

# UNDERSTANDING YOUR NEW HOME

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## WARRANTY COVERAGE

Sunlight Heritage Homes provides statutory warranty coverage for your home during the first two years of possession.

- One year warranty protection: The builder warrants that the home is habitable, has been constructed meeting the Ontario Building Code requirements; and is free from defects in materials and workmanship for a period of one year;
- Two year warranty protection: The builder warrants against water penetration through the building envelope, including the basement or foundation walls. Detachment, displacement or deterioration of exterior cladding, such as bricks and siding. Defects in the electrical, plumbing and heating delivery and distribution systems. Violations of the Ontario Building Code's health and safety provisions for a period of two years;
- Seven year warranty protection: This coverage is for major structural defects (MSD) as defined by the Warranty Act. A major structural defect is the failure of a load-bearing part of the home's structure or any defect in material or workmanship that materially or adversely affects the use of the building as a home. Claims for a major structural defect are to be sent directly to Tarion Warranty Corporation after the second year of occupancy.

### The statutory warranty does not cover any of the following conditions:

- Defects in materials and workmanship in anything supplied by the homeowner;
- Damage due to homeowner negligence or improper maintenance of the home;
- Alterations, deletions or additions done by the homeowner;
- Secondary damage caused by defects. While the defects themselves are warranted, the personal or property damage resulting from the defects is not;
- Damage beyond control, such as acts of nature, wars, riots and vandalism;
- Settling soil in the land around the house or along utility lines;
- Normal wear and tear;
- Normal shrinkage of materials that dry out after construction, such as "nail pops" and minor cracking of drywall, cement, mortar, etc.;
- Damage from insect or rodents;
- Damage caused by municipal services and other utilities;
- Surface defects in workmanship and materials noted in writing and accepted by the homeowner at the time of possession;
- New homes built on old footing or foundations.

## SERVICE PROCEDURES

In our effort to ensure your experience as a new homeowner is a pleasant one, Sunlight Heritage Homes follows a three stage service policy during your first year of occupancy. All warranty service requests are accepted in writing as follows (excluding emergencies):

### PDI

Pre-delivery Inspection conducted with your Service Coordinator.

### 30-DAY Tarion

Located online, you shall log into your Tarion portal (create account if non-existent). Your homeowner information will be sent to you, via email, on the closing date.

### YEAR-END Tarion

Should you require year-end service, log on to the Tarion portal and submit a copy of this form to the builder's head office within the last 30 days of the first year of possession.

Sunlight Heritage Homes Customer Service policies and procedures are designed to ensure efficient and effective scheduling of service for each new homeowner. In order to achieve this we do require that all requests for service be submitted through our client portal (see link below). E-mails are not accepted.

Sunlight Heritage Homes Customer Service Department

<http://portal.sunlighthomes.ca/login>

Please include your lot number, municipal address and all contact telephone numbers on your correspondence.

## **UNDERSTANDING YOUR NEW HOME**

### **/ BRICKWORK**

The brick masonry cladding is warranted for displacement, deterioration and detachment for two years. It is common for the brick and mortar to form hairline cracks due to shrinkage of materials during the curing stage. These cracks are acceptable and repairs are not required as it does not affect the performance of the wall system.

Weep holes have been provided in the mortar joints of the brick walls, including areas at the windows and doors. These holes are a requirement to release water accumulation to the exterior.

### **/ CABINETS AND COUNTERTOPS**

Cabinetry is warranted from defects in materials and workmanship for one year. Occasionally, cabinet doors may fall out-of-plumb or 'rub.' Manipulating the screw on each hinge can easily re-align the fit of the door. It is recommended that you use only a damp cloth to clean the cabinet in your home as scrub brushes or abrasive cleaners may remove or damage the finish.

Countertops are vulnerable to damage from standing water. Be conscious of any kitchen counter top seam separations. If these are not addressed immediately, water accumulation may aggravate the separation and cause swelling of the countertop. We recommend that you use a cutting board and a trivet during meal preparation to avoid damaging the surface of the countertop.

