



GATEWAY HOMES

Homeowner Guidebook

Revised 03/16/2005

Welcome home!

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

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

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

If you need clarification or additional details about any topic discussed, please give us a call. We are delighted to welcome you as part of the Gateway Homes family and are always ready to serve you.

Sincerely,

Tom Walker
President

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What Happens Next?

An Overview of Your New Home Experience

Purchasing a new home is an exciting experience. The process also includes many details to be decided and arranged. While Gateway Homes is building your new home, you participate by taking care of several important aspects of your purchase. The chronological list that follows outlines the events that typically take place in the purchase of a new home. This will be beneficial and will help to ensure that you are doing your part every step of the way.

Purchasing Your Home

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

Applying for Your Loan

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

Your New Home Selections

Refer to the section of this manual known as New Home Selections, for helpful hints on the exciting process of personalizing your new home with your selections.

Construction of Your Home

We invite you to tour your new home with us at several points during construction. We also expect and welcome your casual visits to the site. Please read the section entitled Construction of Your Home, for guidelines on safety, security, and work in progress. Please bring this manual to all our meetings.

Homeowner Orientation

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

Closing on Your Home

The section called Closing on Your Home describes the documents you will sign and other important details about the closing process. We have included guidelines to assist you in preparing for closing and move-in.

Caring for Your Home

Many of your responsibilities as an owner and Gateway Homes' responsibilities under the terms of our limited warranty are discussed in the section entitled Caring for Your Home. Begin reading through the manual now to become familiar with the home maintenance you should provide and our warranty service commitment to you.

Your Feedback and Suggestions

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

As time passes, if your housing needs change, we are ready at any time to build you another home. We also appreciate your referrals. You can always visit our website at www.gatewayhomes.com for information on new communities and exciting new floorplans.

Who's Who?

Some Names You Should Know

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

Your New Home Sales Consultant

Phone Number

Construction Supervisor

Phone Number

Lender

Phone Number

Title Company

Phone Number

Purchasing Your Home

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

Purchase Agreement

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

Addenda

Financing Addendum: This document gives details on whether you have selected a Gateway Homes Preferred Lender, or your own lender. Depending on your choice, Gateway Homes may or may not assist with your closing costs. You will benefit from the maximum contribution from Gateway Homes by selecting one of our Preferred Lenders. Ask your New Home Sales Consultant for more details.

Change Order Addendum: This document details any upgrade selections and the charges for these selections.

Selection Sheet: This document describes your choices for flooring, appliance color, exterior paint, etc.

Property Addendum: This document describes the Homeowner's Association, if applicable, as well as insulation information, notice of possible annexation and contingency information.

NOTE TO HOMEBUYER

Insert the completed *Purchase Agreement* and *Addenda* here.

Applying for Your Loan

The first step is the selection of a lender and completion of a mortgage application. It is very important that you make loan application within three (3) business days of signing your Purchase Agreement. Your Gateway Homes New Home Sales Counselor can make recommendations on lenders, or you can select your own. Please refer to the Financing Addendum of your Purchase Agreement regarding your selection of a lender and the time frames you and your lender must adhere to. Remember to take copies of the completed Purchase Agreement with you when you first visit your lender.

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

Loan Application Checklist

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

Property Information

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

Personal Information

- ___ Social Security number, driver's license, and green card (if applicable) for each borrower.
- ___ Home addresses for the last two years.
- ___ Divorce decree and separation agreements, if applicable.
- ___ Trust agreement, if applicable.

Income

- ___ Most recent 30 day's worth of pay stubs for all borrowers
 - ___ Documentation on any supplemental income such as bonuses or commissions.
 - ___ Names, addresses, and phone numbers of all employers for last two years.
 - ___ W-2s for last two years.
- ___ If you are self-employed or earn income from commissioned sales, copies of last two years of

tax returns with all schedules and year-to-date profit and loss for current year, signed by an accountant.

___ Documentation of alimony or child support, if this income is considered for the loan.

Real Estate Owned

___ Names, addresses, phone numbers, and account numbers of all mortgage lenders for the last seven years.

___ Copies of leases and two years of tax returns for any rental property.

___ Market value estimate.

Liquid Assets

___ Complete names, addresses, phone numbers, and account numbers for all bank, credit union, 401K, and investment accounts.

___ Copies of the last three months statements for all bank accounts.

___ Copies of any notes receivable.

___ Value of other assets such as auto, household goods, and collectibles.

___ Cash value of life insurance policies.

___ Vested interest in retirement funds or IRAs.

Liabilities

___ Names, account numbers, balances, and current monthly payment amounts for all revolving charge cards.

___ Names, addresses, phone numbers, and account numbers for all installment debt and approximate balances and monthly payments for such items as auto loans and mortgages.

___ Alimony or child support payments.

___ Names, addresses, phone numbers, and account numbers of accounts recently paid off, if used to establish credit.

Other Documentation

For VA applicants: Certificate of Eligibility and DD214

For past bankruptcy: Copy of bankruptcy, discharge papers with all Schedules

Please note that you will be asked to pay for a credit report upon signing the application. Your lender will also request that you pay for your appraisal at least two (2) months prior to closing.

Loan Processing

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

The Good Faith Estimate lists the costs you will incur at closing. Some of the numbers listed on this form are prorations, subject to change based on the actual date of the closing. Others are set fees that should remain the same.

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

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

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

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

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

Typically, several weeks pass as these reports and forms are returned to the lender. If any delays are encountered, the loan officer may contact you for assistance. The credit reporting agency may call you to verify that the information they have gathered is correct.

Once the loan processor has collected this standard documentation, you may be asked to write letters describing your assets, income, or credit. Few loans are finalized without requests for additional information just before the package is submitted to the underwriter for final approval.

Before the processor submits your file to the underwriters for final approval, he or she will verify the final sales price. If Change Order Addenda affect the total price after this point, be sure to give your lender a copy of the rewritten Purchase Agreement.

Loan Approval

During your first meeting, you and your lender determine the timing to obtain prequalification. You will discuss additional items that you may need to obtain final loan approval. Several weeks after your first meeting with the lender, you should receive loan approval. If any of the documents requested have not been returned to the lender in a timely manner, approval may take longer.

Contingencies

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

Loan Lock

The only thing anyone knows for certain about interest rates is that they will change. Do not rely on anyone's predictions regarding rates. Locking your rate prematurely can result in extra expense if your new home is not complete in time to close within the lock period. We are happy to update you throughout the process of construction on the expected delivery date. ***Until we reach a point in construction where factors outside our control can no longer affect the delivery date, the decision to lock your loan is at best a gamble.***

Down Payment Worksheet

Available Funds

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

Expected Expenses

Settlement costs (estimate 3 percent of loan amount)	\$ _____
Moving costs	\$ _____
Other expected expenses	\$ _____
Total Expected Expenses	\$ _____

Down Payment

Adjusted total available funds	\$ _____
Minus total expected expenses	\$ _____
Amount Available for Down Payment	\$ _____

New Home Selections

Part of the fun of buying a new home is selecting finish materials and colors. You will make your choice at the Gateway Homes New Home Sales Office, with the assistance of your New Home Sales Consultant.

Selection Hints

Schedule time to visit the sales office to make your selections as soon as possible. Plan to finalize your selections within 7 days of signing your purchase agreement. Your prompt completion of these selections helps prevent the delays caused by backorders.

Please be thorough. Decorating choices that exceed the specified allowances, such as those for floor coverings or countertops may require a deposit. Although such amounts can be credited to you at closing and subsequently added to your mortgage, they are non-refundable, so make choices carefully.

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

Homeowner's association restrictions and particular selections your future neighbors have already made, (such as brick), may limit some of your choices for exterior finish materials. The sooner you can make your selections, the greater the number of choices you have. Driving through the area to view existing homes is one way to select exterior colors. Selections often look different on a full-size home.

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

Please retain your selection sheets for future reference. They are useful for matching paint colors, tile grout, and replacement items in your home.

Custom Changes

The possibilities for your new home far exceed the popular ideas we suggest on our option and upgrade lists. Think, dream, and imagine, look— we will assist you in any way that we can to make these decisions as early as possible.

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

NOTE TO HOMEBUYER

Insert your *Change Order Addenda* here.

NOTE TO HOMEBUYER

Insert your records of your *New Home Selections* here.

Construction of Your Home

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

- As a consumer, you rarely have the opportunity to watch as the products you purchase are created. Your new home is created in front of you.
- You have more opportunity for input into the design and finish details of a new home than for most other products. Our success in personalizing your home depends on effective communication.
- Because of the time required for construction, you have many opportunities to view your home as it is built, ask questions, and discuss details.

