



**RINALDI HOMES (NIAGARA) INC.**

**WELCOME HOME  
PACKAGE**

**P.O. BOX 1655  
ST.CATHARINES. ON  
L2R 7K1  
905-688-1283**

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# EMERGENCY CONTACTS

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## EMERGENCY NUMBERS FOR YOUR NEW HOME:

### COMPLETE LOSS OF HEAT / AIR CONDITIONING & PLUMBING EMERGENCIES

(BROKEN WATER LINE OR PLUGGED SEWER LINE)

PLUMBTECH & HEATTECH SERVICES – EMERGENCY – 905-641-9300

ROB DEWEY – OFFICE – 905-641-9300

### ELECTRICAL EMERGENCIES

COMPLETE LOSS OF POWER: Please contact the individual who serviced your community

H. ELECTRIC – **MIKE POORTINGA** – 905-651-2469

**Merritt Meadows** (off Merritt Rd, Thorold)

**Rosewood Estates** (off of Rice Rd, Fonthill)

**Tetherwood Estates** (off Laughar Ave/ Ontario Rd., Welland)

**Coyle Creek Estates** (off Gaiser Rd, Welland)

**Village West** (off Vansickle Rd, St. Catharines)

**Lock 3 Estates** (off Government Rd, St. Catharines)

**The Settlement at St. David's** (off Regional Rd. 100/Four Mile Creek Rd., Niagara-on-the-Lake)

**Courtland Valley Estates** (off Tanbark Rd., Niagara-on-the-Lake)

M.D. ELECTRIC – **MIKE DITORO** – 905-651-1616

**Optimist Lane** (off Morrison, Niagara Falls)

**Merritt Meadows – TOWN HOUSES on Andrew Lane** (off Merritt Rd, Thorold)

### RINALDI HOMES (ALL EMERGENCIES)

CUSTOMER CARE – **DON MESSERVEY** – 905-688-1283

customercare@rinaldihomes.com

**FURNACE CHECKLIST – SEE TROUBLE SHOOTING GUIDE ON PAGE 24 BEFORE CALLING**

**\*\*HOMEOWNERS PLEASE NOTE\*\***

**\*\*BEFORE CALLING FOR EMERGENCIES PLEASE CHECK THE SUPPLIED TROUBLESHOOTING GUIDE WHICH COVERS SEVERAL ISSUES YOU MAY COME ACROSS TO AVOID SERVICE CHARGES\*\***

# CUSTOMER CARE POLICIES

## 1. WRITTEN REQUESTS FOR SERVICE POLICY

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All requests for service must be in writing. We will NOT accept verbal requests for service other than emergencies. Service is required to be documented to maintain your home warranty and assist our service department in the aid of problem solving. We recognize the TARION PDI, 30 Day, One Year, and Two Year forms as official written requests for service. All other non-emergency requests for service must be in writing and addressed to the Customer Care Department (customer@rinaldihomes.com)

## 2. EMERGENCY SERVICE POLICY

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We will respond to any emergency call within 24 hours. We provide several numbers that can be called 24 hours a day in case of emergencies. All warranty items are covered with no charge to the homeowner. There will be a service charges if the emergency was the result of something not covered by the statutory warranty or builder warranty.

## 3. DRYWALL REPAIR POLICY

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All minor drywall defects caused by shrinkage during the first year of occupancy will be repaired. Homeowner is responsible for identifying items for repair. Repainting or touchups of the repaired area(s) are the responsibility of the Purchaser.

## 4. ACCESS FOR SERVICE POLICY

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All warranty work will be conducted during normal business hours (8am-5pm, Monday – Friday), at a time mutually agreed upon in advance. Failure to provide access to our service representative or to our trades workers during these hours will jeopardize your statutory warranty rights.

## 5. FOLLOW-UP CALL POLICY

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It is our policy to make regular follow-up calls to our homeowners in order to monitor the progress of on-going service work. Upon completion we make a final call/email to ensure the homeowner is satisfied that all warranty work was completed.

