

Warranty/Customer Service and Caring for Your Home

(Warranties extended by WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® are for the original homeowner ONLY)

(This section will also detail standards for construction quality compiled from The Residential Construction Performance Guidelines published by The National Association of Homebuilders. We have underlined those passages to make reference easier)

Our limited warranty program offers a bumper-bumper 1-year warranty consistent with the details described in this warranty and service book. We will warranty your home for major structural failure of the foundation and framing members for the first 10 years. This is of course for the original homeowner only.

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

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

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Many times a minor adjustment or repair done immediately saves a more serious, time-consuming, and sometimes costly repair later. Note also that neglect of routine maintenance can void applicable limited warranty coverage on all or part of your home. By caring for your new

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual

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 WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® 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 interests to be apprised of such coverages.

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, WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® provides you with a 1 year limited 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 for all homeowners.

You can purchase a limited warranty available from companies that sell warranties on new homes. This is an option. If you have any questions regarding the standards or procedures, contact our office.

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual

*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-(How to go about getting repair and adjustments)

All service requests should be put in writing and mailed to our office or faxed to (210) 497-6950. You may also e-mail to WARRANTY@WHITESTONEHOMES.COM **DO NOT DROP OFF REQUEST TO THE SALES OR CONSTRUCTION OFFICE.** Do not drop off requests to the sales office. They need to go to our main office so that we can track the progress of your request. Your sales person or your Construction Manager will usually want to take the call for you, or fax it for you. Do not let them. They are in the habit of trying to please our customers, and want to comply even though they know it is against company policy. Generally, the customer service claim you drop off never gets into our system, and may never get 100% complete if you do drop it off. The reason is because the call is not entered into our system and tracked. We will keep a new call open until it is signed off as complete by you. If the Builder takes it he/she will take care of all the major items and may never get around to the minor ones.

Emergency Service

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

- Total loss of heat when the outside temperature is below 45 degrees F.
- Total loss of A/C when the outside air temperature is above 95 degrees F.
- Total loss of electricity. (Check with the utility company before reporting this circumstance to WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® or electrician.)
- Total loss of water. (Check with the water department to be certain the problem is not a general outage in the area.)
- Plumbing leak that requires the entire water supply to be shut off.
- Gas leak. (Contact your utility company or plumber if the leak is at the furnace or water heater supply lines.)

During business hours, call WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® office:

(210) 497- 4334

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

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual

Other Warranty Service

If you wish to initiate non-emergency warranty service between closing and year-end report, you are welcome to do so by sending in a service request form or writing a letter. We will handle these requests according to procedures. Please put your address and phone number you would like to be contacted at on your request.

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.

Warranty/Customer Service Claim Processing Procedures

Access: Gaining access is the one most important elements in resolving Service Claims. We would like to ask for a key to gain access to your home. Even if you have someone at home most of the time, a key access is the best way to resolve your claim as soon as possible. With a key, a member of our staff will be with any and every subcontractor that works in your home while they are there. We understand that you may not want to lend us a key. That is OK. However, we cannot tell you how long the resolution of your call will take *without it*.

FAQ'S

Question: Will trades people and vendors show up on time?

Answer: NO!

Question: Why is that?? That makes no sense! How do they stay in business? In my line of work that would not be tolerated, they would be fired or at least eliminated.

Answer: No one in the homebuilding business uses employees to build their homes. The cost would be prohibitive. It doesn't matter if you are building a home costing \$250,000 or \$10,000,000, all builders use subcontractors. Much of it has to do with the cyclical nature of the construction business. Therefore, our homes are built using 100% subcontractor labor and material. We depend on these separate companies to work on our warranty claims. Most of the time, the subcontractor who did the original construction will do the warranty work. They are separate businesses, and control their own schedules for the most part. If you stay home and wait for a contractor to come at a specific time, you have about a

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual
50% chance of that sub coming within 2 hours of the time he said he would get there. Getting in to your home is the only way we can fix warranty items.

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

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

When we receive a warranty service request, we may contact you for an inspection appointment. Warranty inspection appointments are available Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. We inspect the items listed in your written request to confirm warranty coverage and determine appropriate action.

Generally reported items fall into one of three categories:

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

If a trade contractor or an in-house employee is required to complete repairs, we issue a warranty work order and the repair technician contacts you to schedule the work. Warranty work appointments are available Monday through Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. We intend to complete warranty work orders within 30 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. WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® does not provide routine home maintenance.

Reporting Warranty Items

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

Appliances Contact the manufacturer directly with model and serial number, closing date, and description of problem. See page 73.

Emergency During our business hours (Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. until 5 p.m.), call our main office, (210) 497- 4334. See page 65.
After business hours or on weekends or holidays, contact the trade or appropriate utility company directly using the emergency numbers you receive.

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual

Nonemergency Mail or fax your written list of items to our office. Please include your phone number. You can find service request forms at the end of this manual or you can request more by calling our office:

**3619 Paesano's Pkwy, Suite 214
Shavano Park, Texas 78231
Fax (210) 497-6950**

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 through Friday, 8 a.m. until 5 p.m.
Inspection appointments:	Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. until 4 p.m.
Work appointments:	Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. until 4 p.m.

Questions? Call the main office during normal business hours, (210) 497- 4334

Air Conditioning

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Note: If you're A/C stops working, it could be due to clogged filters. This will cause the A/C to blow a capacitor or freeze up. If you have a slight leak in a ceiling area, it is probably a clogged primary drain line. You have to clear the line with either compressed air and or bleach to kill the mold. You must pour bleach down the primary line every 6 months. This is a ¾" PVC line that comes out of the bottom of the attic unit. It has a "T" vertical allowing you to pour the bleach in. These two issues are the primary source of A/C problems.

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

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

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

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

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

If evening cooling is your primary goal, set the thermostat at a moderate temperature in the morning while the house is cooler, allowing the system to maintain the cooler temperature. The temperature setting may then be lowered slightly when you arrive home, with better results. Once the system is operating, setting the thermostat at 60 degrees will *not* cool the home any

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual

faster and can result in the unit freezing up and not performing at all. Extended use under these conditions can damage the unit.

Adjust Vents

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

Compressor Level

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

See also Grading and Drainage.

Humidifier

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

Manufacturer's Instructions

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

Temperature Variations

Temperatures may vary from room to room by several degrees F. The standard acceptable variance is 3 degrees. This is due to such variables as floor plan, orientation of the home on the lot, type and use of window coverings, and traffic through the home.