You have the opportunity to meet with us at several points in this process. The first of these is a Preconstruction Conference, where we review your home plans, selections, and the changes you have requested. At that time, we provide an overview of the construction process and answer your questions. All requested Change Order Addenda should be completed at this time.

We understand that you will want to visit your new home between these construction reviews. Whether you are on site for a routine meeting or a casual visit, we ask that you keep the following points in mind.

Safety

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

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

Plans and Specifications

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

Regulatory Changes

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

Individual Foundation Designs

Another area where variations among homes can appear is in the foundation system. Based on the results of a soil test, an engineer determines which foundation system to use.

Changes in Materials, Products, and Methods

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

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

Natural Variations

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

Quality

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

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

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

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

During the construction process, every home being built experiences some days when it is not at its best. Homes under construction endure wind, rain, snow, foot traffic, and activities that generate noise, dust, and trash. Material scraps are a by-product of the process. Although your new home is cleaned by each trade upon completion of their portion of the work, during your visits you will encounter some messy moments. Keep in mind that the completed homes you toured also once endured these “ugly duckling” stages.

Trade Contractors

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

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

Schedules

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

Delivery Date Updates

We will update you on the estimated delivery date at our pre-construction meeting. You are also welcome to check with your sales counselor for the most current target date. As completion nears, more factors come under our control and we can be more precise about that date. Expect a firm closing date no later than 45 days before delivery. You will be given a firm first walk orientation and closing date at the pre-construction meeting.

We suggest that, until you receive this commitment, you avoid finalizing arrangements for your move. Until then, flexibility is the key to comfort, sanity, and convenience. We want you to enjoy this process and avoid unnecessary stress caused by uncertainty that cannot be avoided. Review the Loan Lock heading in Section 3, Applying for Your Loan, for additional suggestions on this topic.

"Nothing's Happening"

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

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

Construction Sequence

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

Foundation

Framing

First floor

Second floor

Roof trusses

Roof sheathing

Roofing

Felt or paper

Valley flashing

Shingles

Exterior

Exterior trim

Fascia (boards at ends of rafters)

Windows and doors

Sheathing

Finish materials

Trim

Deck, if applicable

Gutters, if applicable

Exterior painting or staining

Concrete or asphalt

Fine grading

Landscaping, if applicable

Interior

Rough in of mechanical systems

HVAC (heating, ventilating, and air conditioning)

Plumbing

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

Rough inspections

Insulation

Drywall

Hang

Inspection

Tape and texture

Interior trim

Doors

Baseboards, casings, other details

Paint and stain

Finish work

Cabinets

Countertops

Tile

Floor coverings

Appliances

Hardware
Screens
Finish work (continued)
 Light fixtures
 Plumbing fixtures
Construction cleaning
Builder's punch list
First walk orientation
Second walk orientation
Closing
Home maintenance

Our Customer Wants to Know . . .

Date_____

Home Buyer_____

Phone_____

Address_____

Response

By_____

Date_____

Please fax to Gateway Homes Construction Dept. at (713) 914-0235.
Thank You.

Homeowner Orientation

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

Scheduling

We schedule the meeting with you as your home nears completion. Appointments are available Monday through Friday, **8 a.m. to 3 p.m.** We meet at your new home. This meeting occurs several days before closing. Expect your New Home Orientation Meeting to take approximately two hours.

Forms

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

Preparation

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

Past experience has shown that the New Home Orientation Meeting is most beneficial when buyers are able to focus all their attention on their new home and the information we present. Although we appreciate that friends and relatives are eager to see your new home, it would be best if they visit at another time. Similarly, we suggest that, if possible, children and pets not accompany you at this time.

Acceptance

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

Cosmetic surface damage caused during construction is readily noticeable during the New Home Orientation Meeting. Such damage can also occur during the move-in process or through daily activities. ***Therefore, after we correct any items noted during your walk through,***

repair of cosmetic surface damage is your responsibility. This includes paint touch-up. Our limited warranty excludes cosmetic damage to items such as:

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

Completion of Items

Gateway Homes takes responsibility for resolving any warrantable items noted. We will complete most items before your move-in. If work needs to be performed in your new home after your move-in, construction personnel are available for appointments Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Under normal circumstances, you can expect us to resolve all items within 14 working days. We will inform you of any delays caused by back-ordered materials. Please note that we will correct only those items listed. **No verbal commitments of any kind will be honored by Gateway Homes. All requests must be in writing.**

Future Service

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

Homeowner Orientation

NOTE TO HOMEBUYER

At your New Home Orientation Meeting, you will receive:

- Copies of completed introduction forms.
- A list of emergency phone numbers for critical trade contractors, such as heating and plumbing, who might be needed after hours or on weekends.
- The emergency phone list can be found inside your kitchen sink cabinet and will be pointed out to you at your Homeowner's Introduction.

We suggest you insert them here.

Closing on Your Home

Gateway Homes recognizes that timing is vitally important in planning your move and securing your loan. We can specify an estimated delivery date when construction reaches a point at which weather and other factors are unlikely to affect completion of your home. This occurs 45 days before closing. Until then, many factors can influence the schedule:

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

Date of Closing

The closing, or settlement, takes place 2-3 hours after your final walk through your new home. The Gateway Homes Closing Coordinator will schedule the closing appointment with you and will notify the Title Company and lender for you. Usually, the closing process takes from 45 minutes to an hour.

Location of Closing

The closing on your new home will take place at the title company. The Closing Coordinator will send you a letter in the mail during the month in which you are to close. This letter will detail information about the title company and your closing, and should be inserted in this section of your Homeowner Guidebook. This letter will include a map to the title company.

Closing Documents

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

- **General Warranty Deed**—The general warranty deed conveys the home and lot to you, subject only to permit exceptions.
- **Title Commitment**—At closing, the title company will provide you with a copy of your commitment for title insurance. Review the title commitment carefully. Discuss any questions with your title company. Within 60 days after the closing, the title company mails a standard owner's title insurance policy, insuring you the title to your home in

accordance with the commitment you received at closing. Keep the title insurance policy with your other valuable papers.

- ***Gateway Homes Limited Warranty***—We provide a copy of the limited warranty in this manual for your review. Please read it thoroughly.
- ***Promissory Note***—The promissory note is from you, payable to the lender in the principal amount of the loan, plus interest. One-twelfth of your annual taxes and homeowner's insurance will be added to the principal and interest payment to determine your total monthly payment.
- ***Deed of Trust***—This encumbers your home as security for repayment of the promissory note.

Closing Expenses

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

"The Final Number"

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

Preparation

In your planning, be sure to allow time to arrange for and obtain these funds. In addition, please keep the following items in mind:

- ***Funds for Closings***—Depending on the time frame in which your loan is approved and documents prepared, your actual closing figure may not be available until immediately before closing. In such instances, it is advised that you use the estimate provided by your lender. Plan to bring a certified funds check (made out to the title company) to the closing table. If your certified check exceeds the amount needed to close, the closer at the title company will issue you a refund check before you leave the closing.
- ***Insurance***—You need to provide proof of a homeowner's policy from your insurance company. Your insurance agent should know exactly what is needed. We suggest you arrange for this at least three weeks before the expected closing date. You will receive more detailed information on Homeowner's Insurance from the Gateway Homes

Closing Coordinator the month of closing.

- ***Gateway or Lender Issues***—The title company is not authorized to negotiate or make representations on behalf of any of the parties involved in the closing. Therefore, please discuss any questions, agreements, or other details directly with us or your lender in advance of the closing.

- ***Utilities***—Gateway Homes will have utility service removed from its name three days after closing. You will need to notify all applicable utility companies of your move so that service is provided in your name. We suggest that you contact these companies well ahead of time to avoid any interruption in service. A list of utility phone numbers is provided at your New Home Orientation Meeting to assist you in making these arrangements.

Caring For Your Home

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

A home is one of the last hand-built products left in the world. Once we have assembled the natural and manufactured materials, the components interact with each other and the environment. Although quality materials and workmanship have been used in your home, this does not mean that it will not require care or maintenance. A home, like an automobile, requires care and attention from day one. General homeowner maintenance is essential to providing a quality home for a lifetime.

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

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

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

Please take time to read the literature provided by the manufacturers of consumer products and other items in your home. The information contained in that material is not repeated here. Although much of the information may be familiar to you, some points may differ significantly from homes you have had in the past.