## 6. RESPECT POLICY

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It is Rinaldi Homes' policy that all staff work and act responsibly, in good faith, and in a manner that promotes respect, civility, dignity and understanding for the people with whom we service. We expect those we service to mirror this behavior onto our Customer Care Team, and trades that come to assist you in your home. All parties are encouraged to listen to each others point of view, communicate in a polite and courteous manner, and come to a respectable decision on a solution.

# NEW HOME MAINTENANCE GUIDE

## INTRODUCTION

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Thank you for deciding to build your new home with Rinaldi Homes. This guide was developed to help educate you in warranty information and maintenance requirements of your new home by offering information and instructions to several different maintenance procedures and a troubleshooting guide for common situations past customers have experienced. This guide is to be used with discretion, always seek the advice of a professional. If you do not feel comfortable completing any of these tasks or if you do not understand the instructions, please contact our Customer Care Team and we will help point you in the right direction.

Regular maintenance of your new home is very important to maintaining your warranty and keeping it clean, comfortable, and safe. Similar to newer cars today, your home features several different technologies that do not exist in older homes. For those systems to work properly and efficiently, you need to be an active homeowner to ensure its quality is upheld. Your new home requires regular checks and changes of systems like the air filter, water shut off valves, smoke alarms, along with others that will be noted on the following pages.

We have created this guide because we want you to feel comfortable and confident in maintaining your new home. The guide has been broken down by season to provide you with a manageable checklist, and is followed by additional information on each of them to help you understand why it is important and how to complete the task.



# Winter Maintenance Guide Checklist

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## December

- ☐ Clean Furnace Filters
- ☐ Test Smoke / Carbon Monoxide Detectors
- ☐ Clean Range Hood Fan
- ☐ Test Sump Pump
- ☐ Check / Clean ERV/HRV Filter
- ☐ Check air ducts, remove covers & vacuum dust from vents
- ☐ Check roof for ice dams & remove snow/ice from overhangs if possible
- ☐ Check & reset GFCI receptacle in kitchen, bathroom, and exterior outlets & arc protectors
- ☐ Make sure gas meter is free of ice and snow
- ☐ Check air intakes and exhaust are clear of debris, snow, and ice

## January

- ☐ Change Furnace Filters
- ☐ Check roof for ice dams & remove snow/ice from overhangs if possible
- ☐ Check & reset GFCI receptacle in kitchen, bathroom, and exterior outlets & arc protectors in bedroom plug
- ☐ Make sure gas meter is free of ice and snow
- ☐ Test Sump Pump
- ☐ Check air intakes and exhaust are clear of debris, snow, and ice
- ☐ Clean & test exhaust fans (bathroom)

## February

- ☐ Clean Furnace Filters
- ☐ Check roof for ice dams & remove snow/ice from overhangs if possible
- ☐ Check & reset GFCI receptacle in kitchen, bathroom, and exterior outlets & arc protectors in bedroom plug
- ☐ Make sure gas meter is free of ice and snow
- ☐ Check air intakes and exhaust are clear of debris, snow, and ice
- ☐ Clean out dryer exhaust piping of lint and debris
- ☐ Test Sump Pump
- ☐ Test water main shut-off

\*HOMEOWNER MUST USE DISCRETION WHEN ATTEMPTING ANY MAINTENANCE FROM THIS GUIDE\*

\*\*THIS IS NOT A COMPREHENSIVE LIST OF ALL MAINTENANCE REQUIRED FOR YOUR HOME\*\*



# Spring Maintenance Guide Checklist

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## March

- ☐ Clean Furnace Filters
- ☐ Clean Range Hood Fan
- ☐ Test Smoke / Carbon Monoxide Detectors
- ☐ Check Attic Insulation isn't being moved/ blown around
- ☐ Check roof for ice dams & remove snow/ice from overhangs if possible
- ☐ Check & reset GFCI receptacle in kitchen, bathroom, and exterior outlets & arc protectors in bedroom plug
- ☐ Test Sump Pump
- ☐ Check caulking around windows, trim, counters and replace as necessary
- ☐ Check air intakes and exhaust are clear of debris, snow, and ice

