settling* -- During the 1-year warranty period, Southern Homes will adjust any door that has become misaligned due to settling.
- *Repair split door panels* -- During the 1-year warranty period, Southern Homes will repair any split panel that allows light through.

DRAINAGE AND LANDSCAPING

Your property has been graded to direct runoff water away from your home. These slopes and drainage patterns protect your foundation and that protects your warranty. Be sure to maintain them.

Grading

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

Swales

Typically, a lot receives water from and passes water on to other lots. Southern Homes established the final grade to ensure adequate drainage. Any change in grade will often affect adjacent lots. Southern Homes advises against making such changes because this will void the warranty. Drainage swales are sometimes incorporated into the final grade to promote drainage away from the home. It is not uncommon for water to stand up to 48 hours in the drainage swale after a heavy rain.

Landscaping

Well - designed landscaping not only makes your home more beautiful, it also helps proper drainage. Install the basic components of landscaping as soon as weather permits. In addition to meeting the requirements of your neighborhood covenant or homeowners association, landscaping in a timely manner also prevents erosion and protects the foundation of your home.

Unfortunately, Southern Homes cannot alter grading or drainage to fit the landscaping plans of any one homeowner. Re - grading creates drainage problems that can harm neighboring properties.

ATTENTION

Irrigation Systems

If you install an irrigation system to help care for landscaping, be sure to direct the sprinkler heads away from your home. The excessive water can damage your foundation and exterior walls.

Home & Landscaping Additions

If you decide to expand the patio, build a pool or add a room, be sure to keep erosion and drainage in mind. Discuss drainage with any companies you hire and never let anyone tie into existing drainage pipes without approval from Southern Homes. Even small changes like a fence or rock bed can create drainage issues that could damage your or your neighbors' home.

Most importantly, make sure your project falls within the rules of your neighborhood covenant or homeowners association and all local construction laws and ordinances.

PROPERTY MAINTENANCE

What You Do

- *Cut the grass* -- Cut your grass and perform other necessary yard work. Your neighborhood covenants or homeowners association may have specific rules and guidelines for yard maintenance.
- *Fill settled areas* -- Inspect your property regularly and fill settled areas to maintain positive drainage. If a slight depression occurs along the utility trench, roll back the sod, spread topsoil beneath to level the area and re-lay the sod.
- *Prevent erosion through landscaping* -- Well-designed landscaping prevents erosion and protects your foundation. Just make sure Southern Homes has completed property grading before you begin. Southern Homes is not responsible for weather-caused damage to un-landscaped yards after the final grade has been established or the closing date, whichever occurs last.
- *Direct roof runoff away from your foundation* -- Keep gutter downspouts properly directed to channel runoff toward positive drainage and away from your foundation.
- *Make provisions for efficient irrigation* -- Regularly drain and service sprinkler systems, as well as conduct periodic operational checks to ensure proper performance. Sprinkler heads should always be directed away from your home. Trickler or bubbler type irrigation systems are not recommended for use adjacent to your home.
- *Protect drainage swales when using rototillers* -- If you use a rototiller for landscaping purposes, always run parallel to drainage swales to protect their positive drainage.



What We Do

- *Finish uncompleted grading* – Due to weather conditions, property grading may not have been completed by the time of closing. Southern Homes will finish the process as soon as conditions permit.
- *Fill in settled areas* – The backfill around your foundation and at utility trenches should support positive drainage. If these areas settle during the 1-year warranty period, Southern Homes offers a 1-time correction and up to 1 load of additional fill dirt in case more settling occurs. We suggest waiting until this period is almost over so we can address all issues at once.
- *Fill below sunken concrete* – During the 1-year warranty period, Southern Homes will fill in areas under concrete flatwork that are visibly sunken.
- *Provide grading recommendations* – Southern Homes documents property grades when you move in or shortly thereafter. The ground must be dry and free from frost to make these determinations. Once grades are set, during the 1-year warranty period, Southern Homes will inspect any drainage problems reported in writing, compare the problem grade to the documented grade, and offer advice on correction.

DRYWALL AND SHEETROCK

General Care

As time passes, you might find occasional repairs to drywall are needed. The normal shrinking and deflection of timbers and rafters can cause imperfections such as cracks or dimples. Most shrinking and deflection occurs during the winter, so it's best to wait until warmer months to make all your repairs at once. Here's how:

Drywall Repairs

Symptom	Remedy
<i>Hairline cracks</i>	<i>Cover hairline cracks with a coat of paint. For larger cracks, fill with spackle or caulking and touch-up with paint.</i>
<i>Indentations</i>	<i>Cover the area with 2 or 3 thin coats of spackle. Sand the surface with fine-grit sandpaper. Touch-up with paint.</i>
<i>Raised nails</i>	<i>Reset the nail with a hammer and a nail punch. Cover the area with 2 or 3 thin coats of spackle. Sand the surface with fine-grit sandpaper. Touch-up with paint.</i>

Wood Trim

During your home's first few years, the wood trim along walls can shrink in response to changes in climate. This usually occurs during winter and is a reaction to the dry heat of your climate control system. Keeping your thermostat set at a moderate, stable temperature will help minimize these effects.

If shrinking occurs, you'll need to make a few minor repairs. If it occurs during the winter, wait until spring to make all your repairs at once. Here's how:

Trim Repairs

Symptom

Remedy

Trim separation at joints

Fill in separations with latex caulking. Touch-up with paint.

Trim pulling away from the wall or floor

Remove any protruding nails. Drive a new nail close to the old nail hole. Fill the old hole with putty. Touch-up with paint.

Painted Walls

Wash painted walls using a mild soap and as little water as possible. Do not scrub too hard and never use scouring pads, scrub brushes or abrasive cleaners. Flat paints show marks from washing more readily than gloss paints. You might prefer the results of a touch-up rather than a wash.

When performing a paint touch-up, use a small brush and only apply paint to the damaged spot. Touch-ups may be visible under close inspection. Dye lots vary and original paints fade, so the smaller the touch-up, the better.

When you want to repaint a room entirely, prepare the wall surfaces before you begin. Clean with a reliable cleaning product or a solution of water and mild soap. Allow it to dry completely. Cover your floors with drop cloths and use painters' tape to mask outlets, trim and other areas you'll be working close to but want to remain untouched.



DRYWALL MAINTENANCE

What We Do

- *Confirm drywall surfaces are in acceptable condition* -- During your pre-closing orientation, Southern Homes will confirm all drywall surfaces are in acceptable condition. We offer a 1-time repair on cracks and raised nails during the 1-year warranty period, and will touch-up the repair using original paints if available. We suggest waiting until this period is almost over so we can address all issues at once. If a drywall repair involves more than 1/3" of a wall, we will repaint the entire wall. Please note that touch-ups will be visible due to variations in dye lots and fading of original paint. We do not repair drywall flaws that are only visible under particular lighting conditions.
- *Plumb walls* -- Southern Homes will correct walls that are out of plumb greater than 1/2" in an 8' distance and walls that are bowed greater than 1/4" in any 32" distance.
- *Confirm that wood trim is in acceptable condition* -- During your pre-closing orientation, Southern Homes confirms that installed wood trim has no major defects. Southern Homes will correct any noticeable construction damage such as chips and gouges.
- *Confirm all painted surfaces are in acceptable condition* -- Southern Homes will touch-up paint if needed as part of another warranty-covered repair.