We make every effort to keep our information current and accurate. However, if any detail in our discussion conflicts with the manufacturer's recommendations, you should follow the manufacturer's recommendations. Activate specific manufacturer's warranties by completing and mailing any registration cards included with their materials. **In some cases, manufacturer's**

warranties may extend beyond the first year and it is in your best interest to be apprised of such coverage.

Gateway Homes Limited Warranty Guidelines

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

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

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

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

Reporting Procedures

All service requests must be put in writing.

Air Conditioning

****Please study carefully****

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR HEATING & AIR CONDITIONING SYSTEM

Many people define comfort differently. Some like a home very cool and some like it more temperate. We have sized your air conditioning system to comply with the latest requirements of the Air Conditioning Contractors Association of America using their Manual “J” (which assumes drapes on all windows, not mini blinds, etc.) as the standard, along with the requirements of the Department of Energy and the specifications of the manufacturer of your equipment.

Your air conditioning system removes humidity first, and then removes the heat from within the home. The more heat and humidity in the home from showers, cooking, windows not covered with drapes (especially on the sunny sides), and activity in the home, the more running time for the air conditioner. As outside temperatures get above 90 degrees, the running time becomes long and off time becomes very short. On 94 to 96 degree-days, the unit will probably run continuously from late morning until late evening with no stops or almost no stops. This is not bad. This is the design criteria and is the most efficient method of cooling. Think of it like cruising at 55 mph on the freeway as compared to stop and go traffic.

Short run time for an air conditioner creates stress to the parts and does very little to remove humidity. Long run times remove the most humidity. Please keep in mind that high humidity even in cool air is uncomfortable.

Once the temperature outside reaches 95 degrees, the temperature inside will start to exceed 75 degrees and will increase at approximately 1.5 degrees for each one (1) degree rise in outside temperature. At 100 degrees outside, you can expect 80 to 84 degrees inside.

Air conditioning systems are sized with factors that include drapes on all windows. Uncovered windows or windows with mini blinds add tremendously to the heat in the home. Mini blinds take the light rays from the sun and convert them to radiated heated waves within the living space. They are solar radiators. They are not acceptable window covering for air-conditioned spaces. We recommend lined drapes or multi-cell pleated shades. Fabric or wood blinds are also acceptable.

Homes with two air conditioning systems must have both systems operating to achieve optimum performance. Having one unit off will not save energy but will cause stress to the other unit and discomfort within the home. The heat that enters the home cannot be removed by a single system when the systems are sized with the combined capacity equal to the required capacity. Running only one system also causes a humidity build-up in the unconditioned area that will deteriorate the structure of the home.

An air conditioning system in the coastal Texas area runs enough hours each year (approximately 2400 hours) to equal the equivalent of your car being driven 132,000 miles (2400 hrs x 55 mph). Would you drive your car that many miles without changing fluid and filters and replacing tires, shocks, etc.? Fortunately, your air conditioning system is designed and installed

Better than that. But, you must take an active role in maintaining your system. Change filters at least once monthly, clean the outdoor unit two or three times each year and have a licensed air conditioning contractor properly service your unit every year. Maintenance is the secret to good performance and longer life.

You are fortunate enough to have purchased a home with a high efficiency air conditioning system. Proper care should be taken to keep it at peak performance. We can provide you with proper maintenance and repairs by factory authorized servicemen. ***We are happy to service your system while under warranty.*** You are covered by a limited warranty. A copy may be obtained by a written request sent to our office. In general, you are covered against defects in material or workmanship for one (1) year. The manufacturer warrants the compressor (part only, no labor or incidentals) for an additional four (4) years. Abuse, damage, acts of God, etc., are not covered. Your new air conditioning system requires an active maintenance effort on your part to reduce the likelihood of damage due to neglect, improper maintenance or abnormal use. We also maintain the system as stated in the “Home of Texas” booklet provided by Gateway Homes. Certain systems we provide have enhanced warranties. Ask your sales counselor to explain your warranty.

Test your air conditioning system early each spring on a warm day. Set the thermostat to “cool” and the temperature to 3 to 5 degrees lower than the actual room temperature. This will allow you to feel if it is cooling. If any repairs are necessary, they can be completed before the hot weather begins.

Set the thermostat to a reasonable comfort level rather than to an exact number. You cannot have maximum energy savings and maximum comfort at the same time. Thermostats are designed with a 3 to 5 degree variation.

In addition, if the outside temperature is 20 degrees higher than the thermostat setting inside your home, do not expect the unit to cycle off. Also, there is lag time in the evening when heat in the attic and walls affects the inside temperature even though the air outside has cooled.

Programmable thermostats - they are helpful in saving energy, but have a number of limitations. In the summer season, the temperature should not be set to rise more than 6 degrees above normal cooling temperature and in no situation should the high setting be above 83 degrees. Allow *at least* two (2) hours for recovery to normal setting. If the “Set Up” temperature is not for at least eight (8) hours, the energy to cool the home down will offset any saving you may have.

Special Notes:

Drain Lines must be cleaned each spring. Check them often. The drain is properly installed if it works the first 30 days of the first cooling season after installation. Mishandling or neglect causes any failure after that time. We recommend that Clorox be poured into the drain each spring, Midsummer, and fall to kill natural algae that forms in drain lines.

Drains Noises are usually not the fault of the air conditioning but originate in the plumber’s pipe at the “P” trap below the batch tub or under a sink. You should insulate the plumber’s “P” trap and overflow pipe if you have drain noise.

Electrostatic Air Filters - We do not recommend them. If you install them in your home you must increase the number of filter grills in your home to at least double the filter area. You can seriously damage your system with electrostatic filters. Air balance cannot be properly completed unless the specified filter area is installed.

Air Balance is the responsibility of the homeowner. We are happy to assist you with instruction on air balance and will have a technician assist you if necessary. All windows must be covered with drapes or insulated shades before air can be balanced. Mini blinds are of no benefit to the temperature in a home. In fact, they convert light energy to radiated heat inside the living area. We discourage their use. A 3-degree variation between rooms is allowed by specifications. It is often necessary to readjust the grills in the ductwork as the seasons change, especially in the two-story homes. Adjust the grill to change air volume. "Air Balance" is just another word for "air flow control" to any room.

Keep the doors to bedrooms open or partially open to allow air to leave the rooms. *Closed doors* prevent air from entering through the duct. Without good airflow the temperature cannot be maintained. Drapes on windows are necessary prior to balancing the air. Turning the thermostat fan switch to "on" will keep air moving in the home, which creates comfort and evens the temperature throughout the conditioned space. It also filters the air better. The fan operates at a lower (economical) speed in the "on" position. It is normal for room temperature to vary by 3 degrees from room to room.

Before you call for service, be sure you have completed the following.

1. Check all operating conditions described above.
2. Be sure your *filter* is clean. This should be checked and cleaned or replaced **every three weeks**. ***ANY SERVICE CALLS MADE THAT ARE FOUND TO BE CAUSED BY A DIRTY FILTER WILL BE BILLED AT OUR REGULAR SERVICE CALL CHARGE.***
3. You ***must*** double the area of your filters if you install Electrostatic Air Filters.
4. Be sure your thermostat is set properly for the desired results. For example, the selector switch should be in the "cool" position and temperature indicator set to desire inside temperature.
5. You can expect a **3** to **5** degree variation in your thermostat. The thermostat keeps the indoor fan running from 1 to 3 minutes after air conditioning or heat cycled off. This increases efficiency and comfort.
6. Do not turn the unit off and on in rapid succession. It could seriously damage your compressor. Wait three (3) minutes before restarting.

7. Check to see if the outside unit is running. If not, turn the thermostat to “off” position and throw your condenser circuit breaker to “off” position. Wait 20 minutes, and then firmly return the breaker to “on” position and the thermostat to “cool” position. This should return your air conditioning unit to normal operation. ***ANY SERVICE CALL THAT IS ONLY A TRIPPED BREAKER WILL BE BILLED A REGULAR SERVICE CALL CHARGE.*** If the compressor is off due to rapid “off/on” of the thermostat, turn the breaker off for two (2) hours before you restart. Breakers are often tripped during thunderstorms. If your unit does not cool after an electrical storm, the breakers are probably off.

You should turn your system off at the thermostat during electrical storms and time of power failure. Wait a minimum of 20 minutes after power returns to normal before turning the thermostat back on.

