

### **Caring for Your Home**

Fall Creek Homes 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 under our supervision to attain the best possible results for your investment.

A home is one of the last hand-built products left in the world. Once we have assembled the natural and manufactured materials, the components interact with each other and the environment. Although quality materials and workmanship have been used in your home, this does not mean that it will require no care or maintenance. A home, like an automobile, requires care and attention from day one. General homeowner maintenance is essential to providing a quality home for a lifetime. A home is a conditioned space. As such it is recommended that homes be kept to normal temperatures between 65 – 80 degrees Fahrenheit. Homeowners have the responsibility of learning of general home practices.

### **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 the temperature and humidity also affect your home.

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

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

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

We make every effort to keep our information current and accurate. However, if any detail in our discussion conflicts with the manufacturer's recommendations, you should follow the manufacturer's recommendations. Activate specific manufacturer's warranties by completing

and mailing any registration cards included with their materials. In some cases, manufacturer's warranties may extend beyond the first year and it is in your best interests to be aware of such extended warranties.

### **Fall Creek Homes Limited Warranty Guidelines**

We at Fall Creek Homes pride ourselves that our limited warranty is equal to or exceeds the limited warranty offered by many custom homebuilders. While we strive to build a defect-free home, we are realistic enough to know that mistakes are made or that something in the home may not perform as intended. When either occurs, we will make the corrections promised in this limited Warranty Manual.

In addition to the information contained in the limited warranty, this manual includes details about 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 covered warranty repairs are based on typical industry practices in our region and meet or exceed those practices for the components of your home. However, we reserve the right to exceed these guidelines if common sense or individual circumstances dictate, without being obligated to exceed all guidelines to a similar degree or for all homeowners.

### **Reporting Procedures**

All warranty service requests must be in writing. Our warranty system is designed to accept written reports. This provides you with the maximum protection and allows us to operate efficiently, thereby providing faster service to all homeowners.

In order for our service program to operate at maximum efficiency and for your own convenience, we suggest that you wait 60 days following closing before giving notice of any warranty items. This allows you sufficient time to become settled in your new home and to thoroughly examine all components. With your written request for repair of a qualified defect we will schedule an appointment to repair the defect. Warranty work appointments are available Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. We intend to complete warranty work orders within 30 workdays of the inspection unless you are unavailable for access.

Fall Creek Homes does not provide routine home maintenance.

### **ATTIC ACCESS**

The attic space is neither designed nor intended for storage. We provided 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.

## **BRICK**

### **Efflorescence**

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

### **Tuck-Pointing**

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

### **Weep Holes**

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

### **Cracks**

Brick is one the most durable and lowest maintenance finishes for a home's exterior. One time during the warranty period we will repair masonry cracks that exceed 3/16 inch. Any repairs in this regard should be requested towards the end of the warranty period. Please refer to the section herein regarding "One-Time Repairs" for further details on one-time items.

## **CABINETS**

If you selected wood or wood veneer cabinets, expect difference in grain and color between and within the cabinet components due to natural variations in wood and the way it takes stain.

### **Cleaning**

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

### **Hinges**

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

### **Moisture**

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

## **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 1/8 inch (locations behind appliances are excepted from this repair). Fall Creek Homes will correct separations one time during the warranty period. Any further separation repair is the responsibility of the homeowner. Any repairs in this regard should be requested towards the end of the warranty period. Please refer to the section herein regarding “One-Time Repairs” for further details on one-time items.

## **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 or wood veneer selections. Replacements are not made due to such variations.

## **Painted Cabinets**

It is common for the paint on cabinets to peel and/or chip due to moisture. This is not a defect of material or workmanship. Fall Creek Homes will repair peeling or chipped cabinet paint one time during the warranty period. Any further repairs in this regard are the responsibility of the homeowner. Fall Creek Homes will not repair excessive peeling/chipping caused by a homeowner’s activities that create excessive moisture, such as canning. Any repairs needed as a result of a homeowner’s activities is the responsibility of the homeowner. Any repairs in this regard should be requested towards the end of the warranty period. Please refer to the section herein regarding “One-Time Repairs” for further details on one-time items.

## **CARPET**

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 passages; 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. Vacuum mud after it dries completely.

Vacuuming high-traffic areas daily helps keep them clean and maintains the upright position of the nap. Wipe spills and cleanup 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 dry 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. Snip off the darkened fibers. Then use a soap-less cleaner and sponge with water. If the burn is extensive, talk with a professional about replacing the damaged area.