ELECTRICITY

Your Breaker Box

If your home's electrical system gets overloaded, the breakers in the box will trip and turn off electricity. This safety feature protects the wiring in your home and helps prevent electrical fires.

Breakers trip for a variety of reasons. It could be the result of a defective appliance, an appliance trying to draw too much power, too many appliances on one circuit or even a worn power cord.

If the power goes out in any part of your home, always check the breaker box first. It includes a main shut-off that controls the entire power supply to your home and smaller breakers that control individual circuits.

Restoring Power

- *Identify the tripped breaker* -- Your breakers are marked to identify which part of your home they're connected to. Each has 3 positions: *on*, *off* and *tripped*. Look for any breaker in the tripped position. These are usually identified as having the switch toggled to the center or near center position, with a small red or orange "flag" indicating them as tripped.

- *Switch the tripped breaker off, then on* - When a circuit breaker trips, you have to turn it off before turning it back on. This is a safety feature. If you try to switch the breaker on directly from its tripped position, nothing will happen.

If any breaker trips repeatedly, unplug everything connected to that circuit and then reset it. If the breaker stays on, then one of the items you unplugged is defective and causing the problem. If the breaker continues to trip with nothing connected, contact Southern Homes to determine if the problem is under warranty.

GFCI Electrical Outlets

Southern Homes installs GFCI (Ground-Fault Circuit-Interrupters) electrical outlets in the areas of your home where you, water and electricity might make contact (bathrooms, kitchen, garage, the home exterior, etc.). These outlets have a built-in circuit breaker to help protect you from electric shock.

Each GFCI outlet has a test and reset button. Once a month, press the test button to trip the circuit. Press the reset button to make it work again. If a recently tested GFCI breaker appears to trip for no reason, you may be using a faulty appliance.

SAFETY ALERT

GFCIs are not for major appliances.

Never use GFCI outlets for refrigerators, freezers or anything else that draws a lot of power. This will not only trip the breaker, it could damage the appliance, start an electrical fire and void multiple warranties at the same time.

Children and Electrical Outlets

Always put safety plugs in unused outlets to keep children safe.

Call before you dig.

Always call your local utility locating service to find where cables are buried before digging. It could save your cables and your life.

The buzz on fluorescent lighting

Fluorescent lights sometimes create a slight buzzing sound during normal operation, which cannot be prevented.

SAFETY ALERT

Fluorescent Bulb Safety

Be careful when disposing of fluorescent bulbs. Not only are they very fragile and sharp when broken, they also contain mercury, which is exceptionally dangerous to humans. Handle with care and keep children away.

ELECTRICAL MAINTENANCE

What You Do

- *Use surge protectors* - Damage from power surges is not covered by any warranty. Protect sensitive electronic equipment with surge protectors, which are easily found at most hardware and electronics stores.
- *Protect underground cables* - Protect underground power cables by maintaining positive drainage around the foundation of your home. And remember to call before you dig.
- *Use only approved electricians* - If you wish to make modifications to your home's wiring during your warranty period, contact Southern Homes to get the name of the electrician who worked on your home. Using non-approved electricians will void your electrical warranty.

What We Do

- *Install initial light bulbs* - Southern Homes installs working light bulbs in every fixture before you move in. Replacing burned out bulbs is your responsibility as part of normal maintenance.
- *Confirm your home is properly powered* - During the 1-year warranty period, Southern Homes will repair any electrical wiring that fails to meet specifications or carry its designed load. We will also fix or replace any electrical outlet, switch or fixtures that fail during this period.

EXTERIOR WALLS

Southern Homes enhances its home exteriors in varying combinations of brick, stucco, vinyl siding, and fiber-cement siding.

Brick

Brick exteriors have a series of holes built into the mortar along the bottom of each wall. These are called weep holes and allow condensation to evaporate from between the brick and frame wall of your home. Keep weep holes clear of landscaping and debris at all times.

After several years, the mortar between brick might show signs of wear and deterioration. If this occurs, hire a professional to repair, or tuckpoint, worn areas.

Nothing To Worry About

- *White powder on brick* -- The white, powdery substance that sometimes accumulates on brick surfaces is efflorescence. These deposits are natural and cannot be prevented.

BRICK MAINTENANCE

What You Do

- *Keep weep holes clear* -- Periodically inspect the weep holes found in the mortar along the bottom row of exterior brick walls. Clear and clean any weep holes that are blocked.
- *Have brickwork professionally tuckpointed* -- Inspect brickwork once a year to make sure the mortar is in good condition. If it shows signs of deterioration, hire a professional to tuckpoint the affected areas.
- *Remove efflorescence* -- Efflorescence poses no harm to brick. It is not necessary to remove efflorescence since it occurs naturally and cannot be prevented. However, if you wish to remove efflorescence, scrub with stiff brush using vinegar or a commercial product made for this purpose.

What We Do

- *Repair cracks in brick masonry* -- During the 1-year warranty period, Southern Homes offers a 1-time repair on masonry cracks that exceed 3/16". We suggest waiting until this period is almost over so we can address all issues at once.

STUCCO

Stucco is a slightly porous material and should remain clear from contact with sprinkler systems. Rain on stucco is okay, just maintain positive drainage (away from the home) and keep all landscaping and concrete flatwork at least 6" below the screed (the stucco's underlying mesh). Never pour concrete or plaster over the screed or to the top of your home's foundation.

Nothing To Worry About

- *Minor cracks in stucco* -- Stucco expands and contracts in response to changes in climate. Over time, hairline cracks will develop in the outer layer of stucco and cannot be prevented.



- *White powder on stucco* - The white, powdery substance that sometimes accumulates on stucco is called efflorescence. These deposits are natural and cannot be prevented.

STUCCO MAINTENANCE

What You Do

- *Remove efflorescence* - Efflorescence poses no harm to stucco. It is not necessary to remove efflorescence since it occurs naturally and cannot be prevented. However, if you wish to remove efflorescence, scrub with a stiff brush using vinegar or a commercial product made for this purpose.

What We Do

- *Repair stucco cracks* - During the 1-year warranty period, Southern Homes offers a 1-time repair on cracks in stucco. We suggest waiting until this period is almost over so we can address all issues at once. Be aware that the touch-ups may be noticeable upon close inspection.

VINYL SIDING

Vinyl siding is exceptionally durable and usually requires nothing more than pressure washing to keep it looking new. It can sometimes attract mildew, which looks like a thin layer of dirt on the siding surface. Mildew can be removed using specially designed products available at most hardware and home improvement stores. Cleaning mildew is part of normal home maintenance and is the responsibility of the homeowner.