### **/ CARPET**

The home's environment changes once it becomes occupied; therefore it is imperative that you maintain adequate ventilation in your home to avoid high levels of indoor humidity, causing dampness and condensation to form. This condition may result in the weave of the carpets relaxing and becoming loose at the edges' causing buckling, which is excluded from warranty coverage.

### **/ CERAMIC TILE**

Ceramic tile is easy to maintain and needs only to be wiped down with a mild solution of soap and water. Avoid using a cleaning fluid that causes fading and discoloration.

All tiles are inspected for defects at the pre-delivery inspection (PDI). If it is necessary to replace a tile, Sunlight Heritage Homes will endeavor to match the colour of the existing tile, however replacement tiles and grout may vary in colour due to manufacturer regular dye lot changes.

### **/ CONCRETE WALLS & FLOORS**

Cracks in concrete are normal due to the natural drying out process. "Hairline cracks" commonly occur on walls and floors in the basement, garage and porch. Hairline cracks do not exceed 6 mm in width or allow water penetration and repairs are not required.

Your basement is constructed with an efficient drainage layer around the perimeter of the foundation/basement area. Occasional cracks in the wall should not leak through this plastic-type membrane. According to building codes, the membrane terminates six inches below grade. Any leaks that occur are caused by surface water only and can be easily repaired with new, interior injection processes.

In the event that leakage does occur within the first two years of possession, report the location of the leaking crack through the Sunlight Heritage Homes Customer Service Portal (provided link on page 3). The warranty does not cover personal property damage as a result of a leak so ensure that you do not store any valuables up against the foundation walls or directly on the floor.

Exterior concrete surfaces such as garage floors and porches may experience flaking/scaling or pitting; primarily caused by the use of salt or other ice melting products. The deterioration of the concrete caused by these products is excluded from warranty coverage. We recommend that you rinse off any corrosive or ice clearing agent used on the garage floor and driveway as soon as possible.

A white substance, known as efflorescence may appear on concrete surfaces. This crystal-like deposit is normal and is part of the 'curing' process. Salts in the concrete are carried to the surface as moisture evaporates. This substance can be removed with a stiff brush and water. We suggest that you do not paint the basement or garage floor for a period of at least six months to allow the floor to cure properly.

#### / CONDENSATION, HUMIDITY AND MOISTURE

New home construction involves numerous materials, such as lumber and concrete that contains moisture. This is natural and unavoidable. Moisture can result in warping, condensation, shrinkage and dampness within the home. This is also common and natural.

People (our families) create the majority of the humidity within our homes. When the windows get “steamed-up”, there is usually nothing wrong with the windows. During the first few years in a new home, condensation is normal. It is the natural result of humid air meeting cold glass, the warm air of summer on the colder basement walls, resulting in moisture/water forming on the inside of the glass. Homeowners need to take an active role in protecting their new home investment.

#### CONDENSATION

Condensation: is water that forms when excessive interior humidity levels or warm, moist air hits a cooler surface in a room – such as a window, a cold-water pipes, and basement concrete walls. While windows and doors do not cause condensation, they may be one of the first places it shows up.

The important things is that your foggy windows and sliding doors are trying to tell you to reduce indoor humidity before it causes hidden and costly problems in your home: such as peeling paint, rotting wood, buckling floors, insulation deterioration, mildew and even moisture spots on ceilings and walls.

## CONDENSATION IN NEW HOMES

During the first year after construction, it is likely a new house will have more condensation present because the new building materials are "drying out" or releasing moisture. Even with proper airflow and temperature management, building materials may continue to release moisture for up to three heating seasons.

New homeowners may also see more condensation because newer homes are much "tighter" (in the interests of energy efficiency) than older homes. New materials and techniques in weatherstripping, insulation, vapour barriers, etc., which are intended to keep out the cold air, also lock moisture inside. As a result, moisture created by bathrooms, kitchens, laundries and occupants no longer flow to the outside, unless mechanically ventilated.

## HUMIDITY

Humidity is water vapor, or moisture in the air. Usually it is invisible, but sometimes, such as with steam or ground fog, it is concentrated enough to be seen, but see it or not, all air contains a certain amount of moisture.