8. Be sure the ***electrical switch*** to the ***furnace***, near access in attic or closet, is “on”. ***IF THE SERVICE MAN FINDS THIS SWITCH OFF, YOU WILL BE BILLED A REGULAR SERVICE CALL CHARGE.***

If you are unsure about the operation of you’re air conditioning and heating system, please call the appropriate contractor.

Check and clean condenser coil (outside unit) each spring and periodically during the summer to insure it is clean. Be sure the unit is off before cleaning. Trim back grass, weeds and bushes; pick up paper, etc., to keep them from interfering with the airflow. Do not build any obstruction around the unit so that it may operate more efficiently.

Lubricate blower motors each spring and fall for longer life. Use SAE 20W non-detergent oil only.

Do not expect your system to give you adequate performance without running 15 to 20 hours each day, especially in hot weather. This much running time is necessary to keep humidity and temperature under control.

For additional efficiency, ventilate your attic with continuous ridge and soffit vents or electric attic exhaust fans. They are not normally supplied by builders but are an effective means of reducing attic temperatures. Attic temperatures should not exceed 100 to 105 degrees on a hot day (improper or poor venting = 120 to 140 degree attics).

Heating Operations

When fall weather ***first*** appears, open your window and turn the system switch to heat. This will allow you to verify that the heater is working and to “burn off” the dust on the heat exchanger. Do not store any items within three feet of a furnace. If heat does not come on, check to see that the valve on the gas line is open ***and*** the internal gas valve in the furnace is turned to “on”.

Remember when using the *heating system*, the fan does not come on immediately when the thermostat is turned up. It takes time {as much as five (5) minutes} for the heater to reach the temperature necessary to turn the fan on. Also, when you turn the furnace off it must cool before the fan will shut off. The fan will run continually if the fan switch is in the “on” position.

The indoor fan will come on automatically even if no flame is present in the heat exchanger.

The new high efficiency gas furnace has an electronic ignition, which lights the burners each time heat is called for by the thermostat. If there is air in the natural gas line the furnace will attempt to purge the line by three (3) attempts to ignite. It then locks out for one (1) hour. You may override the lock out by switching the thermostat to “off”, and then back to heat. It will make three (3) attempts to ignite each time you override the lockout. Once your home is two (2) years old have your furnace checked by a qualified technician and serviced each fall. A faulty furnace can cause fires. A faulty furnace can kill members of your family. Do not risk lives!!

Visually check your entire system twice each year to see that the equipment and ductwork are intact and no defects are present.

Utility Costs

Your home has a basic cost of electricity for appliances, lighting, TVs, swimming pool pumps, etc. Usually this is \$60.00 to \$90.00 per month in the winter and \$80.00 to \$110.00 of your electrical bill in the summer. You can determine your winter basic cost by averaging December, January and February utility bills. When summer comes, so do the higher utility bills. To give you some criteria so you can anticipate your cooling cost, it is usually about \$50.00 to \$60.00 per month, per ton of air conditioning. The tonnage of air conditioning in your home is sized not on square footage but on total heat gain from all areas with windows and doors having the greatest heat gain. On average, a home with 4 tons of air conditioning would then have a basic cost of approximately \$90.00 base plus 4 tons multiplied by \$60.00 per ton { $90 + (4 \times 60)$ } or \$330.00 per month. A home with 7 tons of air conditioning would then have a basic cost of approximately \$110.00 base plus 7 tons multiplied by \$60.00 per ton { $110 + (7 \times 60)$ } or \$530.00 per month. These are only estimates, will vary with individual use, and are calculated assuming maintaining 78 degrees inside. Utility bills are now very high and getting higher. In an average home, the utility use could go up by over 60% if you attempt to cool your home to 75 degrees as compared to 80 degrees. The means from \$150.00 to \$500.00 per month, or more, extra cost depending on the size of our home.

Gateway Homes Limited Warranty Guidelines

We are not responsible for any utility bills or consequential damages. We are not responsible for inconveniences or damage caused if the system should fail. We will not pay for or accept work done by others not authorized by Gateway Homes, Ltd.

Compressor

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

Coolant

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

Non-emergency

Extreme hot and cold conditions will determine an emergency. Heating and air conditioning contractors in our region respond to air conditioning service requests in the order received.

Alarm System

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

If you chose to have your home pre-wired for an alarm system, you will need to arrange for the final connection after your move-in. The alarm company will demonstrate the system and instruct you in its use. We recommend that you test the system each month.

Appliances

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Manufacturer's Service

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

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

Registration

Mail warranty registration cards directly to the manufacturer.

Gateway Homes Limited Warranty Guidelines

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

Appliance Serial Numbers

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

Closing Date _____

<i>Appliance</i>	<i>Manufacturer</i>	<i>Model #</i>	<i>Serial #</i>	<i>Service Phone #</i>
Range				
Range Hood				
Cook top				
Oven				
Microwave				
Dishwasher				
Disposal				
Refrigerator				
Washer				
Dryer				

Attic Access

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

The attic space is neither designed nor intended for storage. We provide access to this area for maintenance of mechanical equipment that may traverse the attic space. When you perform needed tasks in the attic, use caution and avoid stepping off wood members onto the drywall. This can result in personal injury or damage to the ceiling below. Your limited warranty does not cover such injury or damage. Never allow two people to stand on the attic access at one time.

Gateway Homes Limited Warranty Guidelines

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

Brass Fixtures

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Cleaning

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

Corrosion

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

Polish

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

Tarnish

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

Gateway Homes Limited Warranty Guidelines

During the New Home Orientation we will confirm that brass fixtures are in acceptable condition. Gateway Homes does not warrant against corrosion damage to the external surfaces or internal workings of plumbing fixtures. This limitation includes solid brass or brass-coated fixtures.

Brick

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Efflorescence

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

Tuck-Pointing

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

Weep Holes

You may notice small holes in the mortar along the lower row of bricks. These holes allow moisture that has accumulated behind the brick to escape. Do not fill these weep holes or permit landscaping materials to cover them. Please walk around your home and inspect these once a year to make sure they are clean.

Gateway Homes Limited Warranty Guidelines

We check the brickwork during the New Home Orientation to confirm correct installation of designated materials.

Cabinets

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Cleaning

Products such as lemon oil or polishes that include scratch cover are suggested for wood cabinet care. Follow container directions. Use such products no more than once every 3 to 6 months to avoid excessive build-up. Avoid paraffin-based spray waxes and washing cabinets with water, as both will damage the luster of the finish.

Hinges

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

Moisture

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

Gateway Homes Limited Warranty Guidelines

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

Alignment

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

Operation

Cabinets should operate properly under normal use.

Separations

We will correct gaps between cabinets and the ceiling or cabinets and the walls by caulking or other means if the gap exceeds 3/8 inch (locations behind appliances are accepted from this repair).

Warping

If doors or drawer fronts warp in excess of 3/8 inch, we will correct this by adjustment or replacement.

Wood Grain

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

Carpentry/Framing

Framing or rough carpentry provides the skeletal structure of the home and includes fabrication of wood portions of the floor systems, exterior walls, interior partitions and roof which are built on and supported by the foundation.

The exterior wall framing is designed to support the vertical load from the floors and roof and to resist lateral loads resulting from winds. Interior partitions may or may not be load bearing. The roof is designed to support its own weight plus that of anticipated loads from snow, ice, and wind. The framing is quality controlled by the building codes and subject to building inspection when the entire framed structure can be viewed.

As a natural product, wood will respond to humidity and temperature conditions, which can cause shrinking, twisting or warping of the framing material. Some of these conditions can be controlled or minimized; others are due to the nature of wood itself.

In single-family construction lumber type; grade, span, spacing and load bearing capacities are tightly controlled by code, while the builder uses his own judgment in determining the layout. Hence, the accumulation of tolerances of several inches in overall dimension is not unusual. For example, framing can overhang concrete foundation walls in attempts to square the building.

Gateway Homes Limited Warranty Guidelines

Some floor and stair squeaks are unavoidable. Although Gateway Homes does not warrant against floor squeaks, a reasonable effort will be made to correct them.

Floor Deflection

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

Floor Level

Floors will be level to within 1/4 inch within a 32-inch distance as measured perpendicular to any ridge or indentation.

Plumb Walls

Gateway Homes will correct walls that are out of plumb more than 3/4 inch in an 8-foot distance or walls that are bowed more than 1/4 inch in a 32-inch measurement.

Carpet

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Cleaning

You can add years to the life of your carpet with regular care. Carpet wears out because of foot traffic and dirt particles that get trampled deep into the pile beyond the suction of the vacuum. The dirt particles wear down the fibers like sandpaper and dull the carpet. The most important thing you can do to protect your carpet is to vacuum it frequently.