Nothing To Worry About

- *Waves in the siding* - Vinyl Siding expands and contracts in response to changes in climate. Slight waves may be visible under certain lighting conditions and cannot be prevented.

VINYL SIDING MAINTENANCE

What You Do

- *Keep vinyl siding clean and mildew free* - Southern Homes suggests pressure washing vinyl siding at least once a year. Mildew can be removed using solutions designed for this purpose, which are found at most hardware and home improvement stores. These products are dangerous, so wear rubber gloves and protective eyewear whenever you use them.

What We Do

- *Confirm vinyl siding is mildew free* - Southern Homes will clean mildew found on vinyl siding during your pre-closing orientation.
- *Correct joint and siding separations* - During the 1-year warranty period, Southern Homes will correct any failing joints in vinyl siding and separations of siding from the home.
- *Fix delaminating siding* - During the 1-year warranty period, Southern Homes will repair any vinyl siding that is splitting.

FIBER - CEMENT SIDING

Fiber-cement siding is one of the most durable exterior products on the market today. This siding product combines strength and durability with the beauty and charm of wood. It holds up exceptionally in cold, windy climates and wet, humid climates. But best of all, this type of siding resists flame spread, damage from flying debris, insect damage, rotting, and cracking.

SIDING MAINTENANCE

What You Do

- *Washing down* - To remove dirt and debris, it is recommended to wash down your siding every 6 to 12 months with a garden hose or low pressure water spray.
- *Keep clearance* - Prune back vegetation that is touching the siding to ensure proper clearance between the siding and the shrubs.
- *Touch-up paint* - Touch-up worn, blistered or peeling paint before the problem becomes worse. Bear in mind that touch-ups may be visible under close inspection due to dye lot variations and fading original paint. We suggest repainting the siding once every 2 to 3 years.

What We Do

- *Correct joint and siding separations* - During the 1-year warranty period, Southern Homes will correct any failing joints in siding and separations of siding from the home.
- *Fix delaminating siding* - During the 1-year warranty period, Southern Homes will repair any siding that is splitting.



EXTERIOR TRIM AND PAINT

Exterior Wood Trim

During your home's first few years, exterior wood trim can shrink in response to changes in climate. This usually occurs over the course of the winter and will require a few minor repairs. We suggest waiting until spring to make all your repairs at once. When it's time, here's how:

Trim Repairs

Symptom	Remedy
Trim separation at joints	Fill in separations with latex caulking. Touch-up with paint.
Trim pulling away from the home	Remove any protruding nails. Drive a new nail close to the old nail hole. Fill the old hole with putty. Touch-up with paint.

Exterior Paint

Check exterior paint conditions at least once a year to catch minor problems before they become major. Wind, rain, harsh sunlight and other weather conditions take their toll on the exterior of your home. Even prolonged water contact from sprinkler systems can cause blistering, peeling and splintering. We suggest repainting your home exterior once every 2 to 3 years.

Touch-up exteriors

1. Reset any raised nails.
2. Use a wire brush or putty knife to remove blistered or peeling paint.
3. Sand the area then wipe to remove dust.
4. Prime, let dry, repaint.

EXTERIOR TRIM AND PAINT MAINTENANCE

What You Do

- *Keep an eye on wood trim* – Exterior wood trim develops minor cracks and raised grain in response to climate changes. This is especially true the first year. Raised grain allows moisture under painted surfaces and can result in peeling. Repaint these areas when needed.
- *Touch-up paint* – Touch-up worn, blistered or peeling paint before the problem becomes worse. Bear in mind that touch-ups may be visible under close inspection due to dye lot variations and fading original paint.

What We Do

- *Confirm painted surfaces are in acceptable condition* - During your pre-closing orientation, Southern Homes confirms that all painted exterior surfaces are in acceptable condition. We'll also do touch-ups if needed as part of another warranty repair.
- *Confirm wood trim is in acceptable condition* - During your pre-closing orientation, Southern Homes confirms that all wood trim is in acceptable condition. We offer a 1-time repair during the 1-year warranty period that applies to any cracks in trim that exceed 3/16". We suggest waiting until this period is almost over so we can address all issues at once.

FIREPLACES

If your home has a fireplace, be sure to follow all care and safety guidelines.

Direct Vent Gas Fireplaces

Direct Vent Gas Fireplaces use only natural gas as fuel (does not require wood) and are the cleanest burning fireplaces available today. For detailed operating and safety instructions, read and follow the manufacturer's guidelines.

A couple of things to remember:

- A slight delay between turning the switch and the flame lighting is normal. The flame should light gently and quietly. If you notice any deviation, or smell gas, immediately turn off the switch and inform your gas company.
- Condensation will occasionally collect behind the glass face of your fireplace. This is normal and will evaporate within a few minutes of lighting.
- Excessive winds can create downdrafts that blow out the gas pilot. Simply relight the pilot before using your fireplace.

SAFETY ALERT

For gas safety and emergency shut-off instructions, see page 5 of this manual.

SAFETY ALERT

Don't get burned!

Be careful: Exterior vent covers on direct vent gas fireplaces get very hot during operation.

Building A Fire: Gas Ignition

Using a gas ignition fireplace is one of the easiest and fastest ways to enjoy a real wood fire.

First, open the damper and fresh air vent and then place 3 or 4 logs on the fire grate (larger logs to the rear). To start the fire, simply use a lit fireplace match or BBQ lighter held carefully to the heating element while slowly turning the fireplace's gas valve to the *On* position.

The gas should light gently and quietly. Use the gas valve to adjust the flame height to light the logs. If the flame does not light quickly, turn the gas valve off, give the collected gas a minute or so to dissipate, then try again.

Once the fire is lit, close the fire screen to keep burning cinders safely where they belong.

Remember, the gas flame is only meant for ignition purposes. Once the logs are lit and burning well on their own, turn the gas valve *Off*.

SAFETY ALERT

If your Gas Ignition fireplace doesn't light easily, takes too long to light or doesn't light after several tries, turn off the gas valve and immediately contact your gas company. For gas safety and emergency shut-off instructions, see page 5 of this manual.

Wood Burning Fireplaces

There are two types of wood burning fireplaces: the traditional, start-it-yourself kind and those that light using gas ignition. With either, the key is to remember to begin each fire small. Small fires allow the components of your fireplace to heat slowly. Starting with more than one starter log or too many logs in general can damage the firebox, the fireplace and your warranty. Start small. Once the fireplace has pre-heated, you can add more logs.

The Word On Woods

Use only cured (fully dried) hardwoods like oak, pecan or hickory in your fireplace. Green (freshly cut) woods do not burn well because they contain too much moisture and produce excessive smoke that can back up into your home.

ATTENTION

Before using your Wood Burning fireplace, always:

- *Open the damper* -- This allows smoke to escape through the chimney, not into your home.
- *Open the fresh air vent* -- Fires need oxygen to burn. If the fresh air vent remains closed, your fire will steal oxygen from you.