## WHERE DOES THE MOISTURE COME FROM?

There are many things that generate indoor moisture. The normal perspiration and breathing of a family of four adds about 1/2 pint of water to the air every hour. Cooking three meals a day adds four or five pints of water to the air. Each shower contributes 1/2 pint. In fact, every activity that uses water, like dishwashing, mopping floors, doing laundry, adds moisture to the air. In newly built homes, additional moisture may escape from lumber, plaster and masonry. The truth is that the daily living activities of a family of four can add more than 18 gallons of water a week into the air in their home. More water vapor in the air means a higher indoor relative humidity.

## WHAT IS RELATIVE HUMIDITY?

Air can hold only a limited amount of water vapor and that amount depends on the air temperature. When air at a certain temperature contains all the vapour it can hold. It is said to have a relative humidity of 100%. Thus, when it holds only half the water vapor it can hold, the relative humidity is 50%. Cooler air is capable of holding less vapour than warmer air. So air at 30 degrees F and 100% relative humidity actually contains less water than air at 70 degrees F and 100% relative humidity.

## HOW DO I KNOW IF I HAVE EXCESS INDOOR HUMIDITY?

Check for damp spots on ceilings and room-side surfaces of exterior walls, particularly closets. Look for water and ice on windows. Even water-filled blisters on outside paint surfaces indicate excessive indoor humidity.

**WHAT DOES EXCESS HUMIDITY DO TO MY HOME?**

Excess humidity contributes to the deterioration of a home. Excessive humidity can pass through walls and freeze in the insulation. In spring it melts, damaging your ceilings and walls, or humidity can force its way out through siding to form blisters under your exterior paint.

**YOU MEAN MOISTURE CAN ACTUALLY GO THROUGH WALLS?**

Yes. It is because of a force called "vapor pressure". Moisture is wet air trying to flow toward drier air to equalize itself. This flow acts independently of air currents. In winter, inside air is much more humid than colder outside air. So, the vapor pressure, or equalization process, actually forces the inside moisture through cement, wood, plaster and brick towards the outside. Because certain varnishes and paints block the flow of moisture, condensation can occur between the inside and outside walls, or under exterior paint surfaces. It can rot a home's wood frame and blister the paint.

**IS CONDENSATION MORE PREVALENT IN ANY GEOGRAPHICAL REGION?**

Yes. Condensation is more apt to occur in climates where the average January temperature is 35 degrees F or colder.

**DOES CONDENSATION DEPEND ON WHETHER MY HOME IS NEW OR OLD?**

Generally, yes. Years ago, before the concern with energy efficiency, homes were built with less weathertightness than homes today. Insulation concepts were not as advanced as today. Walls and ceilings were built with much more porous materials. Water vapor could easily flow in and out of walls. Today's homes are much "tighter". Windows and doors are built to substantially reduce air leakage. Weather-stripping, modern insulation, vapor barriers and construction techniques, which are intended to keep out cold air, lock moisture inside. As a result, moisture created by bathrooms, kitchens, laundries and occupants no longer flows to the outside, unless provisions for mechanical ventilation have been made. So it is very easy to build up excessive, even harmful levels in today's homes.

**WHAT RELATIVE HUMIDITY IS BEST?**

As the outside temperature drops, your home's indoor relative humidity level should be decreased. For homes equipped with double glazed windows, the University of Minnesota Agriculture Extension Service gives the following levels that can be maintained without causing window condensation or discomfort.

Outside air temperature	Inside relative humidity for 70 degree F indoor air temperature
-20 F	-20 F
-10	-10
0	0
+10	+10
+20	+20

## HOW DO I MEASURE INDOOR RELATIVE HUMIDITY?

To get an accurate reading, you can buy humidity-measuring instruments called hygrometers or sling psychomotor. Otherwise, watch your windows for symptoms of excess humidity. When excessive moisture collects on the inside glass in a living room or bedroom, you are approaching the humidity danger level.