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

Coolant

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

Condensation Line Clogs

These lines will eventually clog under normal use. We will provide clear lines at the completion of the job. It is the homeowner's responsibility to maintain clog free lines. See note at beginning of this section.

Air Condition Filters

Replace all return air filters in your home every six months. During extremely hot weather, your filter should be checked every month and replaced if clogged. During hot weather, your system is running all day and most of the night. This means your system is potentially clogging the filter 3 times as fast as it normally would. Take your filters out of the receptacle and take them to the supply store to insure proper fit. Buy two filters the first time you purchase filters. That way you can replace your filter and take the old one as a guide to buy new filters.

Non-emergency

Lack of air conditioning service when temperatures are below 95 degrees is not an emergency. Heating and air conditioning contractors in our region respond to air conditioning service requests in the order received.

Alarm System (If installed)

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

If your home selections included pre-wire for an alarm system, you will arrange for the final connection after your move-in. The Alarm Company will demonstrate the system and instruct you in its use. We recommend that you test the system each month. You must get a permit number from the city to avoid fines if the alarm sounds and police respond. The alarm company will instruct you on the application for the request of the permit number.

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® will correct wiring that does not perform as intended for the alarm system.

Appliances

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual

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.

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

Appliance Serial Numbers

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

Closing Date

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

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.

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® and the local building department inspect the attic before your closing to confirm insulation is correct. The city generally depends on a certification from the insulation company for your blown insulation.

Brass Fixtures

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

The manufacturer treats brass fixtures with a clear protective coating, electro statically applied, to provide beauty and durability. These fixtures are not solid brass. 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. During the orientation we will confirm that brass fixtures are in acceptable condition. WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® 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. Acme Brick Company carries a variety of cleaners for many types of cosmetic brick issues.

Tuck-Pointing

After several years, face brick may require tuck-pointing (repairing the mortar between the bricks). Shrinkage and non-structural settling can occur. Tuck Pointing can fill these areas. Matching the mortar can be a challenge. Over time and good point up job will match as the sun bleaches the repair. This is the homeowner's responsibility. 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. You can use steel wool to fill the hole to slow bugs coming into your home. Be sure that you do not fill it up enough to cause a water damp. Bug problems are Homeowner Maintenance.

We check the brickwork during the orientation to confirm correct installation of designated materials.

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual

Cracks

One time during the warranty period, we repair masonry cracks that exceed 3/16 inch. Due to exact mix and age, the repairs can have a slight color variation. Small hairline cracks resulting from shrinkage are common to mortar construction.

Cut Bricks

Bricks that the mason cuts to form rowlocks, etc, will vary in thickness. They should not vary in thickness by more the 1/4". The smallest dimension of a cut brick should be greater than 1".

Straightness

No point along the bottom of any course shall be more than 1/4" higher or lower than any other point within 10 feet along the bottom of the same course.

Mortar Stain

Exterior brick and stone shall be free from mortar stains detracting from the appearance of the finished wall when viewed from a distance of 20' feet. Brick like many exterior finishes is not meant to hold up to the scrutiny that you would a piece of furniture or trim. Therefore quality of a finished wall is to be viewed at 20'

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. Closed grain takes less stain, knots take less, and open grain takes more stain.

Cleaning

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

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual

Hinges

If hinges catch or drawer glides become sluggish, a small amount of silicone lubricant will improve their performance. They will also need tightening over time. Most Hinges are tightened with Philips head screws. A simple turn of a screwdriver will improve most problems.

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.

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

Alignment

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

Operation

Cabinets should operate properly under normal use.

Separations

We will correct gaps between cabinets and the ceiling or cabinets and the walls by caulking or other means if the gap exceeds 1/4 inch (locations behind appliances are exempted from this repair). We will repair the gap with caulk, putty, or scribe moldings, or we will reposition the cabinet/reinstall cabs to meet the performance guidelines. If the cabinets do not line up at corners by more than 3/16th of an inch or if the cabinet faces are out of line by 1/8th of an inch we will adjust to meet industry standards.

Warping

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

Wood Grain

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

Carpet

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Your selection sheets provide a record of the brand, style, and color of floor coverings in your home. Please retain this information for future reference. Refer to the various 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 clean stains immediately. For best results, blot or dab any spill or stain; avoid rubbing. Test stain removers on an out-of-the-way area of the carpet, such as in a closet, to check for any undesirable effects. Have your carpet professionally cleaned regularly, usually once a year. Some problem conditions that may occur with your new carpet and our suggested remedies are presented below.

Burns

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

Crushing

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

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual

Fading

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

Filtration

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

Fuzzing

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

Pilling

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

Rippling

With wall-to-wall carpeting, high humidity may cause rippling. If the carpet remains rippled after the humidity has left, have a professional re-stretch 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.

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual

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.

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual

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

Edges

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

Seams

Carpet seams will be visible. WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® 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. It is the homeowner's responsibility for inspecting caulked areas that need re-caulking or replacing existing caulking.

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 pure silicone will not accept paint; it works best where water is present, for example, where tub meets tile or a sink meets a countertop. During the orientation we confirm that appropriate areas are adequately caulked.

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

Ceramic Tile

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Cleaning

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

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

Grout Discoloration

Clean grout that becomes yellowed or stained with a fiber brush, cleanser, and water. Grout cleansers and whiteners are available at most hardware stores. Any color variation that is readily visible from a distance of 6 feet under normal lighting conditions is unacceptable.

Sealing Grout

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

Separations

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

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

During the orientation we confirm that tile and grout areas are in acceptable condition. We will repair or replace cracked, badly chipped, or loose tiles noted at that time. WhiteStone Custom

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual

Homes, Ltd.® is not responsible for variations in color or discontinued patterns. New grout may vary in color from the original.

It is very important that you inspect the caulking in your showers and tubs. Water can get behind the walls and cause extended damage. Some caulk last a long time and some caulk cracks within the first few months. The reason this occurs has to do with shrinkage of the items surrounding the tile areas. So, be watchful for areas that may crack in these wet areas. If within the first year, we will send someone to re-caulk or re-grout these areas as soon as possible. Please, discontinue using these areas until the repairs have been made.