## April

- ☐ Change Furnace Filters
- ☐ Check & reset GFCI receptacle in kitchen, bathroom, and exterior outlets & arc protectors in bedroom plug
- ☐ Check downspouts and eaves trough for excess debris and if needed remove debris
- ☐ Turn OFF Humidifier
- ☐ Check window wells for debris
- ☐ Check air intakes and exhaust are clear of debris
- ☐ Test Sump Pump
- ☐ Clean & test exhaust fans (bathroom)

## May

- ☐ Clean Furnace Filters
- ☐ Check & reset GFCI receptacle in kitchen, bathroom, and exterior outlets & arc protectors in bedroom plug
- ☐ Inspect weather stripping around windows/doors, replace as needed
- ☐ Open outside & garage hose bib, inspect for leaks
- ☐ Check air intakes & exhaust are clear of debris
- ☐ Inspect exterior finishes (brick, siding, eaves troughs) for secure attachment
- ☐ Aerate & Fertilize lawn
- ☐ Test Sump Pump
- ☐ Leave ERV ON (if applicable) – Clean filter

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# Summer Maintenance Guide Checklist

## June

- ☐ Clean Furnace Filters
- ☐ Clean Range Hood Fan
- ☐ Test Smoke / Carbon Monoxide Detectors
- ☐ Check & reset GFCI receptacle in kitchen, bathroom, and exterior outlets & arc protectors in bedroom plug
- ☐ Check air intakes and exhaust are clear of debris
- ☐ Clean windows & window screens
- ☐ Check / Clean ERV/HRV Filter
- ☐ Test Sump Pump
- ☐ Inspect / clean air conditioner filter, brush and vacuum outside coils
- ☐ Check air ducts, remove covers & vacuum dust from vents

## July

- ☐ Change Furnace Filters
- ☐ Check & reset GFCI receptacle in kitchen, bathroom, and exterior outlets & arc protectors in bedroom plug
- ☐ Check air intakes and exhaust are clear of debris
- ☐ Test Sump Pump
- ☐ Inspect / clean air conditioner filter, brush and vacuum outside coils
- ☐ Clean & test exhaust fans (bathroom)

## August

- ☐ Clean Furnace Filters
- ☐ Check & reset GFCI receptacle in kitchen, bathroom, and exterior outlets & arc protectors in bedroom plug
- ☐ Check air intakes and exhaust are clear of debris
- ☐ Inspect doors, locks, window latches and repair as necessary
- ☐ Clean out dryer exhaust piping of lint and debris
- ☐ Test water main shut-off
- ☐ Test Sump Pump
- ☐ Inspect / clean air conditioner filter, brush and vacuum outside coils
- ☐ Test floor drains and fill with water if needed

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# Fall Maintenance Guide Checklist

## September

- ☐ Clean Furnace Filters
- ☐ Clean Range Hood Fan
- ☐ Test Smoke / Carbon Monoxide Detectors
- ☐ Test Sump Pump
- ☐ Service furnace / heating system (HRV/ERV, humidifier)
- ☐ Check attic for signs of moisture & insulation is uniformly distributed
- ☐ Check & reset GFCI receptacle in kitchen, bathroom, and exterior outlets
- ☐ Check air intakes and exhaust are clear of debris
- ☐ Check window wells for debris
- ☐ Check fireplace and chimney dampers
- ☐ Test Sump Pump
- ☐ Check caulking around windows, trim, counters and replace as necessary
- ☐ Test garage door operation
- ☐ ERV should be left on all year round
- ☐ Service Fireplace