Once the fire is completely out and your fireplace has cooled, close the damper and fresh air vent. Leaving them open is like leaving a window open.

SAFETY ALERT

Always make sure any fires are out before closing the damper, leaving your home, or going to bed.

Never use soft woods like pine, cedar or fir. They contain saps and resins that can pop, spatter and clog your chimney with dangerously flammable residue.

As a rule, any log with a diameter greater than 6" needs to be split into smaller cords.

Building A Fire: Traditional Method (if no gas is present)

To build a clean, steady, slow-burning fire, open the damper and fresh air vent, and then put 1 or 2 pieces of crumpled newspaper under the fire grate. Loosely lay several pieces of kindling on that. Use kindling of various sizes; smaller pieces help larger pieces light, while larger pieces light the logs.

On top of the grate, place 3 or 4 hardwood logs, larger logs to the rear.

Light both newspapers. The paper below will light the kindling to light the logs. The paper above will make the chimney begin drawing smoke.

Once the fire is lit, close the fire screens to keep dangerous cinders safely where they belong.

Ash Removal

Old ashes and coals can be removed after they have cooled. However, leave a light layer beneath the fire grate to insulate the fireplace floor and reflect heat.



Nothing To Worry About

- *Discoloration* - Discoloration of the firebox or brick is to be expected after normal use and cannot be prevented.
- *Downdraft* - High winds can result in a draft entering your home through the chimney. This will only occur in extreme weather and cannot be prevented. To keep drafts from blowing hot coals or ashes into your home, keep the fire screens closed or purchase glass doors.
- *Minor water infiltration* - During heavy or prolonged rains, especially when accompanied by high winds, a small amount of water might enter through the chimney. This will only occur in extreme weather and cannot be prevented.

FIREPLACE MAINTENANCE

What You Do

- *Hire a professional chimney sweep* - Even with the best firewood possible, residue will build up in the chimney flue and become a fire hazard. The type of woods burned and how frequently you use your fireplace will determine how often they need cleaning.
- *Hire a professional to clean the spark arrester* - The spark arrester is a screen located at the top of your chimney designed to keep sparks from escaping to set your neighborhood on fire. If the spark arrester becomes clogged, the diminished airflow not only affects the performance of your fireplace, but also becomes a fire hazard.

FLOORING-WOOD

General Care

Dirt and grit take their toll on wood floors if left unattended. Combined with foot traffic, they dull and scratch the finish. To keep your floors beautiful for years to come, sweep or mop regularly.

Mopping

Wood floors can be mopped with either store-bought cleaning solutions or a solution of vinegar and water (1-cup vinegar to 1-gallon water). To prevent damage from standing water, your mop should be damp but not overly wet.

Make sure store-bought cleaning solutions are suitable for wood floors. Never use waxes or oil soaps and always read and follow all instructions carefully.

For more detailed information on the care and maintenance of wood floors, refer to the manufacturer's guide or visit their website.

ATTENTION

Keep wood floors looking new.

Wood floors will dull with time and traffic. Having them periodically refinished by a professional will keep them looking new.

Five Things That Damage Wood Floors

- *Sand* - Wood flooring's worst enemy. Protect the high-traffic areas of your home with area rugs and mats. Be aware that rubber backings found on some rugs and mats can make your wood floors yellow or warp.
- *Water* - Standing water can make your wood floor's finish appear milky and even warp the wood. Mop up water and spills as quickly as possible to prevent this.
- *Sunlight* - Direct sunlight can fade wood floors and cause irreparable damage. Use curtains or blinds where needed.
- *Furniture* - Dragging furniture across wood floors will scuff, scratch and scar their finish. Always carry furniture rather than drag it. Jumping into chairs, couches or beds will also scar wood floors, and heavy furniture can leave dimples. Using floor protectors beneath furniture legs will help prevent both. Just be sure to clean these regularly to remove any grit that accumulates.
- *Heavy or sharp objects* - Dropping heavy or sharp objects, or even walking on wood floors in pointed high heels, can leave the wood dimpled.

Nothing To Worry About

- *Expanding or contracting planks* - Wood floors can expand and contract in response to changes in climate. This is a natural occurrence and cannot be prevented.
- *Minor separations* - Floor planks near heat vents and heat-producing appliances might shrink and cause minor separations. This can also occur with seasonal changes. This is a natural occurrence and cannot be prevented.
- *Dulling along traffic paths* - The finish on any wood floor will dull under the effects of high traffic. Area rugs and mats help slow the process but cannot prevent it.



- *Minor floor deflection* -- Heavy furniture like hutches, bookcases, pianos and armchairs can cause the surrounding floor to deflect (or bend) a bit over time. This can also occur in high-traffic areas. This is a natural occurrence and cannot be prevented.
- *Raised grain* -- Changes in climate can raise the grain patterns of wood. This is a natural occurrence and cannot be prevented.

WOOD FLOOR MAINTENANCE

What We Do

- *Fill in large separations in wood floors* -- During the 1-year warranty period, Southern Homes offers a 1-time fill repair on floor separations that exceed 1/8". We suggest waiting until this period is almost over so we can address all issues at once.
- *Correct floors that aren't sufficiently level* -- Southern Homes will correct any floor that is not level within 1/4" within any 32" distance as measured perpendicular to any ridge or indentation. We will also correct any floor slope exceeding 1/240 of the room.

FLOORING-VINYL

General Care

No-wax vinyl flooring has a clear, tough coating that gives it a durable, shiny finish. To maintain this finish, follow the manufacturer's guidelines on care and cleaning. Even with a tough coating, vinyl floors can be damaged.

A few tips to keep vinyl flooring in good shape:

- *Keep floors dry* -- Liquids can penetrate seams in vinyl flooring and cause the material to lift and curl. To prevent such damage, limit mopping and make sure the mop you use is damp but not overly wet. Clean any spill immediately.
- *Seal seams* -- If a seam begins to open at tub or floor joints, use caulking to seal them and prevent water penetration.
- *Limit scrubbing* -- If you scrub or buff the floors, use acrylic finishes to prevent scuffs.
- *Avoid dragging heavy things across floors* -- Pushing heavy furniture or appliances across vinyl floors can cause tears or wrinkles. We recommend installing casters on any furniture that regularly moves across vinyl floors. Also, use a dolly when moving anything you cannot carry.

ATTENTION

Raised Nails

Raised nail heads are the result of natural shrinkage and deflection of floor joists. To prevent this, Southern Homes uses special nails and glues to secure underlayments to subfloors.

If a nail pops up anyway, simply place a block of wood over the nail and hit the block with a hammer. The wood will help protect your vinyl floor from damage.