### **Crushing**

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

### **Fading**

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

### **Filtration**

If interior doors are kept closed while the air conditioning is operating, air circulation from the closed room flows through the small space at the bottom of the door. This forces the air over the carpet fibers, which in turn act as a filter, catching particulates. Over time, a noticeable stain may develop 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. Additionally, sliding and/or rolling heavy objects, such as a piano, across the carpet may cause rippling or stretching to occur. This is considered carpet abuse and should always be avoided. This warranty does not cover carpet abuse.

## **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 are never more than when the carpet is first installed. Usually with time, use, and vacuuming the seams become less visible. You can see examples of how carpet seams diminish after they have been vacuumed and have experienced traffic in the model homes.

## **Shading**

Shading is an inherent quality of fine-cut pile carpets. Household traffic causes pile fibers to assume different angles; as a result, the carpet appears darker and lighter in these areas. A good vacuuming, which makes the pile all go in the same direction, provides a 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, but not limited to, 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 rag 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.

## **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.

## **CAULKING**

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

## **Colored Caulk**

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

## **Latex Caulk**

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

## **Silicone Caulk**

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

We will touch-up caulking one time during your warranty period. Any repairs in this regard should be requested towards the end of the warranty period. Please refer to the section herein regarding “One-Time Repairs” for further details on one-time items.

## **CERAMIC TILE**

### **Cleaning**

Ceramic tile is one of the easiest floor coverings to maintain. Simply vacuum the tile 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 (this will not result in a heavy, difficult-to-remove lather on the grout). Rinse thoroughly.

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

### **Grout Discoloration**

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

### **Sealing Grout**

Fall Creek Homes does not seal grout. Sealing grout, if desired, is the responsibility of the homeowner. A grout sealer can be found at most hardware or tile stores and will help you keep the grout clean. Sealing grout is your decision and responsibility. Once grout has been sealed, ongoing maintenance of that seal is necessary.

### **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. 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. Although this is a homeowner maintenance matter, Fall Creek Homes will correct separations one time during the warranty period. Any further separation repair is the responsibility of the homeowner. Fall Creek Homes is not responsible for color variations in grout or discontinued colored grout. Any repairs in this regard should be requested towards the end of the warranty period. Please refer to the section herein regarding “One-Time Repairs” for further details on one-time items.



## **Cracks**

Cracks appearing in grouting of ceramic tiles at joints or junctions with other materials are common due to shrinkage. Fall Creek Homes will repair grouting, if necessary, one time during the warranty year. Any further crack repair is the responsibility of the homeowner. Fall Creek Homes is not responsible for color variations in grout or discontinued colored grout. Any repairs in this regard should be requested towards the end of the warranty period. Please refer to the section herein regarding “One-Time Repairs” for further details on one-time items.

## **CONCRETE FLATWORK**

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

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

## **Cleaning**

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

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

## **Cracks**

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

During the summer, moisture finds its way under the concrete along the edges or through cracks in the surface. In winter, this moisture forms frost that can lift the concrete, increasing the cracking. Maintaining drainage away from all concrete slabs will minimize cracking from this cause. As cracks occur, seal them with a waterproof concrete caulk (available at hardware or home improvement stores) to prevent moisture from penetrating to the soil beneath.

## **Expansion Joints**

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

## **Heavy Vehicles**

Do not permit heavy vehicles such as moving vans or concrete trucks to drive on your concrete work. Motor homes and large trailers can also do damage. We design and install this concrete for residential use only.

## **Ice, Snow, and Chemicals**

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

## **Sealer**

Fall Creek Homes does not seal concrete. Sealing concrete, if desired, is the responsibility of the homeowner. A concrete sealer can be found at most 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.

## **Color**

Concrete slabs vary in color. No correction is required.

## **Cracks**

If concrete cracks reach 3/16 inches in width or vertical displacement, Fall Creek Homes will patch or repair them one time during the warranty year. Fall Creek Homes will use a “concrete patch” that is not likely to match the original concrete. 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. Any repairs in this regard should be requested towards the end of the warranty period. Please refer to the section herein regarding “One-Time Repairs” for further details on one-time items.

## **Separation**

If separation of concrete slabs from the home exceeds 3/16 inch, Fall Creek Homes will correct the separation one time during the warranty year. To correct such separation, Fall Creek Homes will use a “concrete patch” that is not likely to match the original concrete. Any repairs in this regard should be requested towards the end of the warranty period. Please refer to the section herein regarding “One-Time Repairs” for further details on one-time items.