Concrete Flatwork (Drives & Walks)

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

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

Movement of the slab or any concrete slab results in cracking. Minimize this movement by following WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® landscaping recommendations, the objective of which is to prevent moisture from reaching soils around and under the home.

The flatwork on your home is poured and hand leveled and finished. If it is an exposed aggregate (Pebble Finish) product, the finisher will wash off the top layer of cement to expose the aggregate. Exposed aggregate concrete is ordered differently than regular cement finished concrete. We typically order 5/8" rock. This means the majority of the aggregate is of that size. The finish will not be completely uniform. This is another case in building where there is more art than science to the finish of the work. You can expect that the finish will be more or less the same; but it will not be perfectly symmetrical.

Cleaning

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

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

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual

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. WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® does not warrant against cracks in flatwork.

If concrete cracks reach 3/16 inches in width or vertical displacement, WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® will patch or repair them one time during the warranty year. Subsequently, concrete slab maintenance is your responsibility. If you prefer to have the slab replaced, we will obtain a price for you and assist in scheduling the work upon receipt of your payment. However, we advise against this expense since the new slab will crack as well.

Expansion Joints

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

Heavy Vehicles

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

Ice and Chemicals

Remove ice and snow from concrete slabs as promptly as possible after ice storms. Protect concrete from abuse by chemical agents such as pet urine, fertilizers, radiator overflow, repeated hosing, or de-icing agents, such as road salt that can drip from vehicles. All of these items can cause spalling (chipping of the surface) of concrete.

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual

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.

Concrete slabs are floating—they are not attached to the home's foundation walls. These are not a structural (load-bearing) element of the home and are not covered by the structural warranty. The limited warranty coverage is for one year unless the requirements of your loan state otherwise.

Color

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

Finished Floors

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® will correct cracks, settling, or heaving that rupture finish floor materials that we installed as part of the home as you originally purchased it during the first year.

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

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® will correct separation of concrete slabs from the home if separation exceeds one inch.

Settling or Heaving

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® will repair flatwork that settle or heave in excess of 1 inch or if such movement results in negative drainage (toward the house) or hazardous vertical displacement.

Spalling (Surface Chips)

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

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual

Standing Water

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

Condensation

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

See also Ventilation.

Condensation results from a family's lifestyle and WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® has no control over this. The limited warranty coverage excludes condensation. Windows will collect condensation on their interior surfaces when extreme temperature differences and high humidity levels occur.

Countertops

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Caulking

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

Cleaning

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

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual

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.

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

Laminates

Laminated countertops will have one or more discernible seams. WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® 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.

Granite and Marble Natural

Granite countertops are surprisingly resilient to stains, and practically impossible to scratch. But, as a preventative measure, wipe up any spills on the countertops within a reasonable amount of time. Don't let liquid sit on countertops overnight. Granite is most prone to staining by oil and acid, so blot these spills up soon after they happen and then clean the stone with mild soap and water.

Marble countertops and tabletops are easily stained by acidic foods like fruit, tomato sauce, coffee, and wine. Blot, do not wipe, any spills up immediately, and then clean with mild soap and hot water. Do not set hot pans directly onto marble. And place a mat or pad between marble and anything which might scratch it, like a pan or utensils. Use coasters between marble and any glasses, especially ones containing acidic compounds like fruit juices, wine, or coffee. In bathrooms, marble and granite tend to attract soap scum, just like manmade tile. Keep a squeegee handy for shower walls, and rinse vanities and natural stone sinks with hot, clean water regularly and towel dry.

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual

The use of sealers is also a powerful preventative measure. For countertops, ask your dealer if a sealant was applied before installation. If not, get his recommendation for a high-quality, food-grade sealer and apply it according to the manufacturer's directions. You will need to reapply this sealer periodically. The frequency of applications will depend on the sealer, and on the type of stone you have. Penetrating sealers are also available for flooring and bath areas. Likewise, the application of additional coats of sealer will depend on the type of stone, the frequency of use, and the manufacturer's recommendations.

If stains and scratches do occur, there are many things you can do on your own to remove them. On granite countertops, remove oil-based stains with acetone, mineral spirits, or bleach or ammonia diluted in water. (NEVER mix ammonia and bleach!) Food stains like coffee, tea, or fruit juices can usually be removed with hydrogen peroxide, combined with a few drops of ammonia. On marble and granite countertops, avoid harsh cleaners and acidic cleaners, including vinegar. For stubborn soap scum in the bath, ammonia can be used sparingly. Ammonia will, over time, dull the finish on marble, so use it with caution, and only when the soap scum cannot be removed with a mild, neutral detergent and hot water.

Water spots and rings occur because of minerals in water, and can be removed by buffing the spots gently with steel wool. Likewise, small nicks and scratches can often be removed the same way. Larger scratches, nicks, and pesky stains may require professional help, which can be located by calling your local stone dealer.

Remember the following list of DOs and DON'Ts:

- DO use preventative cleaning measures to keep your stone pristine
- DO use sealers, applied and reapplied according to manufacturer's directions
- DO blot up spills quickly, especially on marble, and then wash with mild soapy water
- DON'T use any kind of acidic cleaner on marble, limestone, or travertine
- DON'T use harsh bathroom cleaners or grout cleaners on any natural stone
- DON'T be afraid to call your stone dealer for suggestions on maintenance, care, and cleaning
- DON'T worry, if you get a significant stain or scratch, that your entire natural stone investment is ruined. Virtually anything can be fixed with professional help.

And above all, DON'T let the fear of maintenance for natural stone scare you into avoiding it. There is no substitute for natural stone when it comes to beauty, practicality, and value. Keeping your natural stone beautiful is something you will enjoy, and no one ever regretted having chosen natural stone over its alternatives. Please note that marble and granite are natural products and shading variances do occur. White Stone is not responsible for those variances.

Separation from Wall

Separation of countertops from walls, backsplash, and around sinks results from normal shrinkage of materials. WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® will recaulk these areas one time during the materials and workmanship warranty. Subsequently caulking will be your home

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual
maintenance responsibility.

Crawl Space

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

The crawl space is not intended as a storage area for items that could be damaged by moisture. Wood stored in a crawl space can attract termites. Only very few of the homes we build on lots with high slope will be built with a crawl space

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

See also Ventilation.

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

Decks-Wood

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Wood deck is out of level.

No point on the deck surface shall be more than 1/2" higher or lower than any other deck surface point within 10 feet on a line parallel to the house, or proportional multiples of the preceding dimensions.