VINYL FLOORING MAINTENANCE

What We Do

- *Repair ridges in vinyl floors* - Ridging is measured by centering a 6" straight edge perpendicular to the ridge with one end tight to the floor. If the opposite end of the straight edge is 1/8" or more from the floor, Southern Homes will repair it.
- *Repair gaps in seams in vinyl floors* - During the 1-year warranty period, Southern Homes will correct seam gaps that are greater than 1/16" where 2 pieces of vinyl flooring meet, or greater than 1/8" where vinyl flooring meets another material.
- *Fix curling of vinyl flooring* - During the 1-year warranty period, Southern Homes will correct any vinyl floor curling that occurs, except when caused by excessive water.
- *Correct floors that aren't sufficiently level* - Southern Homes will correct any floor that is not level within 1/4" within any 32" distance as measured perpendicular to any ridge or indentation. We will also correct any floor slope exceeding 1/240 of the room.

FLOORING - CARPETING

General Care

Regular care will add years to the life of your carpet. The most important thing is to vacuum frequently. This removes dirt before it works its way into the carpet fibers. If dirt is allowed to embed itself beyond the reach of the vacuum, it will destroy your carpet by slowly wearing away at the fibers like sandpaper. Frequent vacuuming is especially critical in high traffic areas. We also recommend having your carpet professionally cleaned at least once per year.



For more detailed information on carpet care, refer to the manufacturer's guide or visit their website.

- *Carpet Seams* - Most carpets are manufactured in 12' widths, which make seams inevitable in larger rooms. Seams are generally more visible in dense, uniform carpets with a low, tight nap, and are more noticeable when the carpet is first installed. These are not considered defects unless they appear more prominent due to improper installation or an improperly manufactured carpet. Seams become less visible over time with use and frequent vacuuming.
- *Shading* - Shading refers to the changes in color value that occur when the pile of fine-cut carpets assumes different angles. This is the normal result of carpet use and cannot be prevented. Vacuuming will temporarily reverse the shading effect by realigning the carpet pile.
- *Shedding* - Carpets tend to shed bits of fiber after installation. This is especially true for wool and pile carpets, and is the result of loose fibers that remain in the carpet after manufacturing. These fibers will disappear over time with frequent vacuuming.
- *Crushing* - Crushing is the normal result of furniture and foot traffic depressing carpet fibers over time. Using glides or cups beneath furniture legs and frequently vacuuming high-traffic areas helps prevent this, but a certain amount of crushing is inevitable. Periodically rotating furniture to change traffic patterns also deters the effects of crushing.
- *Fading* - All carpets lose a certain amount of color over time. This is a normal reaction to natural and artificial forces in the environment.
 - A few tips to slow carpet fading:
 - *Vacuum frequently.*
 - *Change climate control air filters regularly.*
 - *Keep interior temperatures and levels of humidity moderate.*
 - *Reduce carpet exposure to direct sunlight.*
 - *Filtration* - Your climate control system can force air under closed interior doors, effectively turning the carpet at the threshold into an air filter. Over time, a noticeable stain will develop. To prevent this, try keeping interior doors slightly open. Signs of filtration are also a good indication that it's time to have your carpet cleaned by a professional.

Common Problems, Common Cures.

- *Fuzzing* - A few fibers may occasionally break on loop-style carpets. Carefully clip any excess fibers to carpet level. If the problem continues, contact a professional.

- *Pilling* -- Pills are small balls of fiber that can appear in areas of carpeting that are subjected to high traffic. Carefully clip any pills to carpet level. If pilling occurs over a large area, contact a professional.
- *Rippling* -- High humidity may cause rippling in wall-to-wall carpeting. If the carpet is still rippled when air is drier, have a professional re-stretch it using a power stretcher. Never use knee-kicker tools to re-stretch carpeting.
- *Snags* -- Sharp objects can sometimes grab carpet fibers, creating a snag. Carefully clip any snags to carpet level. If a snag is especially large, contact a professional.
- *Sprouting* -- Small tufts of fiber may occasionally appear, or sprout, above the carpet surface. Carefully clip the sprout to carpet level. Never try to pull sprouts free, as this will only bring more fibers with it.
- *Static* -- Cool exterior temperatures and dry interior air can create a build-up of static electricity in your carpet. The moderate use of a home humidifier will help control this problem.
- *Burns* -- If your carpet suffers a minor burn, immediately snip the darkened fibers and use a soapless cleaner and wet sponge to remove the residue that can stain and damage your carpet further. If the burn is extensive, contact a professional to have the damaged area replaced.

ATTENTION

The dirt on stains. Stain-resistant doesn't mean stain-proof.

Certain substances can cause permanent staining, even on carpets designed as stain-resistant. These include hair dyes, shoe polish, paints, India ink and others.

Some substances can even destroy or change carpet colors altogether. These include bleaches, insecticides, drain cleaners, plant foods and topical acne medications. Certain foods or beverages, like mustards and herbal teas that contain strongly colored natural dyes, can also damage carpeting.

Refer to your carpet's care and maintenance brochures for specific stain-cleaning recommendations. Before using any spot-remover on your carpet, always pretest the solution by applying several drops to an inconspicuous area. Hold a white tissue to the test area and count to ten. If the tissue shows no signs of dye transfer and the carpet appears undamaged, the spot remover should be fine.



CARPET MAINTENANCE

What You Do

- *Vacuum frequently* - Vacuum lightly twice each week and thoroughly once each week. A light vacuuming consists of 3 passes; a thorough vacuuming may require up to 7. A vacuum cleaner with a beater-bar is the most effective tool for the job as it agitates the pile, bringing dirt to the surface for easy removal. Heavy traffic areas may require daily vacuuming to keep them clean and maintain the upright position of the nap.
- *Wipe spills and clean stains immediately* - For best results, blot or dab any spill or stain; avoid rubbing.
- *Have your carpet professionally cleaned* - Once per year is recommended. If signs of filtration or dirt in high-traffic areas cannot be removed by vacuuming, you should have your carpet cleaned more often.

What We Do

- *Confirm carpeting is in acceptable condition* - During your pre-closing orientation, Southern Homes will inspect installed carpeting and correct any stains or spots noted by cleaning, patching or replacing the area as necessary. In cases where patching or replacement is needed, Southern Homes will do our best to match color, but cannot be responsible for dye lot variations.
- *Repair defective seams* - While visible seams are sometimes inevitable, Southern Homes will repair any gaps or fraying.

FLOORING - CERAMIC TILE

General Care

Ceramic tile is one of the easiest floor coverings to maintain. A quick pass of the vacuum is usually all it needs. For spills or dirt build-up, mopping with warm water should do. Avoid using detergents. If you need to use a cleaning agent on tougher jobs, use a mild solution of warm water and dishwasher crystals to keep from leaving a heavy, difficult-to-remove lather on the grout. Rinse thoroughly.

For more information on grout and grout care, see page 18 of this manual.