## October

- ☐ Change Furnace Filters
- ☐ Clean & turn ON humidifier
- ☐ Check & reset GFCI receptacle in kitchen, bathroom, and exterior outlets
- ☐ If you have an in-ground sprinkler system, make sure it is properly drained and winterized **BEFORE** freezing temperatures
- ☐ Close outside & garage hose bib, ensure remaining water is drained out
- ☐ Check air intakes and exhaust are clear of debris
- ☐ Service furnace / heating system (HRV/ERV, humidifier)
- ☐ Test Sump Pump
- ☐ Clean & test exhaust fans (bathroom)
- ☐ Check downspouts and eaves trough for excess debris and if needed remove debris
- ☐ Inspect weather stripping around windows/doors, replace as needed

## November

- ☐ Clean Furnace Filters
- ☐ Check & reset GFCI receptacle in kitchen, bathroom, and exterior outlets
- ☐ Check air intakes and exhaust are clear of debris
- ☐ Test Sump Pump

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# REGULAR MAINTENANCE

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This section will cover many of the regular homeowner maintenance routines outlined in the monthly maintenance checklists provided, which are required to maintain your new home warranty and keep your new home clean, comfortable, and safe. The following procedures include a short background on the system of; what it does, why it is important, why it needs to be checked or changed, and how often to do it. The maintenance guide will be further broken down into subsections of **Electrical, Plumbing, HVAC, Interior, Roof & Attic,** and **Exterior.**

## ELECTRICAL

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### Test Smoke / Carbon Monoxide Detectors

**3 Months**

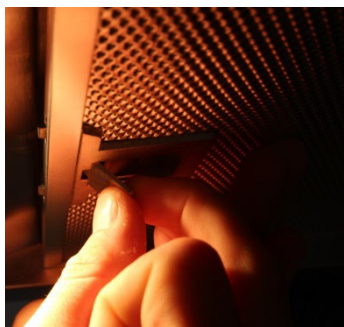


The smoke and carbon monoxide detectors in your home are a vital component to keeping you safe all year round. It is important to test them every 3 months for proper functionality. Even though the detectors are hard wired into your homes electrical system, there is a back-up battery that needs to be checked to keep you safe during power outages. To test the detector, press the button in the center until the alarm sounds. If the alarm does not turn on the batteries may need to be changed. All alarms should be changed every 5- 7 years.

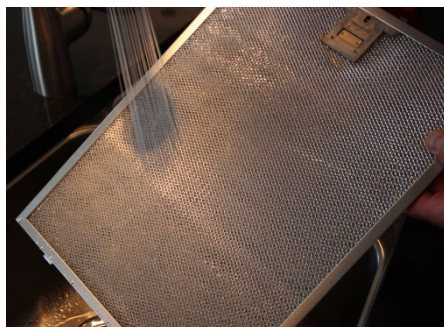
### Clean Oven Range Hood

**3 Months**

Please use your exhaust fan every time the oven is turned on. Your oven range hood fan expels moisture, smoke, and fumes from cooking to the outside. The filter in your hood fan will slowly become dirty through regular use and over time can become clogged, reducing the capability of the exhaust fan. To ensure proper functionality of the fan speeds, it is recommended to clean the filter every 3 months. All hood fans are different, so please refer to the owner's manual for directions on cleaning.



**STEP 1** Pull tab to release screen from hood.



**STEP 2** Rinse and brush screen to remove built-up dirt.



**STEP 3** Dry with towel and re-install in hood.

## Check & Reset GFCI Receptacles

Every Month



STEP 1 Press TEST button.



STEP 2 Press RESET button.

The GFCI (Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter) will protect you from electrical shock from appliances in wet zones (kitchen, bathroom, exterior). The system will trip the outlet, similar to a circuit breaker, if it senses the circuit has been grounded. These outlets can be tested and reset very quickly to ensure you are still protected. In most cases, 2 or more outlets will be wired and protected from 1 GFCI receptacle.