Nails are bleeding

Nail stains extending more than 1/2 inch from the nail and readily visible from a distance of more than 3 feet are not acceptable.

Doors and Locks

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Bifold Doors

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

Exterior 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.

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual

Locks

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

Slamming

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

Shrinkage

Use putty, filler, or latex caulk to fill any minor separations that develop at mitered joints in door trim. Follow with painting. Panels of wood doors shrink and expand in response to changes in temperature and humidity. Touching up the paint or stain on unfinished exposed areas is your home maintenance responsibility. WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® will repair split panels that allow light to be visible.

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. The doors should not warp in excess of 1/4". If it does during the warranty period, we will replace it and paint or stain it to match the surrounding area as much as possible. Variance from the door to the jamb should not exceed 3/16th inch.

Weather Stripping

Weather stripping and exterior door thresholds occasionally require adjustment or replacement. During the orientation we confirm that all doors are in acceptable condition and correctly adjusted. WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® will repair construction damage to doors noted on the orientation list.

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual

Adjustments

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

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. The texture finishing of drywall is a combination of art and science. We currently use Monterrey Drag texture in all of our homes which make the walls look a little like Old Spanish style plaster. It is applied by many different vendors and applicators. To create an exact look, specific size drag, or perfection is not possible. Some jobs can use a little or a lot of TLC. You must understand that the finish will not be perfect or even close to it. There will be edges where the applicators drug a section of wall wetter than others. Don't be afraid to tell us about areas that bother you. More than likely we can fix them. Sometimes we can't.

Acceptance

Make sure you have accepted the quality of the sheetrock before you close or move anything in the home. We can repair lots of things in a home after you move in. The quality of the sheetrock is not one of them. The standard for drywall quality is that any blemishes must be visible from 6 feet in a normal lighting condition to need repair.

Repairs

Care of drywall is your maintenance responsibility. Most drywall repairs can be easily made. This work is best done when you redecorate the room.

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

During the orientation, we confirm that drywall surfaces are in acceptable condition. If we 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.

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual

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

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® 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), WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® completes the repair by touching up the repaired area with the same paint that was on the surface when the home was delivered. If more than one-third of the wall is involved, we will repaint the wall corner to corner. You are responsible for custom paint colors or wallpaper that has been applied subsequent to closing. Due to the effects of time on paint and wallpaper, as well as possible dye lot variations, touch-up may not match the surrounding area.

Electrical Systems

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Breakers

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

Breaker Tripping

Breakers trip due to overloads caused by plugging too many appliances into the circuit, a worn cord or defective appliance, or operating an appliance with too high a voltage requirement for the

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual

circuit. The starting of an electric motor can also trip a breaker.

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

Buzzing

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

Fixture Location

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

GFCI (Ground-Fault Circuit-Interrupters)

GFCI receptacles have a built-in element that senses fluctuations in power. Quite simply, the GFCI is a circuit breaker. Building codes require installation of these receptacles in bathrooms, the kitchen, outside, and the garage (areas where an individual can come into contact with water while holding an electric appliance or tool). Heavy appliances such as freezers or power tools will trip the GFCI breaker. WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® is not responsible for food spoilage that results from your plugging refrigerators or freezers into a GFCI outlet.

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

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

Grounded System

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

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual

Light Bulbs

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

Modifications

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

Outlets

If an outlet is not working, check first to see if it is controlled by a wall switch or GFCI. Next, check the breaker. If there are small children in the home, install safety plugs to cover unused outlets. This also minimizes the air infiltration that sometimes occurs with these outlets. Teach children to never touch electrical outlets, sockets, or fixture.

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.

During the orientation we confirm that light fixtures are in acceptable condition and that all bulbs are working. WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.®'s limited warranty excludes any fixture you supplied.

Designed Load

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® 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, WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® will repair or replace them.

Power Surge

Power surges are the result of local conditions beyond the control of WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® 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.

Arch-Fault Circuit Breakers

A relative new comer to the residential market. Required for all bedrooms. Maybe adding more rooms in the future. These devices detect arc's created from loose fitting connections in your wiring. They will trip the breaker if this happens.

If the AFCI breaker lets you reset it and does not repeat its tripping, you do not need to know or to worry about the cause. For the record, it was probably an overload or an arc-fault that was only a one-time event.

If the arc-fault breaker re-trips immediately (up to 5 seconds) when you reset it, this is typical of a short circuit or a ground-fault. If re-tripping only occurs from one minute to one month later, the cause is more likely an overload, an overheating breaker, or an arc-fault.

Electric Water Heater

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual

line to avoid injury. See manufacturer's literature for diagrams and detailed instructions.

Safety

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

Temperature

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

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

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

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

Takes too long to get hot water:

Cold water must be displaced before hot water can be supplied to the area you want to be hot. The placement of the hot water heater relative to the outlet will also increase the time you must wait. If your water heaters are in the attic and your master bath is down stairs, you will probably have to wait a bit to receive hot water. You can decrease the time it takes by opening up the larger lines like the one at the tub. This will bring hot water into the manifold at a greater rate.

Expansion and Contraction

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual

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.

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® provides one-time repairs to many of the effects of expansion and contraction. See individual categories for details.

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd. is not responsible for wild animal intrusion due to gaps caused by expansion and contraction.

Facia & Soffit

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Facia is the facing edge of the eave. Soffit is also known as the eave. Both are part of the finish exterior trim. This material is installed by the Cornice Contractor or Framing Contractor. Typically, the soffit is full perforated Hardi-plank or similar. The facia is typically made of rough sawn or smooth dado 2" material. Both are fit together and nailed and stapled.

End gaps

The material should not have any gaps that exceed more than 1/16th in width except for areas that meet shingles. Carpenters must allow no greater than 3/8th of an inch gap to allow roof contractor to install shingles and allow for expansion and contraction. (See IRC Pgs. 272 & 294, Table 1507) Also, this will allow some air gaps from the outside to the attic. These gaps are required and allowed by manufacturer and by code. They should not however be allowed to leak.