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

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

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

Burns

Take care of any kind of burn immediately. First, snip off the darkened fibers. Then use a

soapless cleaner, a sponge, and water to clean the area. If the burn is extensive, talk with a professional about replacing the damaged area.

Crushing

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

Fading

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

Filtration

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

Fuzzing

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

Pilling

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

Rippling

With wall-to-wall carpeting, high humidity may cause rippling. If the carpet remains rippled after the humidity has left, have a professional restretch the carpeting using a power stretcher,

not a knee-kicker.

Seams

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

Shading

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

Shedding

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

Snags

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

Sprouting

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

Stains

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

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

Examine both tissue and carpet for dye transfer and check for carpet damage.

Static

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

Gateway Homes Limited Warranty Guidelines

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

Edges

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

Seams

Carpet seams may be visible. Gateway Homes will repair any gaps or fraying.

Caulking

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Colored Caulk

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

Latex Caulk

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

Silicone Caulk

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

Gateway Homes Limited Warranty Guidelines

During the New Home Orientation we confirm that appropriate areas are adequately caulked.

One-Time Repair

Gateway Homes will touch up caulking one time during your materials and workmanship period.

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

Ceramic Tile

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Cleaning

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

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

Grout Discoloration

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

Sealing Grout

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

Separations

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

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

Gateway Homes Limited Warranty Guidelines

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

One-Time Repair

Cracks appearing in grouting of ceramic tiles at joints or junctions with other materials are commonly due to shrinkage. Gateway Homes will repair grouting, if necessary, one time during the first year. We are not responsible for color variations in grout or discontinued colored grout. Any grouting or caulking that is needed after that time is your responsibility.

Concrete Flatwork

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

By maintaining good drainage, you protect your home's foundation.

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

Cleaning

Avoid washing exterior concrete slabs with cold water from an outside faucet when temperatures are high and the sun has been shining on the concrete. The abrupt change in temperature can damage the surface bond of the concrete. We recommend sweeping to keep exterior concrete

clean. If washing is necessary, do this when temperatures are moderate.

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

Cracks

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

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

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

Expansion Joints

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

Heavy Vehicles

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

Chemicals

Protect concrete from abuse by chemical agents such as pet urine, fertilizers, radiator overflow, and repeated hosing. All of these items can cause spalling (chipping of the surface) of concrete.

Sealer

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

Gateway Homes Limited Warranty Guidelines

Flat work is floating—they are not attached to the home's foundation walls. These are not a structural (load-bearing) element of the home and are not covered by the structural warranty. The limited warranty coverage is for one year.

Color

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

Cracks

If concrete cracks reach 3/16 inches in width or vertical displacement, Gateway Homes will patch or repair them one time during the warranty year. Subsequently, concrete slab maintenance is your responsibility.

Finished Floors

Gateway Homes will correct cracks, settling, or heaving that rupture finished floor materials that we installed as part of the home as you originally purchased it.

Level Floors

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

Separation

Gateway Homes will correct separation of concrete slabs from the home if separation exceeds one inch.

Standing Water

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

Countertops

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Use a cutting board to protect your counters when you cut or chop. Protect the counter from heat, especially from extremely hot pans. If you cannot put your hand on it, do not put it on the

counter. Do not use countertops as ironing boards and do not set lit cigarettes on the edge of the counter.

Caulking

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

Cleaning

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

Mats

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

Wax

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

See also Ceramic Tile.

Gateway Homes Limited Warranty Guidelines

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

Laminates

Laminate countertops will have one or more discernible seams. Gateway Homes will repair gaps or differential at the seams that exceed 1/16 inch.

Manufactured Marble

Edges should be smooth and even. Where backsplash joints occur at corners, the top edges should be even within 1/16 inch.

Separation from Wall

Separation of countertops from walls, backsplash, and around sinks results from normal

shrinkage of materials. Gateway Homes will recaulk these areas one time during the materials and workmanship warranty. Subsequently caulking will be your home maintenance responsibility.

Doors and Locks

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Bifold Doors

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

Exterior Finish

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

Failure to Latch

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

Hinges

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

Keys

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

Locks

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

Slamming

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

Shrinkage

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

Sticking

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

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

Warping

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

Weather Stripping

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

Gateway Homes Limited Warranty Guidelines

During the New Home Orientation we confirm that all doors are in acceptable condition and correctly adjusted. Gateway Homes will repair construction damage to doors noted on the New Home Orientation list.

Adjustments

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

Panel Shrinkage

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

Warping

Gateway Homes will repair doors that warp in excess of 1/4 inch.

Electrical Systems

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Breakers

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

Breaker Tripping

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

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

Buzzing

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

Fixture Location

We install light fixtures in the locations indicated on the plans. Moving fixtures to accommodate

specific furniture arrangements or room use is your responsibility.

GFCI (Ground-Fault Circuit-Interrupters)

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

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

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

Grounded System

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

Light Bulbs

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

Modifications

If you wish to make any modifications, contact the electrician listed on the Emergency Phone Numbers you received at your New Home Orientation Meeting. Having another electrician modify your electrical system during the warranty period will void that portion of your warranty.

Outlets

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

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

Underground Cables

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

Gateway Homes Limited Warranty Guidelines

During the New Home Orientation Meeting we confirm that light fixtures are in acceptable condition and that all bulbs are working. Gateway Homes' limited warranty excludes any fixture you supplied.

Designed Load

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

GFCI (Ground-Fault Circuit-Interrupters)

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

Power Surge

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

Expansion and Contraction

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Shrinkage of the wood members of your home is inevitable and occurs in every new home.

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

Gateway Homes Limited Warranty Guidelines

Gateway Homes provides **one-time repairs** to many of the effects of expansion and contraction. See individual categories for details.

Fireplace

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Look upon burning a fire as a luxury that adds much to the atmosphere but just a little to the heat in a home. About 10 percent of the heat produced by a fire is radiated into the house. In many older homes, the air used by the fireplace for combustion is replaced with cold outside air drawn in through cracks around doors and windows. However, your home is constructed so tightly that this does not happen. We install a fresh air vent to supply the fireplace with combustion air and reduce the amount of heated air the fire draws from your house. Open this vent before starting the fire as you do the damper.

Close the damper and cold air vent when not in use. Leaving these open is equivalent to having an open window in the house. If the fire is still burning, but you are finished enjoying it, use glass doors to prevent heated air from being drawn up the chimney until your damper can be closed.

One caution on the use of glass doors: do not close them over a roaring fire, especially if you are burning hard woods (such as oak or hickory) because this could break the glass. Also, when closing the doors over a burning fire, open the mesh screens first. This prevents excessive heat build-up on the mesh, which might result in warping or discoloration.

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

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

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

Chimney Cleaning

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

Spark Arrester

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

Gas Fireplace

Gateway Homes offers direct-vent gas fireplaces. If you ordered this type of fireplace, it is demonstrated during the New Home Orientation. Read and follow all manufacturer directions.

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

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

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

Gateway Homes Limited Warranty Guidelines

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

Chimney Separation

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

Cracks

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

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

Mortar-style fireplaces may develop cracks due to temperature changes and other factors. If a crack is found at the first or second walk orientation, it will be corrected. However, if a crack develops after the home is occupied, it is not warrantable.

Discoloration

Discoloration of the firebox or brick is a normal result of use and requires no corrective action.

Downdraft

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

Glass Doors

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

Water Infiltration

In unusually heavy or prolonged precipitation, **especially when accompanied by high winds, some water can enter the home through the chimney. The limited warranty excludes this occurrence.**

Foundation

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

The foundation of a home transfers all weight and load of the structure of the home to the

ground and is supported by the soil underneath and surrounding it. You, or one of your friends, have probably heard a story or two concerning foundation problems in someone's home. Although it is not important that homeowners understand how a foundation works, it is important to know that a foundation's strength and ability to perform its intended purpose can rely directly on some simple maintenance items that the homeowner can control.

In the Greater Houston area, the soil that supports the foundation shrinks and swells during extreme rainfall and dry weather associated with seasonal changes. In order to reduce the shrinking and swelling of the supporting soils, it is recommended that a homeowner maintain a consistent moisture level around the home. To help you accomplish this, here are some simple guidelines for care and maintenance of your home's foundation:

The grade on your home provides one of the most vital aspects of your foundation's soundness. The grade of the home is intended to direct water away from the slab to the street. You will notice that the slab of your home is exposed around the entire periphery. Grading requirements specify that the slope away from your home is to fall six inches in the first ten feet of runaway from your home. Many homes have only five feet of distance between the home and the side yard property line or fence; therefore, the six inches of fall required has to be established in the five feet available. This is the reason you may see a steep slope on the side of our house.