## HOW CAN I REDUCE INSIDE HUMIDITY IN WINTER?

There are at least two steps you can take to reduce indoor humidity in winter: Control the sources of humidity. Vent all gas burners, clothes dryers, etc. to the outdoors. Use kitchen and bathroom exhaust fans. Ventilate your home. Because outside air usually contains less water vapor, it will "dilute" humidity of inside air. This takes place automatically in older

homes through constant infiltration of outside air. But again, in newer "tighter" homes, the only way outside air can get in is by ventilation.

## WILL REDUCING THE HUMIDITY IN MY HOME DURING THE WINTER HELP CONTROL CONDENSATION?

It is the most practical way. Condensation indicates excessive humidity. Eliminate the excessive humidity and you eliminate the condensation.

!!!IMPORTANT!!!

### **A DEHUMIDIFIER MUST BE USED IN THE BASEMENT DURING THE FIRST SPRING & SUMMER AFTER MOVING IN.**

Hook a hose (usually provided with the dehumidifier) to the appliance.

Run that hose down to the drain located in your basement.

This will prevent the deposit to fill up and turn off the appliance.



The hose shall never run above the appliance drain fitting.

Read the manually instructions attentively!

Building materials dry out during the first year after a home is completed. As a result, your home will experience excessive amounts of humidity. It is critical that you control the amount of humidity during the first 12 months in your new home. Failure to control the levels of humidity can result in mould on drywall, wood framing and trim, as well as, irreversible damage to hardwood flooring (i.e., cupping) and cabinetry (i.e., excessive swelling).

During warmer months (spring and summer), you **MUST** use a dehumidifier in the basement 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Sunlight Heritage Homes recommends using a large-sized dehumidifier with a hose attachment. Run the dehumidifier with the hose on or next to the basement floor drain. The hose will prevent the dehumidifier's tank from filling and shutting off. Larger-sized homes (more than 2,500 sq. ft.) may require more than one dehumidifier.

## TIPS FOR CONTROLLING HUMIDITY

Here are some tips to help reduce and control the humidity levels in your new home:

- Buy a good dehumidifier that will physically remove the extra moisture from the air, allowing your basement to dryout.
- Run a dehumidifier in the basement during warm summer months - 24 hours a day, seven days a week - to help reduce humidity.
- Open a door or window for several minutes each day to refresh the inside air.
- Open window coverings – such as blinds, shades, drapes and curtains – during daylight hours to increase airflow over the glass.
- Run exhaust fans for kitchen, bathroom and laundry rooms for longer periods. For example, after a shower, open the bathroom window, or turn on the exhaust fan, so steam can go outside instead of remaining in the home.
- Closely monitor the furnace humidifier and any other humidifying devices.
- Be sure louvers and vents for the attic, basement and/or crawl space are not blocked.
- If there are a large number of plants in the house during winter, concentrate them in one sunny room and avoid overwatering.

## SIGNS OF EXCESS HUMIDITY

- Water behind basement wall insulation
- Condensation on cold water pipes
- Damp concrete floor and walls (can sometimes result in standing water)
- Wet stains on floors and walls
- Condensation on windows
- Musty smells
- If you have any questions, please contact our after-sales service department at

519-653-5036 or [info@sunlighthomes.ca](mailto:info@sunlighthomes.ca)

///SUMMARY///

## WHAT STEPS CAN I TAKE TO REDUCE EXCESSIVE HUMIDITY IN MY PRESENT HOME AND CONTROL WINDOW CONDENSATION?

Recognize that the best way to stop condensation is to reduce the moisture in the inside air. Be willing to try living in lower humidity. Eliminate any sources of moisture in your home that you can control. In winter, provide more controlled ways for moist inside air to get out. Run kitchen or other vent fans longer and more often than you normally would. Remember, the best way to avoid condensation is to reduce the humidity in the inside air.

## / DOORS & WINDOWS

All interior and exterior doors are exposed to a variety of climatic conditions; therefore it is essential to maintain adequate ventilation in your home. High humidity levels can result in excessive warping and expansion of doors, preventing the doors from opening properly. Low humidity levels will cause the doors to contract, preventing the doors from latching properly.

Minor warping can occur with interior wood doors and variations of up to 1/4" out of plane are considered normal. Minor warping is also to be expected with exterior doors due to temperature differences between outside and inside. Maintaining the weather-stripping on exterior doors is essential homeowner maintenance and is often the cause of air and water leakage.