## **Settling or Heaving**

Fall Creek Homes will repair one time during the warranty year slabs that settle or heave in excess 1/2 inches or if such movement results in negative drainage (toward the house) or hazardous vertical displacement.

## **Spalling (Surface Chips)**

Causes of spalling include repeated hosing of concrete for cleaning, animal urine, radiator overflow, fertilizer, uncleared snow and ice, ice-melting agents, and road salts from vehicles. Repair of spalling is a home maintenance task and does not fall within the purview of Fall Creek Homes' warranty.

## **Standing Water**

Water may stand on exterior concrete slabs for several hours after precipitation or from roof run-off. During the warranty year, Fall Creek Homes will correct conditions that cause water to remain longer than twelve hours unless it is from roof run-off of melting snow or ice.

## **CONDENSATION**

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. Fall Creek Homes does not warrant against condensation.

## **COUNTERTOPS**

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. Fall Creek Homes will re-caulk these areas one time during the materials and workmanship warranty. Any repairs in this regard should be requested towards the end of the warranty period. Please refer to the section herein regarding "One-Time Repairs" for further details on one-time items.

## **Cleaning**

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

## **Separation from Wall**

Separation of countertops from walls, backsplash, and around sinks results from normal shrinkage of materials. Fall Creek Homes will re-caulk these areas one time during the materials and workmanship warranty. Subsequently, caulking will be your home maintenance responsibility. Any repairs in this regard should be requested towards the end of the warranty period. Please refer to the section herein regarding "One-Time Repairs" for further details on one-time items.

## **Sealing Countertops**

Fall Creek Homes does not seal countertops. Sealing countertops, if desired, is the responsibility of the homeowner. A countertop sealer can be found at most hardware stores and will help you keep the grout clean. Sealing countertops is your decision and responsibility. Once countertops have been sealed, ongoing maintenance of that seal is necessary.

## **DOORS AND LOCKS**

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

### **Bi-Fold and Bi-Pass Doors**

Interior bi-fold or bi-pass doors sometimes stick or warp due to humidity changes. Apply a silicone lubricant to the tracks to minimize this inconvenience.

### **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 type of privacy locks.

### **Locks**

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

### **Slamming**

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

### **Shrinkage**

Use putty, filler, or latex caulk to fill any minor separations that develop at mitered joints in door trim. Follow with painting. Panels of wood doors shrink and expand in response to changes in

temperature and humidity. Touching up the paint or stain on unfinished exposed areas is your home maintenance responsibility.

### **Sticking**

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

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

### **Warping**

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

### **Weather Stripping**

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

### **Adjustments**

Due to normal settling of home, doors may require adjustment for proper fit. Fall Creek Homes will make adjustments one time during the warranty period. Any further adjustments are the responsibility of the homeowner. Any repairs in this regard should be requested towards the end of the warranty period. Please refer to the section herein regarding “One-Time Repairs” for further details on one-time items.

### **Panel Shrinkage**

Panels of wood doors shrink and expand in response to changes in temperature and humidity. Although touching up the paint or stain on unfinished exposed areas is your home maintenance responsibility, Fall Creek Homes will repair split panels that allow light to be visible one time during the warranty period. Any repairs in this regard should be requested towards the end of the warranty period. Please refer to the section herein regarding “One-Time Repairs” for further details on one-time items.

### **Warping**

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

### **DRYWALL**

Slight cracking, nail popping, 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. These items are NOT warranty items, but are the homeowner’s responsibility.

Although this is a homeowner maintenance matter, Fall Creek Homes will make corrections one time during the warranty period. Any further repair of drywall is the responsibility of the homeowner. Any repairs in this regard should be requested towards the end of the warranty period. Please refer to the section herein regarding “One-Time Repairs” for further details on one-time items.

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.

## **ELECTRICAL SYSTEMS**

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 each major appliance, outlets, or other service. Should a failure occur in any part of your home, always check the breakers in the main panel box.

### **Breakers**

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

### **Breaker Tripping**

Breakers trip due to overloads caused by plugging too many appliances into the circuit, a worn cord or defective appliance, or operating an appliance with too high a voltage requirement for the circuit. The starting of an electric motor can also trip the 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 by Fall Creek Homes’ standard application and practice. 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 sense 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.

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 boss or device.

## **Light Bulbs**

You are responsible for replacing burned-out bulbs.

## **Modifications**

If you wish to make any modifications, contact a licensed electrician.