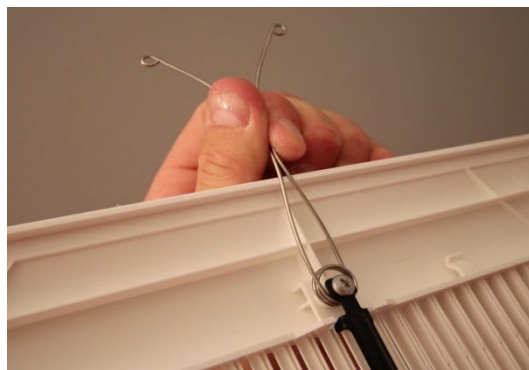
## Clean & Test Exhaust Fans (Bathroom)

3 Months



STEP 1 Pull down fan cover to expose wire hangers.

It is very important to use your bathroom fan every time you shower. The exhaust fans in your bathroom quickly remove the moist air during showers and in some cases will act as a secondary exhaust for your homes air circulation. As dust and debris builds up, the fans will become louder and have to work harder to maintain their desired output. Simple maintenance can keep the fan clean, quiet, and more efficient. Make sure you turn off the fan before removing the cover.



STEP 2 Pinch wire hangers to release fan cover.



STEP 3 Remove cover and inspect / clean fan turbine.

# PLUMBING

## Test Sump Pump

Every Month

The sump pump is responsible for keeping water away from your foundation. It will periodically turn on and remove any excess water that is below your basement floor and from the weeping tiles around the home. This water build up around the home is a normal event that will happen in all homes as rain events and small fluctuations of the water table will bring water around your home. Without a properly functioning sump pump, water could seep into your home, resulting in a flooded basement. Over time, small particles of dirt or debris could accumulate in the sump pit and can clog the pump intake or cause the pump to constantly cycle on and off. To test the pump, pour a bucket of water into the pit and observe if the pump activates. You may need over 1 liter of water depending on the float activation level. Before closing lid, ensure float is clear of obstructions including the wall of pit.



STEP 1 Remove sump pit lid.



STEP 2 Pour a bucket of water in pit.

## Test Main Water Shut-off

6 Months

The main water shut off in your home controls the incoming water to your home at its closest source to the city water main. If any major pipe bursts in your home, you will need to turn off the water from its source. The situation can become much worse if you cannot close this valve. By being an active homeowner, and checking this shut off valve regularly, you can be confident that if the time comes you

will be able to safely turn off the water, and prevent major damage to your home. Unless you have a “water pressure back-up sump pump” it is recommended to close the main water shut off every time you leave the house for more than 2 days. It could prevent a flood or insurance claim. To test the water main shut-off simply cycle the lever from OPEN to CLOSED, then back to OPEN.



STEP 1 Water Main in OPEN Position



STEP 2 Water Main in CLOSED Position



## Close / Open Outside Hose Bib

Spring / Fall

Your outdoor hose bibs provide access for you to water your garden; wash your car, and other various outdoor tasks. However, in the winter months it is critical that the hose bibs are closed and drained properly. If the hose bib is not closed, the water inside the pipe will freeze and crack the pipe, causing potential flooding in your home. There will be a shut off valve located inside the home which will stop the water inside the home where it is kept warm. To close the hose bib for winter, turn the valve handle to CLOSED, open the outside bib, and open the small bleed valve inside the home. **NOTE:** Water may drip through the bleed valve when opened so have a bucket ready to collect any water.