Weather stripping is not required on garage overhead doors and snow and water may enter the garage. Overhead doors should operate without binding. Do not attempt to alter or adjust the overhead garage door mechanism as it is under sizeable tension and can result in injury. The builder is not responsible for the garage overhead door operation if you have installed a garage door opener.

The windows in your home are warranted for water penetration during normal weather conditions and when closed properly for two years. Severe weather conditions may cause water to enter through the window unit which is beyond control and not warranted. Ensure that the weather stripping and caulking is maintained and that the drain holes remain unclogged to prevent water penetration at the window unit. A silicone lubricant or petroleum jelly is recommended on weather-stripping and tracks on windows.

Due to the drying out process of the house there may be occasion when the windows will not open or close properly. The window glass may also suffer "stress cracks." The builder will arrange required adjustments and replace cracked window glass when reported in the first year of occupancy.

## / DRYWALL

As a result of the drying out process in the wood and concrete products in the home, general settlement may occur. This includes drywall cracks, nail pops, corner bead separation and occasional truss uplift. This is caused by material shrinkage and is unavoidable. This is homeowner responsibility

## / EAVESTROUGHS AND DOWNSPOUTS

The eavestroughs installed on your house are sloped towards the downspouts; however they may overflow during a heavy converging rain. The eaves troughs should be checked for debris such as leaves and paper in the spring and fall. Remove any ice that has formed in the winter to prevent "ice damming" which could result in water damage. As part of your regular homeowner maintenance, replace any cracked or missing caulking at the eavestrough joints.

Downspouts are designed to carry water collected from the eaves trough away from the house. Downspout extensions have been provided to prevent erosion of the soil.

## / ELECTRICAL SYSTEMS AND GFI'S

Many advanced electrical features have been installed in your home and rarely will they cause you problems. When electrical outlets do fail it is frequently caused by overloading the circuit, shorting out circuits due to worn appliance cords or defective plug connections causing the circuit breaker to trip. Before calling an electrician, check your circuit breaker panel.

The electrical receptacles in your bathrooms and exterior are protected by a ground fault interrupter (GFI). The GFI in the bathrooms are interconnected with one reset button for all. In the event that there is no power at the bathroom receptacles, press the reset button. If this fails check the electrical panel for any tripped (off position) breaker switches. Often a tripped breaker will appear to be in the 'on' position but it could be that it is not completely in the 'on' position.

Some of the wall receptacles in the primary living spaces are switch operated. The switch is commonly located within close proximity to the receptacle. If the upper outlet of a receptacle does not work it is likely switch operated.

## / EXHAUST FANS AND RANGE HOOD FANS

Exhaust ventilation fans are connected to the exterior through ductwork. Even though backdraft dampers have been installed the fans are exposed to the outside, so cold air can enter through the ductwork. The flaps at the exterior vents will open with air movement caused by high winds. This is normal and cannot be prevented.

Ensure that you check the vent terminations periodically for obstructions at the opening, such as birds or small animals.

The principal exhaust fan switch, normally located next to your thermostat on the main floor, activates one of the bathroom's exhaust fans, most often the main bath. This switch is a building code requirement designed to help ventilate your home. It is recommended that you activate this switch when you have a large group of people in the residence or while cooking and always when bathing.

## / GAS FIREPLACE

Your fireplace is gas operated equipped with a gas shutoff valve located in the basement. If the fireplace will not start, check that the pilot light has been lit and that the switch has been turned on. It is recommended that you start your fireplace and let it run for several hours, eliminating any residue that may still cover the new logs and steel components. You may notice a faint odor during the initial usage of your fireplace, which is normal and temporary.

## / FLOOR SQUEAKS

The subfloors in your home have been nailed and screwed. Sunlight Heritage Homes uses glue throughout your home to minimize the occurrence of squeaks; however floor noise may occasionally occur due to the floor system connections.

Subfloor squeaks caused by shrinkage of materials or by low humidity levels are excluded from warranty coverage. An attempt to repair excessive floor squeaks is done one time only and it is recommended that this be reported on the Year-End Form.