## **Outlets**

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

## **Underground Cables**

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

## **Designed Load**

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

Do not plug a refrigerator or food freezer into a GFCI controlled outlet.

## **Power Surge**

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

## **FIREPLACE**

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.

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

## **Gas Fireplace**

Fall Creek Homes offers direct-vent gas fireplaces. Read and follow all manufacturer's directions. A slight delay between turning the switch on and flame ignition is normal. The flames should ignite gently and silently. If you notice any deviation from this and any gas smell, immediately shut off the switch and report it to the gas company. Excessive winds can cause a downdraft, which can blow out the pilot, requiring you to re-light it before using the fireplace.

## **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.

## **Glass Doors**

During the final walk through inspection we confirm that glass fireplace doors, when included with the home, are in acceptable condition.

## **Water Infiltration**

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



## **FOUNDATION**

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

### **Cracks**

Even though an engineer designed the foundation and we constructed it according to engineering requirements, surface cracks can still develop in the wall. Surface cracks are not detrimental to the structural integrity of your home.

### **Dampness**

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

### **Future Construction in Basement**

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

### **Cracks**

Shrinkage or backfill cracks are not unusual in foundation walls, especially at the corners of basement windows. During the warranty period, Fall Creek Homes will seal cracks that exceed 1/8 inch in width.

### **Cosmetic Imperfections**

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

### **Leaks**

Fall Creek Homes will correct conditions that permit water to enter the basement, provided you have complied with the drainage, landscaping, and maintenance guidelines. For purposes of this warranty the cold storage portion of any home is deemed exterior space. Fall Creek Homes will not warrant or correct leaks into a cold storage area.

## **GARAGE OVERHEAD DOOR**

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

### **30-Weight Oil**

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

### **Lock**

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

### **Opener**

To prevent damage to a garage door opener, be sure the door is completely unlocked. 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.

### **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 Fall Creek Homes will provide. The residential garage doors are only rated to withstand a 40 mph wind. Any man doors or attic access holes left open when the overhead door is closed will create a vacuum and pull the door in and possibly damage the door. This is not covered by warranty.

### **Light Visible & Water Penetration**

Garage overhead doors cannot be air or water tight. Some light will be visible around the edges and across the top of the door. Expect water to come in with precipitation or if ground water is present. Fall Creek Homes does not warrant water, air, or dirt penetration into the garage.

### **GAS SHUT-OFFS**

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. If you suspect a gas leak, leave the home and call the gas company immediately for emergency service.

## **GAS WATER HEATER**

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

### **Pilot**

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

To light the water heater pilot, first remove the cover panel on the tank to expose the pilot. Then rotate the on-off 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 light ignites, continue to hold the red button down for 30-60 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 setting can result in wasted energy dollars and increase the danger of injury from scalding. Hot water will take longer to arrive at sinks, tubs, and showers that are farther from the water heater.

### **No Hot Water**

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

these items and other troubleshooting information.

## **GRADING AND DRAINAGE**

The final grades around your home have been inspected and approved for proper drainage of your lot by the local building authorities.

### **Changes to Grade**

Due to settling, erosion, and/or homeowner activity, final grades may change over time. Homeowners are responsible for maintaining the final grade that existed at the time of delivery of the home. Fall Creek Homes documents the grades that exist at the time of delivery of your home or as soon thereafter as possible. Once final grades are set, Fall Creek Homes will inspect drainage problems reported in writing during the warranty period, compare grades to those originally established, and advise you on corrective actions, if any, we might take.

### **Drainage**

Typically, the grade around your home should slope one foot in the first ten feet, tapering to a two percent slope. In most cases, drainage swells do not follow property boundaries. Maintain the slopes around your home to permit the water to drain away from the home as rapidly as possible. This is essential to protect your foundation. Failure to do so can result in major structural damage and will void your warranty.

### **Roof Water**

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

### **Roto-Tilling**

Roto-tilling can significantly change drainage swells. You can minimize this roto-tilling parallel to the swells 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. Backfilled or excavated areas around the home may settle in the first year. Fall Creek Homes will fill these areas one time during the warranty period to maintain positive drainage. Fall Creek Homes will not repair or replace any landscaping due to settlement in backfilled or excavated areas. Please refer to the section herein regarding "One-Time Repairs" for further details on one-time items.

### **Erosion**

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

## **Swells**

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

## **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**

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

### **Extensions or Splash Blocks**

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

### **Ladders**

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

### **Leaks**

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

### **Snow and Ice**

Clear excess snow from downspouts as soon as possible to allow the gutter to drain and to prevent damage. Severe ice or snow build-up can damage gutters, and such damage is not covered by the limited warranty. Nor is damage that may be caused to the home by non-functioning raingutters due to snow, ice, or natural debris build up.