**STEP 1** Valve in CLOSED position.



**STEP 2** Remove hose and OPEN outside hose bib.



**STEP 3** OPEN small bleed valve.

## Check Floor Drains

1 Year



**STEP 1** Pour 1 liter of water into floor drain and observe.

The floor drains help protect your home from severe sewer flood damage by providing a direct route for the water to flow to the city sewer. It is important to check that they are functioning properly. Homeowners can slowly pour a bucket of water in the drain, and observe its reaction. If the water flows through the drain it is functioning properly. If the water lingers in the drain for a long period of time, or does not move at all, there could be an obstruction in the pipe and it is recommended to be cleared by a professional. These drains are kept wet/primed by the heating & cooling equipment in your home. They can dry out if the equipment is not running. If the drains dry out a foul smell can emanate from the drain which is easily fixed by pouring 1 liter of water down the drain.

# HVAC

## Change / Clean HVAC Furnace Filter

**3 Months**

The furnace filter is your homes first line of defense to eliminating dust, and dirt from your homes air. The return air vent in your home will pull air into the furnace, blow the air through the air filter to clean it, heat or cool the air depending on the season, and then send in back out the registers into your home. If your filter is dirty or clogged, it will drastically reduce airflow throughout the house and potentially cause the furnace to shut down. This will also put additional strain on your blower fan because it experiences higher than normal air flow resistance. If left too long it could blow the circuit board of the furnace which will not be covered by warranty. By changing the air filter regularly, you will improve the indoor air quality and air circulation in your home. It is recommended to check your filter every month, and change the filter every 3 months.



**STEP 1** Remove filter vent cover.

**STEP 2** Remove old filter and inspect condition.

**STEP 3** If replacement is needed, install with "Air Flow Arrow" on filter pointing towards furnace.

## Service Furnace / HVAC System

**September/October**

Homeowners rely on the HVAC system to maintain their desired comfort levels. The system is often on and running 24 hours a day, every day. A regular check up on the insides of your furnace, HRV/ERV, and air conditioning will help ensure everything is working efficiently and reduce the chance of any equipment faults. It is recommended that a professional HVAC contractor service your systems as he or she will know your system inside and out. By servicing your equipment in the fall you can be assured you will have heat when the cold weather comes. To maintain your warranty we recommend calling the contractor who installed your equipment. Your homes HVAC system was installed by PLUMBTECH SERVICES; you can easily book a service appointment by calling Rob Dewey @ 905-641-9300.

## Check ERV/HRV Filter

6 Months

The purpose of the ERV/HRV is to introduce outside air into the home to keep the air fresh and avoid stale air becoming trapped in your home. This additional system that is not found on older homes is required in most homes due to the air tight building envelope that encases your entire home. Similar to the furnace filter, the filter in your ERV/HRV will need to be checked and cleaned to ensure sufficient air circulation and comfort. The majority of dirt and debris will be removed from the air with your ERV/HRV filter, but some particles will pass through, and will be caught in your furnace filter. It is good practice to check your ERV/HRV filter every spring and fall.



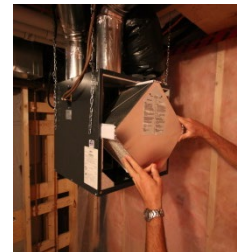
**STEP 1 Turn OFF and UNPLUG unit before servicing.**



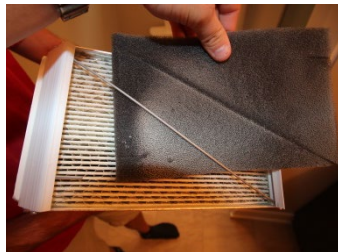
**STEP 2 Remove 2 screws at bottom of box.**



**STEP 3 Remove cover.**



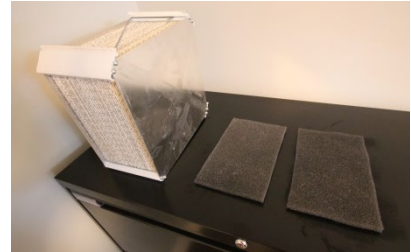
**STEP 4 Gently remove ERV module.**



**STEP 5 Remove black filter pads on module.**



**STEP 6 Rinse pad to remove dirt and dust.**



**STEP 7 Let Air Dry before putting back together.**

## Turn Off / On HRV (if applicable)

May/September

The HRV (Heat Recovery Ventilator) exchanges inside and outside air into your home, while transferring the heat from one air source to the other. The unique climate of Niagara requires the use of an HRV during the fall, winter, and spring months. In the summer, the air is too humid to bring into the home, and most homeowner will open windows on nice days to exchange fresh air into the home. We recommend turning off the HRV at the end of spring as humidity levels begin rise, and turning it back on in the fall when humidity levels have declined.

