

# Grading & Draining

## Maintenance

The final grade is established to ensure adequate drainage away from the home. It is not designed to shed water completely off of the home site, and that is not a reasonable expectation. Typical rainfall may result in ponding in the yard, but it should not be next to the foundation.

Changes to the final grade, such as the addition of berms, can trap water either in the yard or close to the home. It is possible for the ground to settle in the backfilled areas around the

foundation. It is the homeowner's responsibility to watch for excessive settling to ensure that positive slope is maintained.

Over-watering of the landscaping is the most common cause of drainage issues and can easily result in water in your crawlspace. Monitoring and controlling the amount of water applied to the landscaping is the most important maintenance item when it comes to the issue of drainage.

**Backfill Settlement:** It is the Homeowner's responsibility to ensure that backfilled or excavated areas around the foundation and at utility trenches do not interfere with the drainage away from the house.

## Foundation and Flatwork Concrete

### Maintenance

**Foundation:** By maintaining good drainage away from your home, you are protecting your home's foundation. Maintenance of drainage away from all concrete will minimize cracking and other forms of movement.

**Sweeping/Cleaning:** Do not wash patios, porches, drives, etc. with cold water from an outside faucet when temperatures are extremely high and the hot sun has been shining on the concrete. The abrupt change in temperature can damage the surface bond of the concrete. Sweeping is the preferred method of keeping exterior concrete clean. If washing is necessary, do this when temperatures are moderate.

Cleaning of the garage floor by hosing can cause settling, spalling, and increase soil movement by allowing water to penetrate any existing cracks. Sweeping is the recommended method for keeping the garage clean. Be sure to sweep ice and salt out of the garage and off the driveway during the winter months. Leaving these elements on the concrete can also cause spalling.

ACHD uses salt and other materials that can cause spalling in the winter months on their roads. Simply by driving on their salted roads and then returning home can apply salt to your concrete surfaces. It is critical to keep your surfaces free of these materials to prevent spalling.

**Heavy Vehicles:** Do not permit heavy vehicles such as moving vans or concrete trucks to drive on your concrete work. This concrete is not intended to bear the weight of these types of

vehicles.

**Expansion Joints:** Expansion joints have been used to help control expansion; however, concrete is also susceptible to shrinking. If the concrete shrinks, moisture can penetrate under the concrete and lift the expansion joint. If this occurs, you can fill the gap created with a concrete sealant, which can be purchased at most hardware stores.

**Foundation:** While the foundation has been designed and constructed in accordance with engineering requirements, shrinkage or settlement cracks are common and should be expected within certain tolerances.

**Flatwork:** Flatwork is defined as porches, stoops, patios, driveways, and sidewalks. Cracking in the concrete flatwork is often caused by temperature extremes. 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 or causing more cracking.

**Grade Changes:** If the Homeowner changes the grading, drainage, or landscape design or fails to perform needed maintenance and this causes any damage, the Homeowner is responsible.

Cracking of the thin mortar finish over exposed foundation walls is not warranted.

## **Air Conditioning/ Heating System**

**Filter:** Change the filter(s) every three months. If you do not replace your filter(s), your furnace cannot breathe, and it will become too hot and shut down. Similarly, your air conditioner's coil will freeze. This will cause the air conditioner to lose its ability to cool and can cause the system to shut down.

**Temperature Variations:** Normal temperatures can vary from floor to floor and room to room (depending on the style of the home). Rooms in a single-story home can vary as much as 6 degrees. The temperature in a two-story home, from first to second floor, can vary as much as 8 degrees. The furnace blower will typically run non-stop during severe hot spells. To fully and efficiently utilize your cooling system, you must understand that it is a total, whole-house system. The cooling system involves everything inside your home, including, for example, drapes and window coverings. The cooling system is designed to maintain a 20 degree difference from the outside temperature. In the case of excessive outdoor temperatures of 95 degrees or above, a 20-degree difference will be difficult to maintain. The cooling system will perform best when the thermostat is left at one setting around the clock.

**Gas Odor:** If you smell gas, leave the house immediately and call the gas company.

## **Plumbing**

### **Fiberglass Showers and Bathtubs**

Any subsequent damage to your fiberglass tubs or shower units can and should be repaired. There are several companies in the valley that can repair your damaged fiberglass showers and bathtubs. One company in the valley is Bath Crest, you can contact them at 208-343-8000.

## Maintenance

**Freezing Pipes:** Keeping the home heated at a normal level, helps prevent pipes from freezing. Pipes should not freeze at outside temperatures above 25 degrees Fahrenheit if the home is properly heated. Heat should be set at 65 degrees if you are away during winter months and it is advisable to open cabinets, let water drip, and cover exterior faucets. Please take these same precautions if the temperature drops below 25 degrees.