### **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.

Fall Creek Homes does not install a full rain gutter as a standard feature. We advise that a full gutter be installed. Fall Creek Homes does not warrant water coming in through a basement window well, window, or foundation from excessive rain or snow. A full rain gutter will greatly reduce potential problems that may arise.

## **HARDWARE**

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.

## **HEATING SYSTEM**

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.

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.

### **Adjust Vents**

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

### **Avoid Overheating**

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

### **Blower Panel**

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

### **Combustion Air**

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

### **Ductwork Noise**

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

## **Filter**

Remember to change or clean the filter monthly during the heating season (year-round if you also have air conditioning). A clogged filter can slow airflow 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 quantities for the sake of convenience.

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

## **Furnished Home**

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

## **Fuse**

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

## **Gas Odor**

If you smell gas, call the gas company immediately.

## **Odor**

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

## **On-Off Switch**

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

## **Pilot**

On models with manually lit pilots, lighting the furnace pilot involves several steps. First, remove the cover panel to expose the pilot. Then rotate the on-off pilot knob to pilot. When the knob is in this position, you can depress the red button. While depressing the red button, hold a match at the pilot. Once the pilot lights, continue to hold the red button down for 30 to 60 seconds. When you release the red button, the pilot should stay lit. If it does not, wait several minutes to allow any gas to dissipate from the furnace area and repeat the entire process. If the pilot stays lit, rotate the on-off pilot knob to the on position. Reinstall the cover panel. You can find these instructions on a sticker on the furnace and in the manufacturer's literature.

## **Registers**

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

## **Return Air Vents**

For maximum comfort and efficient energy use, arrange furniture and draperies to allow unobstructed airflow 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 ten 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 five 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.

## **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, Fall Creek Homes will repair as needed.



## **Thermostat**

Thermostats are calibrated to plus or minus five degrees.

## **INSULATION**

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.

## **LANDSCAPING**

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

### **Additions**

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

### **Bark or Rock Beds**

Do not allow edgings around decorative rock or bark beds to dam the free flow of water away from the home. You can use a non-woven 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, and pool or rock contractor. Discuss drainage with any company you hire to do an installation in your yard.

### **First Five Feet**

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

### **Irrigation**

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

### **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.

### **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 three 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 two inches of sand and one inch of manure that is treated and odorless. Roto-till this into the soil to a depth of six inches (roto-till parallel to the swells). 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**

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

### **Xeriscape**

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

### **MILDEW**

Mildew is a fungus that spreads through the air in microscopic spores. These spores 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.

## **MIRRORS**

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.

## **ONE-TIME REPAIRS**

Fall Creek Homes strongly recommends that one-time repair items referenced herein be requested towards the end of the warranty period. Throughout this warranty manual, Fall Creek Homes has indicated that it will correct or repair certain items one time during the warranty period. Although each of these items is truly the responsibility of the homeowner and technically does not fall within the purview of this warranty, Fall Creek Homes nonetheless offers to assist homeowners one time during the warranty period as a courtesy. These items include, but are not limited to, cracking in brick, grout, drywall, and concrete; separation in cabinets, grout, concrete, and countertops; peeling of countertops; re-caulking between countertops and walls; settling or heaving of concrete; door adjustments; backfill settling; and nail popping or visible seams in drywall.

However, because this is a courtesy offered by Fall Creek Homes, we are only able to come to the home to make any requested repairs one time. This means that, for example, Fall Creek Homes will not re-caulk between countertops and walls one day and come back another time due to a subsequent request to repair nail pops in the drywall. Repair of any and all of these one-time items must be requested once, at the same time. Accordingly, Fall Creek Homes recommends that these one-time repair items be requested towards the end of the warranty period so that all items may be addressed. Fall Creek Homes will not take corrective action on any such items after we have already been to the home to repair any other one-time item on a prior occasion.

## **PAINT AND STAIN**

Due to changes in the formula for paint (such as 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.

### **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. Climate conditions control the chemical structure of the paint used on the exterior. Over time, this finish will fade and dull a bit.

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

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

### **Severe Weather**

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

### **Stain**

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

### **Touch-Up**

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

We provide samples of 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.

### **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 gutter is the homeowner's responsibility.

### **Fading**

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

### **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. Fall Creek Homes does not provide corrections for this condition.