Is it normal for wood flooring to make a creaking sound due to the shrinkage of materials, this is not due to defects and repairs are not required. Maintaining the humidity levels in your home will assist in the prevention of excessive shrinkage.

## / GRADING, SOD AND LANDSCAPING

Sunlight Heritage Homes will grade your property based on the swales and slopes indicated on the approved grading plans. The grading should be sloped away from the house to prevent water from accumulating at or near the wall. You are provided with healthy sod and once the sod is laid, it becomes the homeowner's responsibility to maintain it. This includes watering, weed removal and fertilizing. The builder is not responsible for replacing any sod due to lack of homeowner maintenance.

It is essential to water all newly laid sod, including the boulevard on a daily basis during the first few weeks. Once the grass has taken root, weekly watering is adequate. Watering for a lengthy period of time less often will cause the water to penetrate the soil and provide the roots with the nutrients they require for healthy growth. Frequent 'brief' watering results in a shallow root system and can burn the lawn. Minor settlement in uneven patches is certain to occur over some areas of all new lawns. Excessive walking on newly laid sod causes depressions and alters the swale flow.

When putting in flower gardens or plant beds, ensure that you do not interfere with the drainage system (grading). To avoid water from flowing into the house, the earth from your gardens should not be higher than the foundation wall. Shrubs and trees should be pruned and kept well away from the walls of the house.

Minor settlement may occur at the swales, walkways and driveways. This is normal due to the disturbance of the soil. Once the grading has been certified by the municipality, any repairs required to the grading due to settlement become regular homeowner maintenance.

It is advisable to wait until the municipality has certified the grading at your property before you begin any alterations to the grade, such as underground sprinkler systems, landscaping, swimming pools, decks or fencing. If you wish to install a fence, hedge or any other boundary feature, we recommend that you hire a qualified surveyor to locate the lot lines to ensure that you do not encroach on the property of others.

## / HARDWOOD FLOORING

Hardwood floors are made from "kiln dried" material, but are subject to the natural process of shrinkage and expansion. In the winter, when the humidity is lower in your home, the wood will separate slightly especially near heating vents. High humidity on the other hand, will cause expansion and may lead to cupping or swelling in the center of the board. The cause of 'squeaks' in some hardwood floors is the common 'settling' of pre-finished hardwood or excessive humidity or dryness in the home. It is imperative that the humidity level of your home always be properly monitored and controlled.

Air conditioning or the use of a dehumidifier in a new home will significantly reduce the high moisture content found in all new homes.

Please refer to the following article from the National Wood Flooring Association regarding hardwood floor care:

### **TECHNICAL PUBLICATION NO. A100**

In a comfortable home with slight humidity variations through the seasons, wood flooring responds by expanding and contracting. These changes may be noticeable. During warm, humid weather wood expands. During dry weather wood contracts. This seasonal movement is a normal characteristic of wood flooring and it never stops regardless of the age of the wood. One of the best ways to ensure that wood flooring will give the performance homeowners expect is to install humidity controls.

### **WORKING WITH HUMIDITY CONTROLS**

A homeowner who chooses hardwood flooring is making an investment in a floor that will last 40 years or more and he or she should protect that investment by installing humidity controls — a tool that helps the floor maintain a beautiful, trouble-free appearance.

### **CRACKS AND SEPARATIONS BETWEEN BOARDS**

Nearly every floor endures some separation between boards. In winter, when homes are heated and the air is dry, wood flooring gives up some of the moisture and therefore shrinks. When this happens, thin cracks appear. This is normal and homeowners should be forewarned of this. It is acceptable and customers should not be calling the installers at the first sign of cracks. Once the indoor heat goes off in the spring and the indoor environment regains moisture, most of these cracks will close up. Cracks in winter during the drier months, may easily develop to the thickness of a dime for solid 3 1/2 inch wide strip oak floors. Floors with light stained woods and naturally light woods like maple tend to show cracks more than darker, wood-tone finished floors.