Swales behind and along both sides of the home are established when a home is completed. These swales are the troughs or ditches you generally see formed around the back and side yards of your home to help direct water away from the slab. The swales need to be maintained in order for water to continue moving away from the foundation. Many new homes do not have grass in the back or side yards when they are first occupied. Subsequently, heavy rainfall will usually cause silt to form in the swales. This silt will need to be removed from the swales to allow proper water flow, and can be used to fill low areas that erode.

It is recommended that you establish your yard in the back and side yards as quickly as possible. Sodding the yard, sprigging the yard, or even spreading grass seed can accomplish this. Ground cover (grass) not only holds your grade and swales intact, but also helps retain moisture in the soil beneath it, giving more consistency to the soil surrounding the foundation. If you sprig your yard, you may want to strip sod areas around your swales to minimize the erosion or silt deposits.

Another consideration for a home's grade is animals. Dogs often dig holes during hot summer days in search of cooler ground. It is important to fill these areas in so that water doesn't pond around your foundation. If the problem persists, there are products on the market that you can spray on your yard to deter dogs from digging.

Cracks

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

cracks are not unusual in foundation walls. Gateway Homes will seal cracks that exceed 1/8 inch in width.

Cosmetic Imperfections

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

Garage Overhead Door

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

30-Weight Oil

Every six months, apply a 30-weight automobile oil or similar lubricant to all moving parts: track, rollers, hinges, pulleys, and springs. At the same time, check to see that all hardware is tight and operating as intended without binding or scraping. Avoid over-lubricating to prevent drips on vehicles or the concrete floor. **Do not use WD-40.**

Lock

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

Opener

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

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

Painting

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

satisfactory appearance.

Safety

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

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

Gateway Homes Limited Warranty Guidelines

The garage door should operate smoothly and with reasonable ease. The door can become misaligned and require adjustment, which Gateway Homes will provide unless the problem is caused by the installation of a garage door opener by an outside supplier after closing on the home.

Light Visible

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

Gas Shut-Off

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Gateway Homes Limited Warranty Guidelines

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

Gas Water Heater

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Condensation

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

Drain Tank

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

Pilot

Never light a gas pilot when the water heater tank is empty. Always turn off the gas before shutting off the cold water supply to the tank.

To light the water heater pilot, first remove the cover panel on the tank to expose the pilot. Then rotate the on-off pilot knob to the pilot position. When the knob is in this position, the red button can be depressed.

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

Reinstall the cover panel and then adjust the temperature setting with the regulating knob on the front of the tank.

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

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

Safety

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

Temperature

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

No Hot Water

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

Gateway Homes Limited Warranty Guidelines

Refer to the manufacturer's limited warranty for information regarding coverage of the water heater. *See also Plumbing.*

Grading and Drainage

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Drainage

Maintain the slopes around your home to permit the water to drain away from the home as rapidly as possible. This is essential to protect your foundation. **Failure to do so can result in major structural damage and will void your warranty.**

Roof Water

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

Rototilling

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

See also Landscaping.

Gateway Homes Limited Warranty Guidelines

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

Backfill Settlement

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

Erosion

Gateway Homes is not responsible for weather-caused damage to unlandscaped yards after the final grade has been established or the closing date, whichever occurs last.

New Sod

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

Recommendations

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

Swales

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

Under Concrete

Gateway Homes will fill visible sunken areas under concrete during the first year.

Winter Grading

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

Gutters and Downspouts

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Extensions or Splash Blocks

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

Ladders

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

Leaks

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

Paint

Gutters and downspouts are color-coordinated to match your home. You should repaint them when you repaint your home.

Gateway Homes Limited Warranty Guidelines

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

Leaks

We correct leaks that occur during the warranty period.

Overflow

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

Standing Water

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

Hardware

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Gateway Homes Limited Warranty Guidelines

We confirm that all hardware is in acceptable condition during your New Home Orientation Meeting. The limited warranty excludes repairs for cosmetic damage subsequent to the New Home Orientation. Gateway Homes will repair hardware items that do not function as intended.

Due to harsh weather conditions in the Houston area, exterior hardware may tarnish and this is excluded from the warranty.

Hardwood Floors

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Cleaning

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

Dimples

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

dimples.

Filmy Appearance

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

Furniture Legs

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

Humidity

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

Mats and Area Rugs

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

Separation

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

See also Warping in this section.

Shoes

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

Spills

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

Splinters

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

Sun Exposure

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

Traffic Paths

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

Warping

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

Wax

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

Gateway Homes Limited Warranty Guidelines

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

Separations

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

Insulation

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

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

Gateway Homes Limited Warranty Guidelines

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

Note: No insulation will be installed on the attic access door.

Landscaping

Lawn Drainage:

The grading of your home site and drainage have been approved and certified by a licensed surveyor. Any alteration of this drainage could nullify your warranty. A few helpful tips are listed below:

- Flowerbeds should not be built above the slab line. In times of heavy rain, water can drain from flowerbeds into the home if the beds are too high. Any water damage caused above these circumstances is not warrantable.
- Tree should not be planted within 5 feet of your home.
- Drainage around your home should run away from the house. After a heavy rain, water may accumulate in the yard and take as long as 24 hours to drain away. It may take as long 72 hours in the swales.

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Additions

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

Bark or Rock Beds

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

Contractors

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

Irrigation

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

Planning

Locate plants and irrigation heads out of the way of pedestrian or bicycle traffic and car bumpers.

Space groves of trees or single trees to allow for efficient mowing and growth. Group plants with similar water, sun, and space requirements together.

Utility Lines

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

Waiting to Landscape

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

Mildew

Gateway Homes Limited Warranty Guidelines

We will remove any mildew noted during your New Home Orientation Meeting. Gateway Homes' warranty excludes mildew. Mildew is the visible result of a type of fungus

growth. All fungi propagate microscopic spores, which float through the air and after landing on a hospitable surface, germinate. Fungi feed on organic matter – wood, paper, leather plastic, or paint to mention a few – and in the process, decompose and eventually destroy the surface on which they are growing. Mildew will also feed on superficial films of dirt, grease or other organic matter frequently found on inorganic surfaces such as metal or porcelain enamel. Often, mildew is thought to be growing on paint, but is actually growing on a surface film which has collected on the paint, instead of on the paint film itself.

There are many species of molding differing in color, growth habits and other characteristics. They develop in warm humid or shady locations. Many species of mildew (mold) are black and are frequently confused with dirt. To identify mildew, dampen a cloth or sponge with common household bleach and apply it to the discolored surface. If the bleach causes the surface to lose its dark appearance, mildew is probably growing on the surface. If the surface retains its color, dirt collection is the likelier contaminate. In either case, when there is extensive discoloration, a good cleaning is in order.

The recommended method of removing the mildew is to scrub the affected area with a household bleach and detergent solution, mixed as follow:

1 quart	Jomax
1 gallon	5% sodium hypo chlorite (Clorox or Purex, for example)
3 gallons	Warm Water

There are many prepared mildew removers available in the market. Jomax is probably the most popular and, in our opinion, the most effective. These chemicals are usually concentrated and easy to mix. Follow the package instructions, mixing the water and bleach first and adding the concentrate last. Treatment material should be applied with a low-pressure sprayer (e.g. Hudson, plastic type). High-pressure application is not required.

Usually, the discoloration will disappear in a few minutes. In severe cases, additional applications may be required. Remember, chlorine bleach kills existing mildew but does not prevent future contamination and growth. After all traces of discoloration have vanished, **RINSE THE AREA THOROUGHLY.**

Our paints are formulated for the Texas climate and contain a high level of mildewcide. However, there is no guarantee that mildew will not appear if the conditions are favorable for its growth. Because mildew is not caused by paint, we cannot be responsible for damage or unsightly appearance resulting from mildew growth on our products.

Mirrors

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Gateway Homes Limited Warranty Guidelines

We will confirm that all mirrors are in acceptable condition during the New Home Orientation Meeting. Gateway Homes will correct scratches, chips, or other damage to mirrors noted during the New Home Orientation.

Paint and Stain

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Colors

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

Exterior

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

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

Avoid having sprinklers spray water on the exterior walls of your home. This will cause blistering, peeling, splintering, and other damage to the home.