CERAMIC TILE FLOORING MAINTENANCE

What We Do

- *Confirm ceramic tiles are in acceptable condition* - During your pre-closing orientation, Southern Homes will inspect all ceramic tile and repair or replace any cracked, chipped, or loose tiles noted. Southern Homes is not responsible for variations in color or discontinued patterns. New grout may vary in color from the original.
- *Correct floors that aren't sufficiently level* - Southern Homes will correct any floor that is not level within 1/4" within any 32" distance as measured perpendicular to any ridge or indentation. We will also correct any floor slope exceeding 1/240 of the room.

STAIRCASES

You might hear small squeaks or feel a minor vibration when using stairs. This is normal and nothing to worry about. If the noise or vibration becomes excessive during your 1-year warranty period, give us a call and we'll do our best to fix it. Unfortunately, we cannot promise that we can make it go away entirely.

Minor separations might sometimes occur between stairs and walls. This is due to the normal shrinkage of wood. It cannot be prevented but it can be fixed. Simply apply a thin bead of latex caulking to the separation. Let the caulking dry and touch-up with paint.

GARAGE OVERHEAD DOOR

Electric Door Openers

Garage doors fitted with an electric door opener also have a motion detector installed. This electric eye is a safety feature and is located beside the door at knee level. If someone crosses the electric eye while the garage door is closing, the door will automatically reverse direction and return to the open position. For this safety feature to work, stored items must remain clear of the sensor.



Nothing to Worry About

- *Visible light around edges* – Garage overhead doors need freedom of motion to work. As a result, light can be seen around edges and across the top of the door. During severe storms, some water may also enter through these narrow gaps. This is normal and cannot be prevented.

SAFETY ALERT

Garage doors can be dangerous.

Never allow children to play with garage doors – Children can be seriously injured playing with garage doors.

Never attempt to remove or replace garage door springs yourself – Garage door springs are designed to carry the weight of the door and as a result are loaded with a significant amount of force. If your garage door appears to need service, call a professional immediately. If a car accidentally hits your garage door with significant impact and there's no visible sign of damage, have a professional perform a safety inspection anyway.

Never allow anyone near a moving garage door except the operator – If they're not in control of it, they shouldn't be near it.

Electric eyes are not foolproof – Motion sensors on electric garage door openers are meant to prevent accidental injury, not act as a door control. Never try to race a closing door.

Keep hands and fingers away from everything but the handle – The moving parts of garage doors can pinch, cut and even remove fingers. Use the handle.

When in doubt, call a professional.

GARAGE OVERHEAD DOOR MAINTENANCE

What You Do

- *Regularly oil all moving parts* – Every 6-months, apply a thin coat of 30-weight automobile oil to all moving parts, including the track, rollers, hinges, pulleys and springs. Be careful not to over lubricate. Excessive lubricant can drip onto your garage floor and vehicles.
- *Test door operation* – Every 6-months, inspect the garage door in operation to make sure no moving parts are binding or scraping. If you have an electric garage door opener, test the electric

eye as well. Stand clear of the door as it's closing and pass your hand across the sensor. The door should immediately reverse direction and return to its open position. If any problem is found, call a professional.

- *Inspect and tighten hardware* -- Every 6-months, confirm that all screws, bolts, nuts and pins are tight and secure. This hardware may loosen over time due to vibration.
- *Lubricate sticking locks with graphite* -- Use powdered graphite to lubricate sticking locks. Never use oils in locks. They can collect dirt and make the lock worse over time.

What We Do

- *Adjust misaligned garage doors* -- During the 1-year warranty period, Southern Homes will fix any garage door that needs adjustment. If you want to have a garage door opener installed after closing, we recommend hiring a company approved by Southern Homes so warranty coverage will remain uninterrupted.

PLUMBING & FIXTURES

In the event of a broken waterline or leak, turn off the water supply to the fixture involved. If the line is broken below the fixture's *shut-off valve*, turn off the main water supply at the meter. For detailed instructions, see *Emergency shut-offs* located at the front of this manual.

PLUMBING CLOGS

Prevention

Never put disposable diapers, sanitary supplies, cotton swabs or even dental floss down toilets or sinks. These will clog your plumbing. Put them in the trash instead. Excessive amounts of toilet paper can also clog your plumbing.

When using your garbage disposal, run only cold water and use plenty of it. Let the water run for another 10 or 15 seconds after you turn off the disposal.



TRUE OR FALSE?

It's better to run hot water when pouring old cooking grease down your sink.

False. Though hot water helps old cooking grease remain liquid, grease can stay in your sink trap and solidify as the water cools.

To help prevent grease clogs, run cold water and turn on the garbage disposal. The grease will solidify as it hits the disposal chamber, where the blades will cut it into small bits so it can safely wash away.

SAFETY ALERT

Hot oil and water do not mix.

Always let cooking grease cool completely before disposing it down your drain.

Clearing Clogged Pipes

Before using chemical drain cleaners that can damage both you and your plumbing, try a plunger.

If you find you still need the chemical route, make sure the product you choose is safe for PVC plumbing. Be sure to read and follow all directions; chemical drain cleaners are very dangerous.

If neither method works, call a professional.

Increasing Drain Flow

Most bathtubs and bathroom sinks installed by Southern Homes use plunger-type drain stoppers. Hair and other materials can sometimes collect around the stems of plunger stoppers which decrease drain flow. If your tub or sink drains slower than normal, it's probably time to clean the stopper.

Cleaning Bathtub Plunger Stoppers

1. Close the stopper, then unscrew counter-clockwise to remove. You may need pliers.
2. Clean all debris from the stopper and inside drain. Dispose of the debris in the trash only.
3. Return the stopper to the drain, screwing it clockwise just until snug. Do not over-tighten as the screw is only meant to hold the stopper in place. Over-tightening can break the stopper stem.

Cleaning Sink Plunger Stoppers

1. Find the stopper retaining nut on the back of the drainpipe beneath your sink. Turn it counter-clockwise to remove.
2. Remove the stopper lever by pulling it back and away from the drainpipe.
3. Remove the stopper from the sink and clean the debris from its stem and inside the drain. Put this debris in the trash only.
4. Return the stopper to the sink and reassemble the lever mechanism. Tighten the retaining nut just enough to keep it from leaking. Do not over tighten.

ATTENTION

Stopper Retaining Nuts. The right tool for the job.

- **Hex Nuts** – If your stopper-retaining nut is a hex (6-sided) nut, use the correct sized open-end wrench or a small crescent wrench only. Loosening or tightening the nut with the wrong-sized wrench, or pliers, will damage it.
- **Knurled or Splined Nuts** – If your stopper-retaining nut has either a knurled (raised diamond pattern) or splined (grooved) gripping surface, it is designed for loosening and tightening by hand. If it is too tight to turn by hand, lay a thick, damp cloth over the gripping surface and carefully use pliers to loosen. Use only enough pressure to grasp the nut without slipping; the cloth will help protect the nut against damage.

Dripping Faucets

To repair a dripping faucet or showerhead:

1. Shut off the water at the closest valve.
2. Remove the faucet stem.
3. Change the washer, replacing it with another of the same type and size.
4. Reinstall the faucet stem.
5. If this doesn't fix the problem, refer to the manufacturer's website for additional information.