Bee, Wasps, Rodents, Critters in-General-Entering Home

We intend to seal all gaps in the exterior of your homes, except for the ones noted. Any defect found in this seal will be repaired by the company during the first year warranty. WhiteStone Custom Homes does not intentionally or unintentionally warrant against intrusion from any bee, wasp, hornet, yellow jacket, rats, mice, raccoons, opossums, squirrels, etc. WhiteStone Custom Homes responsibility for sealing the home against intrusion if found is for the first year only. We do not provide warranty against animal eradication and any damages from animal intrusion.

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.

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.

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual

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

Chimney Cleaning

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

Spark Arrester

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

Gas Fireplace

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® offers direct-vent gas fireplaces. If you ordered this type of fireplace, it is demonstrated during the orientation. Read and follow all manufacturers' 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.

Firebrick Paint

There will be a discoloration after the first fire. The paint finish is cosmetic only.

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

Fireplaces are not intended to be the sole heat source in the home. The fireplace should function

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual

properly when WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.®'s and the manufacturer's directions are followed.

Chimney Separation

Separation of a brick chimney from a newly constructed home may occur. WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® 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. WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® will repair cracks that exceed 1/8 inch in width. The repair consists of pointing or patching and the mortar color will be matched as closely as possible, but expect some variation.

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

Discoloration

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

Downdraft

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

Glass Doors

During the orientation we confirm that glass fireplace doors, if installed 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

We install the foundation of your home according to the recommendations of our consulting engineer. The walls of the foundation are poured concrete with steel reinforcing cables.

To protect your home's foundation, follow guidelines for installation and maintenance of landscaping and drainage in this manual.

Cracks

Even though an engineer designed the foundation and we constructed it according to engineering requirements, **surface cracks can still develop in the wall**. Surface cracks are not detrimental to the structural integrity of your home. If a crack develops in a foundation wall that allows water to come through, follow the procedures for submitting a warranty claim. Cracks in the garage floor greater than 3/16 inch or 1/8 inch in vertical displacement are excessive.

Out of Level

As measured from the top of the foundation wall, no point shall be **more than 1/2 inch higher or lower than any point within 20 feet.**

Out of Square

As measured at the top of the foundation wall, the diagonal of the triangle with sides of 12 feet and 16 feet shall be no more than 1" more or less than 20 feet.

Dampness

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

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

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual

Cracks

Shrinkage or backfill cracks are not unusual in foundation. WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® 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.

Foundation Even Moisture

Proper care of your foundation is very important in preserving the integrity of your structure. Clay soils have the ability to expand (when wet) at alarming rates. This requires that an even and relatively constant level of moisture be maintained in the soil supporting the foundation. Defects in foundations occur when the supporting soil is too wet or too dry or when one area around the foundation is overly wet while other areas remain dry. Improper foundation maintenance can result in severe movement in just a few days. This is true regardless of the type or age of the foundation. You must monitor and maintain even moisture around your foundation. This can be done by checking for potential leaks around the structure. Do not allow any un-even watering of any part of your foundation.

Non-Uniform moisture can be caused by any of the following:

- 1.) Improper drainage
- 2.) Allowing the soil to become dry
- 3.) Excess watering near the foundation
- 4.) Plumbing leaks
- 5.) An improper watering program
- 6.) Neglect
- 7.) Runoff water not properly diverted away from the foundation
- 8.) Trees and large bushes growing too close to the foundation

Garage Overhead Door

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

30-Weight Oil

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual

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

Lock

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

Opener

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

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

Painting

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

Safety

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

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

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

Light Visible

Garage overhead doors cannot be 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-Offs

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

The gas company is responsible for leaks up to the meter. WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® 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. Please read your manufacturers recommendations first but in general we would like to give you a thumbnail on draining your gas water heater:

Flush the Tank Every Six Months

Sediment build up in the tank can reduce your water heater's energy efficiency and also clog your water lines. Avoid these problems and increase the life of your unit by flushing the tank each time you check the pressure relief valve. To flush the tank:

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual

1. Turn off the electricity to the water heater or turn the gas switch to pilot.
2. Shut off the cold water inlet to the water heater.
3. Connect a garden hose to the tank's drain valve.
4. Locate the draining end of the hose in an area that won't be adversely affected by the scalding hot water.
5. With the pressure relief valve open, open the drain valve and allow the tank to drain completely. Completely draining the tank ensures that you have removed all the sediment possible.
6. Close the tank drain valve, disconnect the hose from the valve and close the pressure relief valve.
7. Open all the hot water spigots in the house and turn on the cold water inlet to the tank.
8. Close each hot water spigot as water begins to flow from it. After all the spigots are closed, turn on the electricity to the water heater or turn the gas switch to "run".

Following these simple maintenance procedures every six months will keep your water heater operating safely and efficiently for years.

Pilot

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

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

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

Reinstall the cover panel and then adjust the temperature setting with the regulating knob on the front of the tank. Water heaters sometimes collect small quantities of dirty water and scale in the main gas lines, which may put out the pilot light.

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

Safety

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

Temperature

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

No Hot Water

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

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.

Drainage

Typically, on acreage homesites, the grade around your home should slope 1 foot in the first 10 feet, tapering to a 2 percent slope. In most cases, drainage swales do not follow property boundaries. With the topography we have in San Antonio, sloping 1 foot in 10 feet may not be possible or practical. In those cases we cut a swale a few feet away from the foundation. 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. Swales are basically gradual ditches used to carry off accumulated water. This means your homesite will not be flat no matter what.

Roof Water

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

Rototilling

Rototilling can significantly change drainage swales. You can minimize this by rototilling

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual
parallel to the swales rather than across them.

Settling

The area we excavated for your home's foundation was larger than the home to allow room to work. In addition, some trenching is necessary for installation of utility lines. Although we replaced and compacted the soil, it does not return to its original density. Some settling will occur, especially after prolonged or heavy rainfall or melting of large amounts of snow. Settling can continue for several years. Inspect the perimeter of your home regularly for signs of settling and fill settled areas as needed to maintain positive drainage. If you paid us to install sod on your homesite, we will come back and roll the sod within the first 2 weeks. The day we come back to roll the sod, you must water the night before so that the roller can relevel your yard. We will only do this once. You must then stay off the lawn until the grass has rooted in enough to walk on the sod without it sinking in.

See also Landscaping.

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, WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® will fill the areas that have fallen in excess of 6 inches, one time and subsequently will provide you with fill dirt to maintain positive drainage.

Erosion

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® 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

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® 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, WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® will inspect

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual

drainage problems reported in writing during the warranty period, compare grades to those originally established, and advise you on corrective actions you might take.