## **PLUMBING**

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.

### **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.

### **Basement Construction**

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

### **Cleaning**

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

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

During the final walk through we confirm that all lines are not clogged, and are not obstructed. Any damage to the home caused by a clogged line will not be warrantied by Fall Creek Homes.

### **Freezing Pipes**

Provided the home is heated at a normal level, pipes should not freeze at temperatures above **32** degrees F. Set the heat no lower than **60** 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, you should 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.

### **Leaks**

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

Occasionally cleaning of the aerators on your faucets (normally every three to four months) will allow proper flow of water.

### **Marble or Manufactured Marble**

Marble and manufactured marble will not chip as readily as porcelain enamel but can be damaged by a sharp blow. Do not use abrasive cleaners 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 may 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.

### **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. The float should be free and not rub the side of the tank or any other parts. Also check the chain on the flush handle. If it is too tight, it will prevent the rubber stopper at the bottom of the tank from sealing, resulting in running water.

### **Shut-Offs**

Use the main water 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.

### **Cosmetic Damage**

Fall Creek Homes will correct any fixture damage noted on the final walk through inspection. Repairing chips, scratches, or other surface damage noted subsequent to the orientation list is your responsibility.

### **Freezing Pipes**

Provided the home is heated at a normal level, pipes should not freeze. Set heat at 60 degrees F if you are away during winter months. Keep garage doors closed to protect plumbing lines that run through this area.

### **Leaks**

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

### **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. Fall Creek Homes will repair persistent water hammer. Expect temperatures to vary if water is used in more than one location in the home.

### **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.

## **ROOF**

### **Clean Gutters**

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

### **Leaks**

If a leak occurs, try to detect the exact location. This will greatly simplify finding the area that requires repair when the roof is dry. Fall Creek Homes will repair roof leaks other than those caused by severe weather, such as hail damage, severe wind, or some action you have taken, such as walking on the roof. Roof repairs are made only 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. Fall Creek Homes will repair roof leaks other than those caused by severe weather, such as hail damage, severe wind, or some action you have taken, such as walking on the roof. Roof repairs are made only when the roof is dry.

### **Ice Build-Up**

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

## **ROUGH CARPENTRY**

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



## **Floor Deflection**

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

## **Floor Level**

Floors will be level to within 1/4 inch within any 36-inch distance as measured perpendicular to any ridge or indentation. Fall Creek Homes will correct floor slope that exceeds 1/240 of the room.

## **Plumb Walls**

Fall Creek Homes will correct walls that are out of plumb more than 5/16 inch in an eight foot distance or walls that are bowed more than 1/4 inch in any 32-inch measurement.

## **SIDING**

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

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

## **SMOKE DETECTORS**

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.

Fall Creek Homes limited warranty guidelines. Fall Creek Homes does not represent that the smoke detectors will provide the protection for which they are installed or intended. You are responsible for obtaining fire insurance.

## **STAIRS**

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

## **STUCCO**

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

## **Drainage**

To ensure proper drainage, keep dirt and concrete flatwork a minimum of six 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 accumulated 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. Fall Creek Homes will repair stucco cracks. The repair will not exactly match the surrounding area.

We will fix stucco cracks when cracks exceed 1/16 inch. The repair will not exactly match the surrounding area.

## **VENTILATION**

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

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

Your daily habits can help keep your home ventilated:

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

Proper ventilation will prevent excessive moisture from forming on the inside of the windows.

This helps reduce cleaning chores considerably.

## **WATERPROOFING**

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

## **WINDOWS, SCREENS, AND PATIO DOORS**

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

### **Cleaning**

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 ten-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 light into the home. To make reinstallation more convenient, label each screen as you remove it. Use caution: screens perforate easily and the frames bend if they are not handled with care.

## **Weep Holes**

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

## **Condensation**

Condensation on the 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; Fall Creek Homes provides no corrective measures for this condition.

Condensation that accumulates between the panes of glass in dual glazed windows indicates a broken seal. Fall Creek Homes 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. Fall Creek Homes warranty excludes this occurrence.

## **Scratches**

Fall Creek Homes confirms that all window glass is in acceptable condition at the final walk through inspection. Minor scratches on windows can result from delivery, handling, and other construction activities.

## **Tinting**

Fall Creek Homes does not recommend tinting of your windows. Tinted windows will not be repaired by Fall Creek Homes. Damage can result from condensation or excessive heat build-up between the panes of glass. Refer to the manufacturer's literature for additional information.