ATTENTION

Drip tip

Using too much force to turn off faucets is the primary cause of drips. Use only enough force to stop water flow without over-tightening.



ATTENTION

Low water pressure?

If water pressure seems to decrease at a certain fixture, the aerator (small screens at the end of your faucets) or showerhead may need to be cleaned. You can easily accomplish this by unscrewing the part from the faucet or pipe and using a toothbrush and vinegar to scrub away trapped particles and build-up. We recommend cleaning aerators and showerheads at least once every 3 or 4 months.

If you find your overall water pressure seems too low throughout your home, contact your local water department and have them check for problems.

Running Toilets

If your toilet keeps running after the tank fills, the problem could be one of a couple. Here's how to diagnose and remedy the most common:

Remove the tank lid and look for the tall, open-ended pipe standing near the center. This is the overflow tube. If the water in the tank has reached the top of the tube and is draining away, then the tank float is most likely the problem. If water is below the top of the overflow tube and leaking into the bowl, the problem is most likely the tank flapper valve.

Tank Float Adjustments

Your tank float is identified as either a short, plastic cylinder that collars the fill line running parallel to the overflow tube; or as a large, ball-shaped object attached to the end of a thin, plastic or metal rod. Both are hollow and are designed to shut off the tank's fill valve once a specific level of water is reached.

Make sure the float has a free range of motion and is not catching on anything. If everything looks good there, then make sure the float is not waterlogged. A waterlogged float is no longer a float and needs to be replaced. If the float is airtight, then it's time to adjust.

ATTENTION

Federal Conservation Standards

To meet federal conservation standards, modern toilets are designed to flush using no more than 1.6 gallons of water. By adjusting the tank float to turn off the water supply just before water reaches the top of the overflow tube, you make the most of the tank's capacity and limit the need for multiple flushes.

Ball Floats

Ball floats are attached to threaded rods that allow you to fine-tune the fill valve shut-off point. The rule for adjustment is simple: the lower the float rests in the tank, the lower the water level needed to shut off the fill valve. Threading the float toward the overflow tube raises its position, threading away lowers it. Adjust accordingly.

In the case of metal rods (not plastic), an additional correction can be made if threaded adjustments aren't enough. Being careful not to put pressure on the flush and fill mechanisms, bend the rod slightly by holding it with one hand near the center and using the other to put pressure on the float end. A slight bend is generally all it takes.

Cylinder Floats

Cylinder floats ride the fill line as water levels rise and fall, and have a metal clip on the top and bottom that allow for adjustment. By squeezing these clips, you release the float from its locked position and can adjust it up or down. As with ball floats, a lower float position means lower water levels are needed to shut off the fill valve. Higher means higher. Adjust as needed.

Flapper Valve Adjustments

The flapper valve is located at the bottom of your tank and is connected by a small chain to the flush handle trip lever. Pressing on the toilet handle raises the flapper, draining the tank to flush the bowl.

The flapper valve needs a tight seal to work properly. Without it, the tank leaks into the bowl and water levels necessary to shut off the fill valve cannot be maintained.

Checking the Flapper Seal

First, make sure the connecting chain is set to the correct length. If the chain is too tight, the flapper will not close properly. If it is too loose, the chain can get caught in the valve. Both situations compromise the valve's seal.

To adjust the connecting chain, remove it from the small metal hook at the end of the flush lever and reconnect it at a higher or lower point on the chain as needed. If the loose end of the chain is too long, it can also pose a threat to catching in the valve or some other mechanism. Simply loop and hook the excess chain to the flush lever as well.



If the chain is set properly, then the problem probably lies with the valve itself. Turn off the toilet's water supply and flush to drain the tank. Examine the flapper for inconsistencies. All surfaces should be clean and smooth.

If the flapper or valve seat (the rim of the pipe that drains the tank) shows signs of algae or mineral build-up, they can be cleaned with a toothbrush and vinegar. If the flapper has rough, warped or uneven sealing surfaces, then it needs to be replaced. Simply remove the flapper, taking it to your local hardware or home improvement store to find a match, and install the replacement the same way you removed the original.

Still Not Working?

Call a professional.

ATTENTION

Handle with care.

Toilets are fragile things. Take care not to put undue pressure against the tank. This can crack both the tank and the bowl where they connect. Also protect it from bumps or hits, which can chip or crack the finish.

Frozen Pipes

Southern Homes has plumbed your home with burst-proof PEX tubing, but this does not mean they cannot freeze to diminish or completely cut off your water supply.

For protection against frozen pipes, keep garage doors closed so plumbing lines that run through the area aren't directly exposed to freezing temperatures. Within your home, open cabinet doors beneath sinks so warm air can circulate around the water supply lines.

ATTENTION

Protect exterior faucets from bursting.

The exterior faucets on your home are the only plumbing fixtures that pose a risk of freezing and bursting. These simple steps will help protect them:

1. *Unhook and drain garden hoses* – Water left in garden hoses can freeze, expand back into the faucet and burst pipes. Unhooking and draining the garden hose will protect both the hose and your pipes.
2. *Wrap exposed faucets* – Metal conducts temperatures exceptionally well. Wrapping exposed metal faucets helps keep freezing outside temperatures from reaching the water inside the pipes.

PLUMBING FIXTURES

Cleaning & Care

Clean faucets, sinks, tubs and toilets with a soft sponge or brush and non-abrasive cleansers only. Rinse or wipe with clean water afterward to remove any residue. This is especially important with metal-surfaced fixtures that can react negatively to extended contact with cleansers. Never use scouring cleansers or scouring pads.

To prevent water spots, polish with a dry cloth after cleaning. The occasional use of a good stainless steel cleaner helps brighten the finish on stainless steel sinks.

A few extra tips for care:

- *Never stand in bathtubs wearing shoes* – If you need to stand in the tub to work, lay cardboard or a thick layer of newspaper on the bottom to protect the finish.
- *Never use sharp objects to scrape paint or stains from fixtures* – Use a solvent instead.
- *Never leave fruits or vegetables in stainless steel sinks* – Leaving organic matter like fruit and vegetable peelings in stainless steel sinks can stain the surface.



- *Never subject sinks, tubs or toilets to heavy impact or pressure* – Heavy impact or undue pressure on sinks, tubs or toilets can crack the plumbing fixtures. Treat all fixtures with care.

For more detailed information on fixture care, see the manufacturers' guidelines.

PLUMBING MAINTENANCE

What We Do

- *Make sure plumbing is working correctly* – During your pre-closing orientation, we confirm that all plumbing lines and fixtures are in acceptable and working condition. If a clogged drain is discovered within the first 30 days after closing and the problem is related to workmanship, Southern Homes will correct it. If the clog is due to a household item, you assume charges for the repair.
- *Repair leaks* – Southern Homes will repair any plumbing leaks found during the 1-year warranty period. If the leak results in drywall or floor covering damage, we'll repair or replace items that were part of the original home. If items like wallpaper, drapes or personal belongings are damaged, your homeowner's insurance should cover those.