Soil Information

Landscaping recommendations are designed based on soils and engineering reports and thus may vary slightly.

Swales

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® 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. WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® advises against making such changes. After heavy rain, water may stand in swales up to 48 hours. Swales are basically graded ditches in your yard to divert water.

Under Concrete

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® 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 (If installed)

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. Unless you upgraded our standard we install gutter on the front of the house where the draining rain would wash out your shrub and flower beds. We also add a diverter or sometimes a gutter over all exterior exits and the A/C compressors.

Extensions or Splashblocks

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

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual

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 painted to match your home. You should repaint them when you repaint your home.

Ice

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

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

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual

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.

We confirm that all hardware is in acceptable condition during orientation. The limited warranty excludes repairs for cosmetic damage subsequent to the orientation. WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® will repair hardware items that do not function as intended.

Hardwood Floors

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Cleaning

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

Dimples

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

Filmy Appearance

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

Furniture Legs

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

Hollow Spots

You may find that you will hear hollow areas in your wood floor. This is always the case with

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual

unfinished wood floors. That hollow sound is because the floor is suspended from the concrete or wood. In pre-finished flooring, shrinkage in glues, moisture in the curing foundation will cause some hollow sounding spots. These can be fixed by drilling a hole in the spot, and filling with glue. The hole will then be filled with a wood filler.

Humidity

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

Mats and Area Rugs

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

Recoat

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

Separation

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

Shoes

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

Spills

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

Splinters

When floors are new, small splinters of wood can appear. Please discourage children and adults from "sliding" across the floor without shoes to prevent injury from splinters.

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual

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. Debris can fill in grooves. Sweep often.

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.

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

Separations

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

Heating System

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Adjust Vents

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual

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

Avoid Overheating

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

Blower Panel

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

Combustion Air

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

Never cover or block the combustion air vent in any way. Outside air is needed to supply the furnace with sufficient oxygen. Blocking the combustion air vent will cause the furnace to draw air down the vent pipe and pull poisonous gases back into your home.

Ductwork Noise

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

Filter

Remember to change or clean the filter monthly. A clogged filter can slow air flow and cause cold spots in your home. Although it takes less than one minute to change the filter, this is one of the most frequently overlooked details of normal furnace care. Buy filters in large quantity for the sake of convenience.

If you have a permanent, washable, removable filter, you need to clean this monthly. Use water

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual

only to clean the filter, tap to dry or air dry, and leave unit off for a brief period. Do not use soaps or detergents on the filter.

Furnished Home

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

Fuse

Some furnaces have a fuse directly above the on-off switch. This fuse is an S10, S12, or S15 fuse. It absorbs any spikes in the line such as close electrical strikes or power surges. Unlike old fuses that burn out and clearly indicate that they are blown, these fuses, similar to automobile fuses, have a spring that depresses when tripped. Unless you have examined these quite carefully before, it may be hard to determine if the fuse has blown. We suggest that you buy some extra fuses of the same size to have on hand.

Gas Odor

If you smell gas, call the gas company immediately.

Odor

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

On-Off Switch

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

Pilot

On models with manually lit pilots, lighting the furnace pilot involves several steps. First,

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual

remove the cover panel to expose the pilot. Then rotate the on-off pilot knob to pilot. When the knob is in this position, you can depress the red button. While depressing the red button, hold a match at the pilot. Once the pilot lights, continue to hold the red button down for 30 to 60 seconds. When you release the red button, the pilot should stay lit. If it does not, wait several

minutes to allow any gas to dissipate from the furnace area and repeat the entire process. If the pilot stays lit, rotate the on-off pilot knob to the on position. Reinstall the cover panel. You can find these instructions on a sticker on the furnace and in the manufacturer's literature.

Registers

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

Return Air Vents

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

Temperature

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

Thermostat

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

Trial Run

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

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

Adequacy of the system is determined by its ability to establish a temperature of 70 degrees F, as measured in the center of the room, 5 feet above the floor. In extremely cold temperatures (10

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual

degrees below or colder), the system should be able to maintain a temperature differential of 80 degrees from the outside temperature.

Duct Placement

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

Ductwork

Although the heat system is not a sealed system, the ductwork should remain attached and securely fastened. If it becomes unattached, WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® will repair as needed.

Furnace Sounds

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

Heat Pump

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Air Circulation Across Coils

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

Air Conditioning and Heating

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

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual

The thermostat inside your home controls this heating or cooling activity.

Air Temperature at Vents

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

Auxiliary Heat System

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

Defrost Cycle

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

Night Setback

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

Register Adjustment

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

Return Air Vents

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual

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

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

Humidifier

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

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

Insulation

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

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

Landscaping

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Additions

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual

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

Backfill

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

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

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

See also Grading and Drainage.

Bark or Rock Beds

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

Contractors

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

First 5 Feet

Do not allow sprinkler heads within 5 feet of your home to spray on the foundation.

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. **Please note, any leaks or broken sprinkler heads in the system**

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual
need to be noted with in the first 30 days following your Closing or Settlement.

Planning

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

See also Xeriscape.

Plant Selection

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

Requirements

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

Soil Mix

Provide good soil mixes with sufficient organic material. Use mulch at least 3 inches deep to hold soil moisture and to help prevent weeds and soil compaction. In areas with high clay content, prepare the soil before installing your grass. First cover the soil with 2 inches of sand and 1 inch of manure that is treated and odorless. Rototill this into the soil to a depth of 6 inches (rototill parallel to the swales). Whether you use seed or sod, this preparation helps your lawn to retain moisture and require less water. Installing a lawn over hard soil permits water to run off with little or no penetration and your lawn will derive minimal benefit from watering or rain.

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

Utility Lines

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

Waiting to Landscape

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual

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

Xeriscape

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

Landscape materials we install are warranted for one growing season. We will confirm the healthy condition of all plant materials during the orientation. Maintaining landscaping is your responsibility.

Mildew

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Mildew, while rare in San Antonio, is a fungus that spreads through the air in microscopic spores. They love moisture and feed on surfaces or dirt. On siding, they look like a layer of dirt. Cleaning mildew from your home is your responsibility. Solutions that remove mildew are available from local paint or home improvement stores. Wear protective eyewear and rubber gloves for this task; the chemicals that remove mildew are unfriendly to humans.