Leaving a hose attached to a hose bib when a frost can occur will cause the copper to crack in the wall or crawl space.

Garage doors should be kept closed as much as possible to protect plumbing lines, which may run through this area.

In unusually frigid weather, or if you will be gone more than a day or two, open cabinet doors to allow warm air to circulate around pipes.

If your pipes freeze, turn your water off at the main shut-off valve. When pipes freeze, they usually burst. The pipe should thaw. But if a pipe bursts while the water is on, an enormous amount of damage to your home may result.

It is a good idea to disconnect all outside water hoses after each use but especially during freezing weather. When a hose is still attached to the spigot it can cause the pipe to burst.

## Electrical

**Breaker Panel:** The breaker panel that contains the electrical breakers for your home includes a “main” shut-off that controls all the electrical power to the home. In addition, individual breakers control the separate circuits. The master breaker panel is in the garage.

**Outlets:** If an outlet is not working, check first to see if it is one that is controlled by a wall switch or protected by a Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI).

**GFCI:** GFCI (Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter) receptacles have a built-in element, which senses fluctuations in power. Installation of these receptacles is required by building codes in bathrooms, the kitchen, exterior outlets, and in 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 can trip the GFCI breaker. Do not plug a refrigerator or food freezer into a GFCI controlled outlet. The likelihood of the contents being ruined is very high. Garage door openers and your sprinkler control box are plugged into GFCI's. Failure to notice a tripped GFCI will stop power to your opener and will also stop sprinklers/drip lines from watering.

**Breaker Tripping:** Plugging too many appliances into a circuit can often cause the breaker to trip. Also, a worn cord, defective item, operating an appliance with too high a voltage requirement, or starting an electric motor can trip a breaker.

If any circuit trips repeatedly, unplug all items connected to it and reset. If it trips when nothing is connected to it, you need an electrician and the problem should be reported. If the

circuit remains on, one of the items you unplugged may be defective and may require repair or replacement.

**Buzzing:** Fluorescent fixtures use transformer action to operate them. This action sometimes causes a buzzing. This is normal.

**Recessed Can Lights:** All recessed can fixtures have a thermal cutoff switch internally wired. If too much heat from the lamp is trapped inside, it will automatically shut off to prevent a hazard.

If Any electrical wiring fails to carry its designated load, refer to the Limited Warranty.

**Fixtures:** Required bulb wattage on all fixtures must be adhered to; failure to use the proper bulb can damage the fixture or cause a fire.

**Power Surge:** Power surges are the result of local conditions beyond the control of Asbury Homes, LLC. The result of surges is often burned out bulbs but can damage other items plugged into electrical sockets.

## Ceiling Fans

**Maintenance:** Ceiling fans will give you extended, trouble free service if a small amount of maintenance is performed. During normal use, the screws in the fan can become loose resulting in excessive wobbling and/or ticking. It is recommended to check and tighten all visible screws every six months. Be careful not to hold onto the blades when performing this maintenance or when cleaning as the blade arms can bend easily and will cause the fan to wobble. Some “ticking” sounds during fan use is normal.

## Drywall

**Shrinkage Cracks:** Some slight cracking, nail “pops” and/or drywall seams may become visible in walls and ceilings. These occurrences are normally caused by the shrinkage of the wood to which the drywall is attached, or by normal shifting, settling, and expansion/contraction of your home.

## Wood Trim

**Interior:** Minor imperfections may be visible. Minor separation of wood trim from the adjacent materials is a normal result of shrinkage, shifting, settling, or expansion/contraction which can require caulking as a repair.

## Paint and Stain

Do not allow sprinklers to spray water on the exterior walls of your home. This will cause blistering, peeling, splintering, and other damage to the home. Trim painted white or light colors will more readily show grain and cracks and therefore requires additional maintenance.

**Severe Weather Damage:** Hail and wind can cause a great deal of damage in a severe storm and the home should be inspected after such weather. Damage caused by severe weather should be reported to your insurance company promptly.

**Touch-Up:** Homeowner will receive a sample of each interior paint to be used for touch-ups. This paint should be stored so as not to be affected by freezing temperatures. When doing paint touch-up, use a small brush, applying paint only to the damaged spot. Touch-up may not match the surrounding area exactly, due to paint fading.

**Visible Wood Grain:** Due to wood characteristics, color variation will result when stain is applied.

## Ceramic Tile

**Maintenance:** The ceramic tile installed on walls or counter tops in your home may be washed with any non-abrasive soap or detergent. Abrasive cleaners will dull or scratch the finish, including mild abrasive liquid cleaners.