## CUPPING AND CROWNING

"Cupping and crowning" are common complaints that develop with high humidity. Both problems occur across the width of the flooring material. Cupping is when the edges of a board are high and its center is lower. It can occur after water spills onto the floor and is absorbed by the wood, but high humidity is more often the cause. If the wood expands significantly, compression set can result as the boards are crushed together, deforming the boards at the edges. Cupping is caused by a moisture imbalance through the thickness of the wood, as the wood is wetter on the bottom than on the top of the board. Taking moisture meter readings at different depths can prove moisture imbalance.

The first step in repairing a cupped floor is to identify and eliminate the moisture source. In the kitchen, it may be a leak from the dishwasher or icemaker. From outdoors, it might be the terrain of the lot with rain and runoff not moving away from the house and foundation. Indoor, the humidity may need to be controlled or a plumbing leak may be causing excess moisture in the basement, which migrates up into the subfloor and from there into the wood flooring. Once the source of the moisture is controlled, cupping can usually be cured. The floor may improve on its own as it dries out over time. At other times, fans may be needed to speed the drying process. Once the moisture content is stabilized, the floor can be reassessed. Choices may be to do nothing at all, to recoat the floor, to remove or replace boards or to sand and refinish the floor. However, it should not be sanded until moisture meter readings indicate the floor has thoroughly dried.

Crowning is the opposite of cupping. The center of a board is higher than the edges. Moisture imbalance is sometimes the cause of crowning if excessive moisture is introduced on the top of the floor, perhaps from water used in maintenance or plumbing leaks from an overhead sprinkler system. However, a common cause is that the floor was previously cupped, but was sanded at the wrong time.

It should be known that some slight cupping and crowning may occur naturally and should be tolerated. The bark sides of lumber shrinks and swells more than the side closest to the center of the tree. Using a bevel-edged flooring product with a satin finish, rather than square-edge flooring with a high gloss finish can minimize its appearance.

## SOME TIPS ON MAINTENANCE

Sweep your floors or use a dust mop daily, but do not use a household dust treatment, as this may cause your floors to become slick or dull the finish.

Vacuum your wood floors as often as you would vacuum your carpets. Clean your floor's coated surface with a lightly dampened cloth using a recommended cleaning product and according to the manufacturer's directions for use. Never damp mop a wood floor. In all cases, use minimum water, because water causes deterioration of the wood itself, as well as the finish. Clean only when necessary and clean only the soiled areas.

Buy a "floor care kit" that your installer or flooring retailer recommends instead of counting on home-made remedies such as vinegar and water to clean your floors. Different finishes have different requirements and it's best to follow professional advice in this area.

Clean light stains by rubbing with a damp cloth. Avoid using mops or cloths that leave excessive water on the floor. Never let a spill of water dry on the floor.

Control humidity levels by use of a dehumidifier or humidifier.

## / HEATING SYSTEM & BALANCING

As part of the permit process, the municipality reviewed and approved the heat delivery system configuration designed for your home based on heat loss calculations and duct designs which determine the furnace size and adequacy of the heating system.

Aside from your personal preference and comfort level, the heating system should be able to maintain an indoor temperature of 22 degrees. Your furnace will not 'turn on' unless the thermostat setting is higher than the room temperature.

Several factors affect living space temperatures, including the direction of your home (facing north or south); windows as they allow heat to escape; rooms above garages as the garage is unheated below and airflow, so ensure that all of the interior doors remain open when unoccupied.

"Balancing the system" is the easiest way for you to compensate for the effects of these factors. This is done by partially closing other vents in the house in rooms that are used infrequently to force more flow to colder/warmer (depending on the season) areas. This is a common and effective method to make seasonal changes and obtain seasonal balance of the heating and/or cooling system in your home.

The heating system installed in your home comes complete with a manufacturer warranty of one year from occupancy on the mechanical components. If your furnace fails to start, be sure that the switch (in the basement) is turned on; check the breaker on your hydro panel; review the operating procedure manual, which accompanied your furnace. Ensure that the furnace fan motor and unit are oiled per manufacturer's instruction and that the air filter is cleaned and replaced regularly. Dirty filters restrict the efficient supply of return air. For emergency service, contact the company listed on the furnace sticker. Most heating companies provide 24 hour emergency service.