## Check Air Intakes & Exhaust

Every Month



Remove any leaves, dirt, snow, or animal nests from vents.

It is very important to watch for snow drifts covering vents during winter months. Your home will have several air intakes and exhaust for the various appliances installed including the stove, furnace, water heater, HRV/ERV, etc. If any of these vents are blocked by debris or snow it can greatly reduce energy efficiency and put added strain on the system. Some appliances, like the water heater and furnace, will automatically shut off if it is not able to expel its exhaust. A quick walk around your home to ensure these vents are clear will go a long way in extending the life of your appliances and your overall comfort in your home.

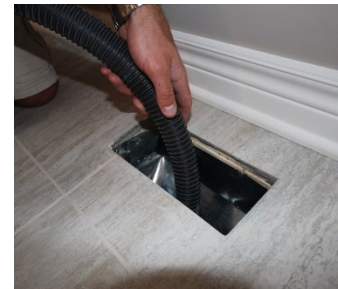
## Check Air Ducts, Remove Covers & Vacuum Dust from Vents

6 Months



STEP 1 Remove register.

The air ducts provide fresh clean air throughout your home along with improving air circulation. The air will leave the furnace and travel through the duct work to each register. Dust and dirt will build up almost anywhere in the home, so to keep the ducts and registers flowing properly, and to maintain a high level of air quality, it is important to



STEP 2 Vacuum out dust.

clean these vents. A few moments removing the cover and vacuuming the inside will keep your home's air fresh and clean.

## Inspect / Clean Air Conditioner (if applicable)

Weekly

The air conditioner is responsible for cooling and dehumidifying the air in your home during the summer months. To maintain its high efficiency, it is important to clean the grills and grates of debris. Without proper airflow through the condenser, the A/C unit will have difficulty keeping up with your cooling demands. In the spring and fall airborne objects can blow around and clog the coil of the A/C. **Check the Unit Weekly and Remove Any Grass Clippings / Tall Weeds, or Other Coil Obstructions.**

## Clean Humidifier (if applicable)

1 Year

The humidifier is attached to your HVAC system, and is responsible for maintaining desired humidity levels in your home. In the cold winter months, the air outside becomes dry and will resultantly make the air inside your home dry as well. If you have hardwood floors, it is extremely important to maintain a relative humidity level between 45%-55% or the floor will shrink. To maintain the high efficiency of the system you will need to clean/replace the drip pad every fall **before** turning on the heat cycle.



# INTERIOR

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## **Clean Windows & Window Screens**

**1 Year**

To keep clean fresh air circulating through your home, it is important to clean the window screens. Similar to a furnace filter, the window screens will build up dust and dirt particles over time which will lead to an unsightly appearance. Most window screens can be easily removed, and cleaned with a damp cloth.

## **Clean Out Dryer Exhaust Pipe of Lint**

**6 Months**

The dryer exhaust pipe expels the dryer air to the outside. This pipe can build up with lint which can pose a serious fire hazard. This pipe can be cleaned out by lifting the flaps at the exterior vent and pulling out lint. Always use your dryer. Never hang dry any clothing inside your home, it will cause mould. We recommend to hard pip dryer connections.