Severe Weather

Hail and wind can cause a great deal of damage in a severe storm, so inspect the house after such

weather. Promptly report damage caused by severe weather to your insurance company.

Stain

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

Touch-Up

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

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

Wall Cracks

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

See also Sheetrock/Drywall.

Gateway Homes Limited Warranty Guidelines

During your New Home Orientation Meeting we will confirm that all painted or stained surfaces are in acceptable condition. Gateway Homes will touch up paint as indicated on the New Home Orientation list. You are responsible for all subsequent touch-up, except painting we perform as part of another warranty repair.

Cracking

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

Fading

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

Touch-Up Visible

Paint touch-up is visible under certain lighting conditions.

Wood Grain

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

Phone Jacks

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Gateway Homes Limited Warranty Guidelines

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

Plumbing

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

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

Aerators

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

See also dripping Faucet in this section.

Cleaning

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

Clogs

The main causes of toilet clogs are domestic items such as disposable diapers, excessive amounts of toilet paper, sanitary supplies, Q-tips, dental floss, and children's toys. Improper garbage disposal use also causes many plumbing clogs. Always use plenty of cold water when running the disposal. This recommendation also applies to grease; supplied with a steady flow of cold water, the grease congeals and is cut up by the blades. If you use hot water, the grease remains a liquid, then cools and solidifies in the sewer line. Allow the water to run 10 to 15 seconds after shutting off the disposal.

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

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

Dripping Faucet

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

Extended Absence

If you plan to be away for an extended period, you should drain your water supply lines. To do this, shut off the main supply line and open the faucets to relieve pressure in the lines. If you

leave the water heater tank full, keep the pilot on and set the temperature to the lowest or "vacation" setting. Check manufacturer's directions for additional hints and instructions.

Freezing Pipes

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

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

Gold or Brass Finish

Avoid using any abrasive cleaners on gold or antique brass fixtures. Use only mild detergent and water or a cleaning product recommended by the manufacturer. **Polished brass fixtures will dull with normal usage.**

Leaks

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

Low Pressure

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

Marble or Manufactured Marble

Marble and manufactured marble will not chip as readily as porcelain enamel but can be damaged by a sharp blow. Avoid abrasive cleansers or razor blades on manufactured marble; both damage the surface. Always mix hot and cold water at manufactured marble sinks; running only hot water can damage the sink. Car wax is also a good product to use for this type of maintenance.

Outside Faucets

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

Porcelain

You can damage porcelain enamel with a sharp blow from a heavy object or by scratching. If you splatter paint onto the porcelain enamel surfaces during redecorating, wipe it up immediately. If a spot dries before you notice it, use a recommended solvent.

Running Toilet

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

Shut-Off

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

Sprinklers

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

Stainless Steel

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

Tank Care

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

Gateway Homes Limited Warranty Guidelines

During the New Home Orientation we will confirm that all plumbing fixtures are in acceptable

condition and that all faucets and drains operate freely. Gateway Homes will correct clogged drains that occur during the first 72 hours after closing. If a household item is removed from a clogged drain during this time, we will bill you for the drain service. After the first 72 hours, you are responsible for correcting clogged drains.

Cosmetic Damage

Gateway Homes will correct any fixture damage noted on the New Home Orientation list. Repairing chips, scratches, or other surface damage noted subsequent to the New Home list is your responsibility.

Freezing Pipes

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

Leaks

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

Noise

Changes in temperature or the flow of the water itself will cause some noise in the pipes. This is normal and requires no repair. Gateway Homes will repair persistent water hammer. Expect temperatures to vary if water is used in more than one location in the home.

Roof

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Clean Gutters

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

Leaks

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

Limit Walking

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

Severe Weather

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

Gateway Homes Limited Warranty Guidelines

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

Ice Build-Up

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

Inclement Weather

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

Sheetrock/Drywall

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Repairs

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

done when you redecorate the room.

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

Gateway Homes Limited Warranty Guidelines

During the New Home Orientation Meeting, we confirm that drywall surfaces are in acceptable condition. One time during the materials and workmanship warranty, Gateway Homes will repair drywall shrinkage cracks and nail pops and touch-up the repaired area using the same paint color that was on the surface when the home was delivered. Touch-ups will be visible.

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

Lighting Conditions

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

Related Warranty Repairs

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

Siding

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

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

See also Paint and Wood Trim.

Gateway Homes Limited Warranty Guidelines

Gateway Homes will caulk and apply touch-up paint to cracks that exceed 3/16 inch. We provide this repair one time only near the end of the first year. Paint or stain touch-up will not match.

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

Smoke Detectors

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Cleaning

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

Gateway Homes Limited Warranty Guidelines

Gateway Homes does not represent that the smoke detectors will provide the protection for which they are installed or intended. We will test smoke detectors during the New Home Orientation to confirm that they are working and to familiarize you with the alarm. If they start chirping, please check the battery. **You are responsible for battery replacement.** You are also responsible for obtaining fire insurance.

Stairs

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Gateway Homes Limited Warranty Guidelines

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

Ventilation

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

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

Your daily habits can help keep your home well ventilated:

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

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

Gateway Homes Limited Warranty Guidelines

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

Vinyl Flooring

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Although vinyl floors are designed for minimum care, they do have maintenance needs. Follow any manufacturer's specific recommendations for care and cleaning. Some vinyl floors require regular application of a good floor finish. This assures you of retaining a high gloss. However,

avoid using cleaning or finishing agents on the new floor until the adhesive has thoroughly set. This will take about two weeks.

Color and Pattern

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

Limit Water

Wipe up spills and vacuum crumbs instead of washing vinyl floors frequently with water. Limit mopping or washing with water; excessive amounts of water on vinyl floors can penetrate seams and get under edges, causing the material to lift and curl. Do not use rubber-backed rugs because they trap moisture and will cause the floor to discolor and stain.

Moving Furniture

Moving appliances across vinyl floor covering can result in tears and wrinkles. It is recommended to use coasters or felt pads under furniture legs to prevent damage. If you damage the vinyl flooring, you can have it successfully patched by professionals.

No Wax

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

Raised Nail Heads

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

Seams

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

Gateway Homes Limited Warranty Guidelines

We will confirm that vinyl floor covering is in acceptable condition during your New Home Orientation Meeting. Gateway Homes' limited warranty does not cover damage to vinyl floors

caused by moving furniture or appliances into the home. We can assist you in contacting professionals who can repair such damage if it occurs in your home. Gateway Homes is not responsible for discontinued selections.

Adhesion

Vinyl floor covering should adhere. Gateway Homes will repair lifting or bubbling and nail pops that appear on the surface.

Ridges

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

Seams

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

Water Heater

Homeowner Care and Maintenance

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

Drain Tank

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

Element Cleaning or Replacement

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

No Hot Water

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

Pressure Relief Valve

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

Safety

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

Temperature

Temperature settings on a gas water heater will produce approximately the temperatures listed below:

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

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

Gateway Homes Limited Warranty

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

Windows, Screens, and Patio Doors

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Cleaning

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

Condensation

Condensation on interior surfaces of the window and frame is the result of high humidity within the home and low outside temperatures. Your family's lifestyle controls the humidity level within your home. If your home includes a humidifier, closely observe the manufacturer's directions for its use. **Gateway Homes provides no corrective measure for this condition.**

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

Please refer to Condensation Letter and Home of Texas Limited Warranty.

Door Locks

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

Door Tracks

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

Invisible Glass

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

Sticking Windows

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

Storing Screens

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

Weep Holes

In heavy rains, water may collect in the bottom channel of window frames. Weep holes are provided to allow excess water to escape to the outside. Keep the bottom window channels and weep holes free of dirt and debris for proper operation.

Gateway Homes Limited Warranty Guidelines

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

Infiltration

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

Scratches

Gateway Homes confirms that all window glass is in acceptable condition at your New Home Orientation Meeting. Minor scratches on windows can result from delivery, handling, and other construction activities. Gateway Home will replace windows that have scratches readily visible from a distance of 4 feet away from the window. Gateway Homes does not replace windows that have scratches visible only under certain lighting conditions.

Tinting

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

See also Ventilation.

Wood Trim

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Shrinkage may also cause a piece of trim to pull away from the wall. If this occurs, drive in

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

See also Expansion and Contraction.

Gateway Homes Limited Warranty Guidelines

During your New Home Orientation we will confirm that wood trim is in acceptable condition. Minor imperfections in wood materials will be visible and will require no action. Gateway Homes will correct readily noticeable construction damage such as chips and gouges listed during the New Home Orientation.