Please note that any additions to the heating/cooling system, done after occupancy, may void or exclude the original warranties contracted by Sunlight Heritage Homes.

## / PLUMBING

The plumbing fixtures and piping provided in your home have been manufactured to provide lengthy service under normal conditions. The disposal of grease, fat and similar wastes, especially petroleum products through the plumbing system should be kept to a minimum. These kinds of materials accumulate in the piping, which reduces efficiency. The plumbing pipes and drains in your home have a two year warranty for distribution and delivery. The plumbing fixtures and faucets have a one year warranty for materials and workmanship.

Today's conservation regulations require that all builders install low flow or water saver toilets in all new homes. While the new toilets conserve our water resources, they are not as efficient as the older toilets. At times, two flushes will be required to clear toilets of debris. Also you may find that if you hold the flush handle in the down position during the flush, more water will be available and the toilet will clear more efficiently.

## / EXTERIOR WATER TAPS AND HOSE BIBS

The rear yard and garage hose connections (hose bibs) have shut off valves inside the house, usually in the basement ceiling. Ensure that the hose bib is drained and bled before winter to prevent freezing and possible bursting of the pipes.

To bleed the line, turn the exterior valve wide open draining off any remaining water by holding open the pin in the valve opening in the up position then turn the shut off valves to the off position. For the same reason, your garden hose should never be left connected during freezing weather. Ice forming in the hose can burst the hose and the connecting plumbing.

## / ROOFING

With proper maintenance, the roof of your home should provide many years of service. It is recommended that you check for loose, broken or missing shingles following heavy winds and rainstorms as this may cause the shingles to blow off. Severe weather conditions sometimes exceed the design limitations of the shingles. The builder is not responsible for replacing the shingles under these conditions and the homeowner should arrange for repairs as soon as possible to prevent leakage that may result in damage in the interior.

Slight differences in the roof's level may be the result of the plywood puckering or the raising of shingles between nails as they expand. This is acceptable and excluded from warranty coverage.

Ice and icicles on roofs is normal. 'Ice damming' will occur when the surface of the roof is warm enough to melt the snow but the outside temperature is cold enough to refreeze the melted snow. Ice forming in the eaves of sloping roofs often cause water to back up under shingles and may result in leakage to the interior of your home. It is imperative to clear any snow and ice off of the roof, particularly at the eaves to prevent ice dams. Do not allow excessive snow and ice to remain on the roof throughout the winter. Removal of ice damming is regular homeowner maintenance and is excluded from warranty coverage.

## / SEALANTS

Caulking is a waterproof sealant material that is used to fill open joints or cracks. Both exterior and interior caulking has a natural tendency to shrink. Caulking that is exposed to the outside elements should be checked and maintained yearly for shrinkage and delaminating. Remove the old caulking at any deteriorated area and re-caulk using a good quality product and a caulking gun.

Minor shrinkage of silicone or caulking is normal and excluded from warranty coverage. Caulking and/or application of silicone to windows and door trim, tub areas, countertops and aluminum flashing are regular home maintenance items after possession. We recommend that you carefully maintain all such areas particularly in areas where silicone and caulking are used as waterproofing material.

### Common areas to watch for sealant maintenance:

- Exterior of windows and doors
- Aluminum flashing where brick or siding meet the roof
- Eaves trough joints
- Vents or pipes on exterior walls
- Interior window and door trim
- Showers and bathtubs
- Countertops

## / SETTLEMENT

"Settlement" or "shrinkage" issues in a new home are normal and not due to defects. Your home will likely experience some minor settlement issues in the first two years. Most settlement is a result of the shrinkage of the structural lumber used in the construction of your home. In the first year, when the house is heated, a normal 'drying out' process will happen, causing slight adjustment or "shrinkage" in the lumber. Ensure that your home is being properly ventilated during this drying out process.

### Some common signs of settlement may be:

- Nail/screw pops occur in the drywall which is fastened to the lumber studding
- Small gaps between cabinets, vanities, wood trim and walls
- Minor joints may open, slightly, on door and window trim, baseboards, etc.
- Wood flooring planks may 'open' between individual joints
- Doors become more difficult to open/close