**Separations:** Tile around bathtubs or counter tops may appear to be pulling up after time. This is caused by normal shrinkage of grout or silicone. If this occurs, a new bead of silicone or grout will need to be applied to these areas. This maintenance is important to protect the underlying surface from water damage.

New grout may vary in color from the original. Cracks appearing in grouting of ceramic tiles at joints or junctions with other materials are commonly due to normal shrinkage conditions. New grout should be applied to remedy normal shrinking conditions. Sealing the grout is a Homeowner option and responsibility.

## Floor Coverings

### Maintenance

**Carpet:** Vacuuming high traffic areas weekly will not only keep them clean but will help to maintain the upright position of the nap. Spills should be wiped up and stains spot-cleaned immediately. Always dab at the stain, never rub it. Stain removers should be tested first on an out-of-the-way area of the carpet, such as in a closet, to check for any undesirable effects.

Excessive professional cleaning will reduce the life of your carpet.

**Seam Lifting:** Flooring of any type will shrink, and seams may lift or separate slightly due to this shrinkage. Minor gaps and separations not exceeding 1/8" are common and should be expected. Seams can lift or curl if excessive moisture is allowed on the floor. As a preventative measure, do not drag furniture over seams. If you encounter lifting or separation, under normal use, refer to your Limited Warranty.

**Laminate/ Engineered Hardwood:** Wood floors will respond noticeably to changes in the humidity level in the home, especially in winter. A humidifier will help, but will not completely eliminate, this reaction. Fading of the floor color will occur on wood floors that

are in direct sunlight.

Wood floors will exhibit the following traits: when new, small splinters of wood may appear; dimples or scratches can be caused by moving furniture, dropping heavy or sharp objects, etc. Some shrinkage or warping can be expected, especially around heat vents or any heat-producing appliances. Warping or bubbling will occur if the floor becomes wet repeatedly or is thoroughly soaked even one time. A dulling of the finish in heavy traffic areas is likely; a white, filmy appearance is caused by moisture (often from wet shoes or boots).

**Shoes:** High heeled shoes can exert a force that can damage wood floors.

**Mats:** Use protective mats outside the exterior doors to help prevent sand and grit from getting on the floor. Gritty sand is wood flooring's worst enemy. Avoid mats with rubber backing.

**Furniture Legs:** Install proper floor protectors on furniture used on hardwood floors. Protectors will allow chairs to move easily over the floor without scuffing. Clean the protectors on a regular basis to remove any grit that may accumulate.

**Maintenance:** Dry mop and vacuum. See manufacturers website for product information.

**Floor Squeaks:** A squeak-proof floor cannot be assured. Floor squeaks are often temporary and may be a passing condition, caused by lumber shrinkage or temperature changes. An isolated floor squeak is not a defect unless caused by a defective floor joist in the system. If you have a large area of floor squeak which is noticeable, loud and objectionable, refer to your Limited Warranty.

## Countertops

### Maintenance

**Heat:** Always use a cutting board when cutting, chopping, etc. Protect the counter from excessive heat such as irons, hot pans, and coffee pots. If you cannot put your hand on it, do not put it on the counter.

**Cleaners:** Avoid abrasive cleaners as they will damage the luster of the surface.

**Caulking:** The caulking around the edge of your countertops and between the countertops and the sink may shrink, leaving a slight gap.

**Granite:** Granite countertops may need to be sealed once each year to provide maximum protection.

**Separation:** Separation of countertops at walls and the back splash are the result of normal shrinkage of materials. To prevent warping, keep moisture away from the wood under the laminate.

**Laminate:** Laminated countertops typically will have one or more discernible seam. There should not be a gap at the seams.

# Overhead Garage Door

## Maintenance

**Keypad and Remote Controls:** The keyless entry pad and the car remote controls have batteries. If the garage door is not operating correctly, try replacing the batteries.

**Adjustments:** For your safety, 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.

**Light Visible:** Garage overhead doors cannot be airtight and typically light will be visible around the edges and across the top of the door. Severe weather conditions may result in some precipitation entering around the door. This should be expected.

The garage door should operate smoothly and with reasonable ease. The door can become misaligned and not open smoothly which requires adjustment. If such misalignment occurs, refer to your Limited Warranty.

## Doors & Locks

### Maintenance

The interior doors installed in your home are hollow-core wood products and subject to the natural characteristics of wood such as shrinkage and warping. Due to humidity changes and the use of forced air furnaces, showers, dishwashers, etc., interior doors may require minor adjustments.

**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 the damp season, do not attempt any adjustment or repair to the door unless it continues to stick after the weather changes. Use sandpaper to smooth the door. Be certain to repaint the area of the door where it was sanded to seal against moisture. Doors that stick or bump the jamb can be caused by normal settling, doors that have been slammed, swinging or hanging on doors/knobs, or gravity.