We will remove any mildew noted during the orientation. WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® warranty excludes mildew.

Mirrors

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

We will confirm that all mirrors are in acceptable condition during the orientation. WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® will correct scratches, chips, or other damage to mirrors noted during the orientation.

Scratches

Mirror surfaces scratches should not be visible from a distance of 2 feet.

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

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual

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. Do not store your paint in the attic.

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

Wall Cracks

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

See also Drywall.

During your orientation we will confirm that all painted or stained surfaces are in acceptable condition. WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® will touch up paint as indicated on the 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. WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® limited warranty excludes this occurrence.

Touch-Up Visible

Paint touch-up is visible under certain lighting conditions.

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual

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. WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® does not provide corrections for this condition.

Brush Marks & Paint splatters

These should not be visible from a distance of 6 feet under normal lighting conditions.

Pergo Flooring

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

We install Pergo flooring. It is a tough product. It will not scratch like real wood. The problem with Pergo and Pergo like products is they tend to resist glues on fresh concrete floors. This causes them to buckle. Pergo must have been designed for used home, not a new one. This does not happen every time, but understand that it does. Also understand that we may need to wait until the concrete has really cured to fix the product. In our opinion other types of floors are a better selection.

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.

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® will correct outlets positioned so that a phone cannot be installed due to a cabinet or countertop that is part of the original home.

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® 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

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual

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

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

Aerators

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

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. **You are to only flush toilet paper down the toilet.** Clogs caused by other items will not be warranted. 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

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual

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. You may also wish to shut off the water heater. Do this by turning off the cold water supply valve on top and the gas control at the bottom. Drain the tank by running a hose from the spigot on the bottom to the basement floor drain. If you leave the tank full, keep the pilot on and set the temperature to its lowest or "vacation" setting. Check manufacturer's directions for additional hints and instructions.

Freezing Pipes

Provided the home is heated at a normal level, pipes should not freeze at temperatures above 0 degrees F. Exterior faucets, especially, those locations in the garage can freeze if not covered or allowed to drip. 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 that has been recommended by the manufacturer.

Laundry Tub

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

Leaks

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual

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

Low Pressure

Occasional cleaning of the aerators on your faucets (normally every three to four months) will allow proper flow of water. Dirt and plumbers flux can build up during construction, which can result in low water pressure. Cleaning the aerators can take care of this problem. The water department controls the overall water pressure.

Marble or Manufactured Marble

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

Outside Faucets

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

Porcelain

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

Running Toilet

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

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual

running water.

Shut-Offs

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

Sprinklers

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

Stainless Steel

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

Tank Care

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

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

Cosmetic Damage

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® will correct any fixture damage noted on the orientation list. Repairing chips, scratches, or other surface damage noted subsequent to the orientation list is your responsibility.

Exterior Faucets

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® will repair leaks at exterior faucets noted on the orientation list. Subsequent to orientation, repair of a broken line to an exterior faucet is your responsibility.

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual

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

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

Noise

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

Supply

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® will correct construction conditions that disrupt the supply of water to your home.

Below is a handy checklist to make sure your Plumbing System runs as well as it did the day you moved in:

As a homeowner, keeping up with home maintenance can sometimes feel like a full-time job. There are many things that need to be done to a home in order to keep it running smoothly. Plumbing is just one of the many aspects of your home that you have to keep up throughout the year. Below you will find a helpful checklist that will help you to look for plumbing problems as well as potential plumbing problems that should be addressed before they become a real issue. Going line-by-line on the checklist will help you with preventative care and maintenance of your home's plumbing. When thinking about your plumbing system, you need to first realize the number of appliances and pipes that are included in the system. This doesn't only cover the plumbing system that operates toilets, sinks, showers, and bathtubs in your home, it also covers laundry facilities in your home for your washer, utility sinks, and drains that may be installed.

- Look for signs of leaks in exposed pipes, where pipes run through the walls or the foundation of your home. Signs of a leak include puddles of water and watermarks.
- Look for signs of corrosion. Corrosion of pipes can cause leaks and bad pipe connections if not corrected. A sign of corrosion is green stains around brass and copper fittings and on shutoff valves.

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual

- ❑ Test water pressure. Water pressure is with how much force the water comes out of sink faucets and showerheads. Low water pressure can be a sign of sediment build up in the faucet or shower head. It may also be a sign of a problem with the water line.
- ❑ Remove the showerhead to look for any sediment that may have collected in it. This may be a cause of lower the water pressure.
- ❑ Check each sink, shower and tub drain for the speed of drainage. Slow drainage usually indicates a clog in the drain or a blocked vent pipe. Your drains should have a full swirl when draining. If bubbles appear when water is draining, this is usually a sign of a problem.
- ❑ Check the flushing handle and inside parts of the toilets. Flush each toilet to make sure that it is flushing properly. Check the parts inside the tank of the toilet to see if any parts are broken, rusted, or missing. Make sure the toilet water does not continue to run after flushing and make sure there is no sign of water on the floor around the toilet.
- ❑ Look for cracked tiles in the shower, around sinks, or near water pipes in the home. Loose or hollow tiles can be an indication that there is, or was, a leak that has caused rotting underneath or behind the tile.
- ❑ See if tub, sink or toilet caulking is coming off.
- ❑ Check for mildew, which is caused by standing water that may have dried up again.
- ❑ Push and pull on each toilet to see if it rocks or moves.
- ❑ Look inside the burner chamber of the home's water heater. See if there are any flakes of rust inside of the chamber. Also, check the flame of the water heater, which should be a blue color with no signs of yellow in the flame. If you see a yellow color, this may mean that the jets need to be cleaned.
- ❑ You should drain the water heater to remove sediment that may have built up in it.
- ❑ Turn on all of the faucets in your home to see if there is any water coming out of the handles and valves.
- ❑ Check the washing machine hoses to make sure that there aren't any cracks and that the hoses are not brittle or leaking.

By running through this checklist on an annual or bi-annual basis, you can check your home for plumbing problems or potential plumbing problems. Addressing these problems on a regular basis can help you to prevent the problems from becoming worse, which can save you quite a bit of money on the long run. Therefore, taking a few minutes to inspect your plumbing system is time well spent.