Exterior

Gateway Homes will caulk and apply touch-up paint to cracks in exterior trim components that exceed 3/8 inch. ***We provide this repair one time only near the end of the first year.*** Paint or stain touch-up will not match. We will correct any separation at joints that allows water to enter the home.

Raised Grain

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

Sample Maintenance Schedule

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

ITEM	MONTHLY	QUARTERLY	SEMIANNUALLY	ANNUALLY	COMMENT

Reporting Warranty Items

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

Appliances Contact the manufacturer directly with model and serial number, closing date, and description of problem. See page 40.

Emergency During our business hours (Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m.), call our main office, (713) 622-3737. Emergency requests are the only requests accepted by phone. See page 34.

After business hours or on weekends or holidays, contact the appropriate contractor or utility company directly using the emergency numbers you receive at your New Home Orientation Meeting.

Non-emergency Gateway Homes would like to assist in making owning your home an enjoyable experience. To better assist you, we ask that you gather all concerns you may have. Simply put them in writing and mail to our Customer Service Department at the address listed below, or fax your request to our Warranty Department at 713-622-3642 or e-mail them to warranty@gatewayhomes.com. You can find a service request form on page 99 of this manual or you can request more by calling our office at 713-622-3737.

Gateway Homes, Ltd.
P.O. Box 27943
Houston, Texas 77227-7943

Storm damage or other natural disaster Contact your homeowner's insurance agent immediately. Contain damage as much as possible without endangering yourself. In extreme situations, photograph the damage.

Hours Office: Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. until 4:30 p.m.
Inspection appointments: Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. until 3:30 p.m.
Work appointments: Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. until 3:30 p.m.

Questions? Call the main office during normal business hours, 713- 622-3737.

Non-Warrantable Items Please call the appropriate contractor for any manufacturing information.

Emergency Service

There are two basic types of service requests for your new home: Emergency Service and Non-emergency Service. In either event, we will be happy to help you in any way we can. Emergency situations, because they need immediate attention, will be handled most effectively if you, the homeowner, follow the guidelines below and contact the appropriate company to address the situation. This will enable you to handle the situation in the event Gateway Homes' office is closed, or our construction staff is temporarily away from their offices. Please follow up by notifying Gateway Homes main office at (713) 622-3737 of your emergency situation, or fax a request for warranty service to our Customer Service Department at (713) 622-3642 or e-mail your request to warranty@gatewayhomes.com. A Customer Service Coordinator will be happy to assist you.

Simply put, emergency situations are those that affect your ability to live in your home safely and comfortably.

Examples of emergency situations would include:

- Loss of electricity
- Major plumbing leaks
- Smell of gas inside or outside the home
- Water damage
- Loss of heating in the winter or air-conditioning in the summer

During your New Home Orientation Meeting, you will be given a list of important telephone numbers. This list provides the names of utility companies that service your community and the companies that handle emergency situations like those mentioned above. Certainly, we hope you never encounter any of these situations. If, however, you do, follow the guidelines below, then contact the appropriate company so the situation can be handled immediately.

LOSS OF ELECTRICITY

1. Check your breaker box first. The breaker box is located outside your home and was pointed out during your New Home Orientation Meeting. Flip all breakers to off, and then one by one (main breaker first), turn each one back on. If your power is not restored, call your electric company for further assistance.
2. If you notice the power is off in the surrounding area, call your electric company to report the situation.
3. If your underground service has been cut, Gateway Homes is responsible only if one of our subcontractors was responsible for the digging that led to a line being cut. Your electric company would be responsible if they were responsible for the digging that led to a line being cut. If you or a neighbor needs to dig in your yard, you must call the utility coordinating committee so they can mark utility line locations and help you avoid potentially dangerous and inconvenient situations.

4. In some instances your electric company may need to run an over ground emergency cable to temporarily connect electricity to your residence. There may be a fee for this service, and the electric company will request you be at home to sign for the service at the time it is connected.
5. If both the oven and the cook top are not working. You can call the appliance company listed in your important phone numbers. If, however, either the oven or the cook top is operable this is not considered an emergency and should be reported to our offices as soon as possible. Dishwashers, garbage disposals, individual light fixtures and individual electric outlets that may not work should also be reported to our offices as soon as possible. Dishwashers, garbage disposals, individual light fixtures and individual electric outlets that may not work should also be reported to our office as soon as possible. Our office number is (713) 622-3737, we'll be here to assist you in any way we can.

PLUMBING LEAKS:

1. **In case of a major plumbing leak, first try to turn off the water at the cut off valve on the leaking fixture.** These valves were pointed out to you during your New Home Orientation Meeting. If the water does not stop, or if you cannot find the cut off valve, you can turn off the water at the main water valve located outside your house. The main valve is the one that comes out of the ground and goes into your house. This valve was also pointed out during your New Home Orientation Meeting. It is important that these steps be taken to prevent further damage due to the leaking water.
2. A slow drip is not an emergency. Use a receptacle (bucket, pots or pans, etc.) to catch water until the next business day, at which time you should report the drip to our office as soon as possible.
3. If all commodes are not working, this is an emergency and should be immediately reported to the plumbing company designated on your phone list. If at least one commode is working, continue to use that commode and call our office as soon as possible. The same applies to tubs, showers, vanities and sinks.
4. As per your homeowner's warranty, **the builder is not responsible for secondary damages, so the homeowner is advised to protect all personal belongings and other items in the home in the event of a leak.**
5. Remember that an unknown source of leaking water could be a roof or flashing leak. Not much can be done when these types of leaks are discovered except protecting other items in the home until the source of the leak can be identified and repaired. ***A PLUMBER WILL CHARGE FOR A SERVICE TRIP IF THE LEAK IS NOT DUE TO A PLUMBING DEFECT.***

6. Frozen pipes are the responsibility of the homeowner. If the pipes are frozen, you should not leave the house unattended or you should turn off the main water supply. The pipes may not leak until thawed, usually midday, and then tremendous damage could result if the water were left on.
7. To help prevent the pipes from freezing, we suggest that several faucets be left partially open to keep the water moving during freezing weather, alternating from cold to hot water. Usually, cutting of the main supply and draining the pipes does not remove all the water and pipes can still burst.

WATER DAMAGE:

Be careful of electrical shock. If possible, turn off the source of the problem, either at the fixture or at the main valve. Wet carpet should be pulled up and propped up to air out. Wet padding should be thrown away. Other items should be moved or protected to prevent further damage. You should report this to the main office at 713-622-3737 as soon as possible.

AIR CONDITIONING & HEATING SYSTEM MALFUNCTION:

1. Check your breaker box first. If this does not restore operation to your air conditioner, then check the A/C cutoff switch located above your condenser unit outside your home.
2. If other electrical problems also exist at the time your air conditioner or heating unit is not working, the problem is most likely an electrical one. For instance, if your air conditioning is not working and you notice your oven is also not working. In this case you should contact your electric company.
3. Examples of emergency situations regarding your air conditioning and heating would be: air conditioning not working during extremely hot weather or heating not working during extremely cold weather. In cases where your air conditioning or heating stop working during mild temperatures, every effort will be made to correct the problem as soon as possible.
4. If extreme weather conditions exist and you must leave your home, you should protect your home from freezing pipes if the heating unit is not working in winter. In the summer, turn off the air conditioner to prevent damage to your compressor.

SOME OTHER CASES AND REQUIRED ACTIONS:

FIRE: Call the Fire Department at 911. If time permits, call the Police Department or Sheriff's Department. It would also help if the main electrical breaker could be turned off at this time.

Kitchen Appliance Warranties

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

Service Processing Procedures

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

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

When we receive a warranty service request, we will contact you for an inspection appointment within 48 hours. Warranty inspection appointments are available Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. We inspect the items listed in your written request to confirm warranty coverage and determine appropriate action. Generally reported items fall into one of these categories:

- Trade contractor item
- Home maintenance item

If a trade contractor or an in house employee is required to complete the repairs, a Customer Service Coordinator will contact you to set up an initial inspection after your request is received. At the time the initial inspection is completed, the Customer Service Coordinator and the homeowner will agree upon a scheduled date for all warrantable repairs. Please allow at least three days notice for the Customer Service Coordinator to schedule the work with the appropriate contractors. **Warranty work appointments are available Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.** We intend to complete Warranty Requests within 14 workdays of the inspection unless you are unavailable for access. If a back-ordered part or similar circumstance causes a delay, we will let you know.

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