**Hinges:** A squeaky door hinge can be remedied by removing the hinge pin and rubbing a lead pencil or graphite lubricant on it. Do not use oil or WD40, as it can gum up.

**Failure to Latch:** If a door will not latch due to minor settling, you can raise or lower the plate accordingly.

**Bi-Fold Doors:** Interior bi-folds will sometimes stick or warp due to weather conditions. Applying a wax such as paraffin to the tracks can minimize this inconvenience.

**Door Trim:** Putty, caulk, or filler can be used to fill any minor separations that may develop

at mitered joints in door trim. Follow with painting.

**Locks:** Lubricate door locks with graphite or other waterproof lubricant. Avoid oil and WD40, as it can gum up.

**Keys:** Interior privacy locks come with a key that is left on top of the door jamb. In the event an interior door is locked inadvertently, use this key provided.

Due to normal settling of the home, doors may require adjustment for proper fit. If such adjustment is needed, refer to your Limited Warranty.

## Exterior Stone and Brick

**Maintenance:** All building materials are subject to expansion and contraction caused by changes in temperature and humidity. This movement can result in separation between materials, particularly dissimilar ones such as stone/brick that is placed against siding or stone. This can be alarming to an uninformed homeowner but, in fact, it is very normal. Shrinkage of the wood pieces of your home is inevitable. It will be most noticeable during the first year but may continue beyond that time. In most cases, paint and caulking are all that is needed to conceal this minor evidence of a very natural occurrence. Properly installed caulking will shrink and must be maintained by the Homeowner.

## Stucco

The SMA and member plastering contractors are constantly striving to improve stucco. From time to time, even stucco manufactured and installed correctly will crack. The size of cracks in stucco that is acceptable to one person might be unacceptable to another person. Cracks that appear within the first 30 days after installation and are larger than 1/16" (the thickness of a penny) can be filled or repaired with the same color coat material. If a crack is visible from more than 10' away or is a source of leaking, it should be patched. Patching small hairline cracks (smaller than 1/16") is not recommended. Small cracks will not accept material, and the resulting patch will detract from the natural beauty of the stucco and will serve no useful purpose.

## Gutters & Downspouts

**Cleaning:** As part of normal maintenance, the Homeowner should keep gutters clear of debris. Leaves are most common, but any debris could clog the gutters and cause them to overflow.

Homeowner should check gutters periodically to ensure proper functioning; excess snow should be brushed off downspouts with a broom as soon as possible. Severe ice or snow build-up can damage gutters.

**Ladders:** Do not lean ladders against gutters.

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



**Overflow:** Gutters may overflow during periods of excessively heavy rain. It is expected that water will stand for short periods of time in gutters immediately after rain. No correction is required for these conditions.

## Sprinklers/Landscape

### Maintenance

**Fall Blow-Out:** It will be necessary to have your sprinkler system pipes blown out in the fall each year, prior to the first hard freeze. This will help avoid cracked or damaged pipes. We recommend that you use a professional in the field to ensure that it is done properly.

**Filters:** The in-line filter located at the main waterline connection will need to be inspected and cleaned bi-annually, once in the spring shortly after the water is turned on and once mid-season.

There are also small filters in many of the sprinkler heads themselves. For pop-up heads, the filter is located in the shaft of the pop-up and can be accessed by removing the shaft cap, or head. A clogged filter is usually the cause for a pop-up head that does not work or has diminished output. Cleaning these filters may be necessary several times throughout the season.

**Timer Clock:** Timer clocks are initially programmed to help “root” your landscaping and the times can usually be backed off a few weeks after the sod has been installed.

**Test Cycle:** Once each week of operation, it is advisable to run a test cycle or observe the cycle including drip lines. You have set to make sure all the heads are functioning properly, that none have been damaged or “moved” during lawn maintenance or mowing, and that individual unit filters are not clogged. In looking at the spray pattern of your sprinkler heads, do not allow irrigation water to regularly hit your home as it will damage the siding and paint.

**Systems Installed During Winter Months:** When your system was installed in the winter months, it will require the landscape contractor to return in the spring to adjust the heads.

**Live Plant Material:** It is your responsibility to monitor the watering and fertilizing of your live plant material. Because of this, your live plant material is not covered by the Limited Warranty. If a tree or bush fails to make it through the first winter in your home and you are the original owner, refer to your Limited Warranty.

**Maintenance:** Periodically adjusting the timer clock, cleaning filters, and checking that drip lines are not plugged or damaged are all items that will need to be maintained by the homeowner.