Resilient Flooring

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual

Color and Pattern

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

Limit Water

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

Moving Furniture

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

No Wax

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

Raised Nail Heads

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

Scrubbing and Buffing

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

Seams

Any brand or type of resilient flooring may separate slightly due to shrinkage. Seams can lift or curl if excessive moisture is allowed to penetrate them. You can use a special caulking at tub or

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual

floor joints to seal seams at those locations. Avoid getting large amounts of water on the floor from baths and showers.

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

Adhesion

Resilient floor covering should adhere. WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® will repair lifting or bubbling and nail pops that appear on the surface.

Ridges

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

Seams

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

Roof

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

The shingles on your roof do not require any treatment or sealer. If we replace shingles they may not match.

Clean Gutters

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

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual

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.

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® 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.

Visible Sag

All beams and rafters to be sized and fastener spaced accounting to the National Forest Products Association span tables or local building codes.

Bows in Rafters

Rafters that bow greater than 1 inch in 8 feet are considered excessive.

Bows in Ridge Beam

Ridges that have deflection of 1 inch in 8 feet are considered excessive.

Roof Sheathing

Roof sheathing shall not bow more than 1/2 inch in 2 feet.

Blown off shingles

Blown off shingles is not the builder's responsibility unless it can be proven that they were installed incorrectly.

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual

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.

Roof-Metal

Standing seam metal roofs are generally not a standard for our company. Those that do choose this type of roof must understand that these type roofs are subject to “oil canning”. That is that they will show ripples. Some roof will ripple a little more than others. We do not warrant or represent that they won’t, or that they will be consistent within the same contractor or roof style.

Rough Carpentry

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Some floor and stair squeaks are unavoidable. Although WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® 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 WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® will take no action for this occurrence. WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® does not design second story floors for waterbeds. Extra beams and floor stiffening will need to be added at an extra cost. Please notify us in writing if you need this feature.

Floor Level

Floors will be level to within 1/4 inch within any 32-inch distance as measured perpendicular to any ridge or indentation. WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® will correct floor slope that exceeds 1/240 of the room.

Plumb Walls

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® **will correct walls that are out of plumb more than 1/2**

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual
inch in an 8-foot distance or walls that are bowed more than 1/4 inch in any 32-inch measurement.

Post Twists

There will be some twist in exterior post. Twisting and bowing are usually not a structural concern if sized according to National Forest Products span tables. Bows and twists exceeding 3/4" in an 8 ft. section are unacceptable.

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.

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® 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. WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® will correct delaminating siding.

End Gaps

End gaps exceeding 3/16 of an inch are unacceptable.

Siding not installed on a straight line

Any piece of lap siding more than 1/2 inch off parallel in 20 feet with contiguous courses is unacceptable.

Siding is bowed

Bows exceeding 1/2" in 32 inches is unacceptable

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.

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® does not represent that the smoke detectors will provide the protection for which they are installed or intended. We will test smoke detectors during the orientation to confirm that they are working and to familiarize you with the alarm. You are responsible for obtaining fire insurance.

Stairs

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

Although WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® does not warrant against stair vibration and squeaks, a reasonable effort will be made to correct them. The stair tread should not show deflection of 1/8th inch at 200 pound force.

Stucco

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Cracks

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

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual

of the stucco in any way. We will repair cracks that exceed 1/8th inch in width during the warranty period. The repair may not match. We will make at least 2 attempts to match as close as possible. Textures of repair and old wall will not match perfectly.

Drainage

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

Efflorescence

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

Sprinklers

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

One time during the warranty period, WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® will repair stucco cracks. **The repair will not exactly match the surrounding area.**

Trim-Interior

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Gaps

Openings at joints in trim and moldings, and at joints between moldings and adjacent surfaces shall not exceed 1/8th inch at the time of installation.

Nail Holes

After painting, finishing nails and nail holes should not be readily visible from a distance of 6 feet under normal lighting conditions.

Hammer Marks

Marks should not be visible from a distance of 6 feet under normal lighting conditions.

Ventilation

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

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

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

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

Your daily habits can help keep your home well ventilated:

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

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

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

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

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual
without special tools.

Cleaning

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

Condensation

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

Door Locks

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

Door Tracks

Keep patio door tracks clean for smooth operation and to prevent damage to the 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.

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual

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.

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

Condensation

Condensation on interior surfaces of the window and frame is the result of high humidity within the home and low outside temperatures. You influence the humidity level within your home; WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® provides no corrective measure for this condition.

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

Infiltration

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

Scratches

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd., confirms that all window glass is in acceptable condition at the orientation. Minor scratches on windows can result from delivery, handling, and other construction activities. WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd., will replace windows that have scratches readily visible from a distance of 10 feet. WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd., does not replace windows that have scratches visible only under certain lighting conditions.

Tinting and/or Solar Screens

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

See also Ventilation.

Wood Trim

Homeowner Use and Maintenance Guidelines

Shrinkage of wood trim occurs during the first two years or longer, depending on temperature and humidity. All lumber is more vulnerable to shrinkage during the heating season. Maintaining a moderate and stable temperature helps to minimize the effects of shrinkage. Wood will shrink less lengthwise than across the grain. Wood shrinkage can result in separation at joints of trim pieces. You can usually correct this with caulking and touch-up painting. Shrinkage may also cause a piece of trim to pull away from the wall. If this occurs, drive in another nail close to, but not exactly in, the existing nail hole. Fill the old nail hole with putty and touch up with paint as needed. If the base shoe (small trim between base molding and the floor) appears to be lifting from the floor, this is probably due to slight shrinkage of the floor joists below. Again, you can correct this condition by removing the old nails and re-nailing. You may prefer to wait until after the first heating season to make any needed repairs at one time when redecorating.

See also Expansion and Contraction.

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

Exterior

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® will caulk and apply touch-up paint to cracks in exterior trim components that exceed 3/16 inch. We provide this repair one time 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.

Cupped

Cups exceeding 3/16th of an inch in 5-1/2 inches is unacceptable.

Sample Maintenance Schedule

Item	Monthly	Quarterly	Semiannually	Annually	Comment
Clean and test smoke alarm	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

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual

Item	Monthly	Quarterly	Semiannually	Annually	Comment
Bath and Shower Tile Grout	X				This is very important. Water can get behind the walls and cause a lot of damage
Please read the checklist provided in the individual categories					

WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.® Homeowners Manual

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Homeowner,

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

Thank you,
WhiteStone Custom Homes, Ltd.®