ROOF

You should only climb on your roof when absolutely necessary. The weight and movement can loosen materials and cause leaks.

After heavy or severe storms, step outside and examine your roof from the ground. Look for visible signs of damage like raised shingles or pieces of shingle lying in the yard. If you find either, call your insurance company.

SAFETY ALERT

Stay off wet shingles.

Never climb on your roof when it's wet. The shingles are very slippery and can result in major injuries.

ROOF MAINTENANCE

What We Do

Repair leaks - During the 1-year warranty period, Southern Homes will repair any leak resulting from faulty construction. If the leak is the result of severe weather, contact your insurance company.

TELEPHONE SERVICE

Southern Homes has equipped your home with plenty of telephone jacks. To connect service, simply contact one of the telephone service providers available in your area to arrange service.

TELEPHONE MAINTENANCE

What You Do

- *Hire a professional to install or relocate telephone jacks* - If you need a new phone jack installed, or to relocate an existing phone jack, call a professional.

What We Do

- *Correct inaccessible telephone jacks* - Southern Homes will correct any telephone jack blocked by cabinets, countertops or other home components that we have installed.
- *Repair faulty wiring* - During the 1-year warranty period, we will repair any faulty wiring found between your home and phone service box. If the problem lies beyond the phone service box, contact your phone company.

TERMITE AND PEST CONTROL

Southern Homes provides a certificate at closing certifying that the foundation of your home has been treated for termites. It is part of normal homeowner maintenance to maintain a termite contract with a pest control company after closing.

Treatment for other pests or animals (such as ants, roaches or rodents) is part of normal homeowner maintenance and is not covered under warranty.



WATER HEATERS

Hot water takes longer to reach sinks, tubs and showers that are farther from the heater. A few basic guidelines for water heater operation are included below, but for more detailed information and warranty coverage, see the manufacturer's literature.

Temperature Settings

When setting water heater temperatures, use your dishwasher as a guide rather than bathing preferences. Dishwashers need higher temperatures than we do and work optimally at 140°F. On electric water heaters, 140°F is setting *B*. On gas water heaters, the setting is *Normal*.

Higher settings may be considered to make hot water stretch farther, but they waste energy and greatly increase the danger of scalding.

Troubleshooting

If your hot water is cold, make sure the water heater's temperature setting hasn't been turned down and that its cold-water supply is on.

Check the following, too:

- *Electric Water Heater* - Make sure its breaker is on at the breaker box.
- *Gas Water Heater* - Make sure that the pilot is on.

For more troubleshooting tips, see the manufacturer's literature.

SAFETY ALERT

Keep water heaters clear.

Water heaters get hot during normal operation. For your safety, never store anything on top or too close to any water heater. Highly combustible materials should be kept even farther away.

Electric Water Heaters

Electric water heaters are simple to operate. The alphabetized temperature settings approximately convert to Fahrenheit as follows:

Setting	Temperature
Hot	120° F
A	130° F
B	140° F Optimal Setting
C	150° F
Very Hot	160° F

Gas Water Heaters

Gas water heaters require a pilot flame for operation. For detailed instructions on lighting the pilot, refer to the manufacturer's guide or visit their website.

SAFETY ALERT

Keep gas water heaters full.

It's dangerous to run a gas water heater without any water. Always turn your water heater off before cutting off its cold water supply. That means the pilot, too.

For gas safety and emergency shut-off instructions, see page 5 of this manual.

Nothing To Worry About

- *Dripping condensation* -- If your home uses a gas water heater, condensation may collect on the bottom of the tank and drip onto the lit burner. This usually occurs only with new gas water heaters and causes no harm. In most cases, it will stop after a short period of time.
- *Mineral deposits extinguishing the pilot* -- Gas water heaters sometimes collect small quantities of dirty water and mineral deposits in the main gas lines that can extinguish the pilot. If this occurs, simply follow the instructions to relight the pilot.



WATER HEATER MAINTENANCE

What You Do

- *Partially drain the tank* -- This reduces mineral deposits, saves energy dollars, and prolongs the life of your water heater. See the manufacturer's literature for detailed instructions and maintenance schedules.
- *Relieve the pressure in the tank* -- The pressure relief valve on your water heater needs to be opened at least once a year. This can be a dangerous process so be sure to carefully read and follow the detailed instructions in the manufacturer's literature.
- *Clean or replace heating elements* -- Heating elements need periodic cleaning and may sometimes even require replacement. You can hire a professional or do it yourself with the detailed instructions in the manufacturer's literature.
- *Clean around your gas water heater* -- Sweep or vacuum the area around your gas water heater to keep dust from interfering with flame combustion.

What We Do

- *Correct gas leaks from the meter into the home* -- Southern Homes will correct any gas leak found between the meter and into the home during the 1-year warranty period. Your gas company is responsible for any leaks found otherwise.

WINDOWS AND SCREENS

Unless your window manufacturer recommends a specific glass cleaner, use common liquid glass cleaners or a solution of vinegar and water.

To clean aluminum surfaces, use warm water alone. Chemical cleaners can cause discoloring. After cleaning, apply a silicone lubricant to protect against oxidation. Never clean aluminum with powdered cleaners that can easily scratch such a soft metal.

ATTENTION

Never tint Dual-Glazed windows.

Tinting dual-glazed windows will cause condensation and excessive heat to build between the panes. This not only permanently damages the windows; it also voids their warranty. See the manufacturer's literature for more information.

Nothing To Worry About

Condensation - Condensation on windows and window frames is caused by low outside temperatures and high humidity in your home.

SAFETY ALERT

Broken Windows

If a window breaks in your home, do not try to fix it yourself. Glass is dangerous and difficult to install without the proper tools or know-how. Call a professional instead.

Mirrors at a glance

Avoid splashing water behind installed mirrors and never use acidic glass cleaners. Both can damage the silvering. To clean mirrors, use a common liquid glass cleaner or a solution of vinegar and water.

WINDOW MAINTENANCE

What You Do

- *Lubricate window guides* - If a sliding window sticks or needs excessive force to operate (more than 10 lbs. of pressure), use a silicone lubricant along its guides and sliding surfaces.
- *Hire a professional to repair broken windows* - Do not risk damaging the window or yourself. Call a professional.



What We Do

- *Confirm windows, mirrors, screens, and patio doors are in acceptable condition* – Southern Homes will repair or replace any broken window, chipped mirror, damaged screens or sliding patio doors found during your pre-closing orientation. Windows should operate with reasonable ease and locks should perform as designed.
- *Replace windows with major scratches* – Southern Homes will replace windows with scratches that are easily visible under normal lighting conditions from a distance of 4 feet.
- *Repair broken seals* – Condensation accumulating between the glass panes of a dual-glazed window indicates a broken seal. We'll replace the window if this occurs during the 1-year warranty period.

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