## **Inspect & Replace Weather Stripping around Windows / Doors**

**6 Months**

Weather stripping is an essential system in your home that to create a seal between windows and doors, and the frame of the respective component. While living in your home, and moving furniture in, the weather stripping can be damaged. Small rips, cuts, and marks are okay, but large voids and missing weather stripping can create locations for air to seep in and out. Weather stripping gets worn with use. Inspect and replace it as required.

## **Inspect Door / Window Locks & Latches**

**1 Year**

The door and window latches keep you safe from unwanted visitors. But not all windows and doors are used equally, and the window you last closed a few months ago can easily go unnoticed for long periods of time. Quickly inspect and test each lock and latch to ensure its functioning properly and offering the protection and security you expect. Make sure all screws in door handles, latches, and hinges are tight.

**\*\*CAUTION EXTREMELY HOT\*\***

## **Check Fireplace**

**1 Year**

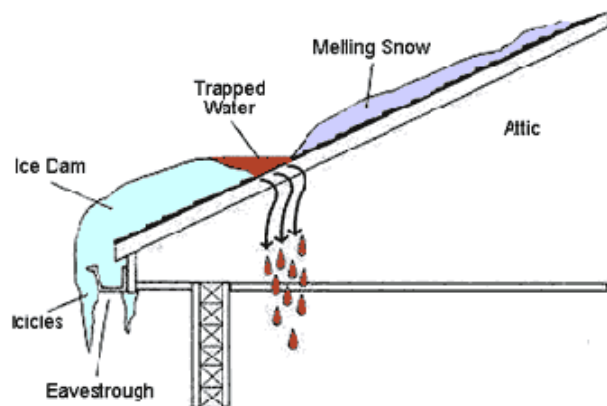
Do NOT use regular glass cleaner to clean fireplace glass. The heat will cause unwanted streaks and can damage the glass. A dedicated fireplace glass cleaner can be purchased at **One Stop Fireplace Shop**. To maintain your warranty, the fireplace must be serviced each year by THE ONE STOP FIREPLACE SHOP. Appointments can be booked by phone @ 905-357-6333.

# ROOF & ATTIC

## Check Roof for Ice Dams, Remove Ice from Overhangs

Each Winter Month

Ice damming can be a nightmare for any homeowner and their roof. In the winter months, the snow on your roof will often freeze and thaw as the outside temperatures fluctuate. An Ice dam can begin to form if the thawed snow does not have the chance to reach the eaves. Over time the snow will melt and



freeze on the roof, which in turn, will block future melting snow from making it to the eaves, and will freeze on top of the forming ice dam. The problem arises when this water backs up below the shingles and perpetrates your roof sheathing. It is critical to monitor your roof in the winter for ice dams in roof valleys and eaves troughs. If ice damming occurs call a trusted professional to remove the ice to prevent damage to your home.

## Check Downspouts / Eaves Troughs & Clean Debris

6 Months

The eaves trough and downspout provide a channel for water to travel around your house during rain events. It will discharge at pre-determined locations, to minimize water erosion, and keep windows and doors clear of unwanted water. Leaves, pine needles, and other debris can build up and block the flow of water, causing the troughs to over flow in unpredictable places. Checking these twice a year should help eliminate any unwanted rain from trickling over the edge. If you have mature trees nearby it is important to check your eaves troughs frequently when the tree is shedding leaves or seeds.

## Check Attic Insulation

6 Months

The attic is designed as an outdoor space that should be close to the outdoor air temperature. The insulation in your attic will keep your home warm, and help reduce any heat loss from the ceiling in the home. To make sure the home is properly insulated, the blown insulation should appear evenly distributed across the ceiling. Sometimes this insulation can move if a strong wind blows in through your soffit.

# EXTERIOR

## Make Sure Gas Meter is Free of Ice & Snow

Each Winter Month

The gas meter is directly connected to the main gas line on your street. It is important to keep this meter clear of ice and snow. In the event of emergencies it must be quickly turned off to keep you and your neighbours safe. Ensure the ON/OFF valve is clear to move at all times.

## Check Window Wells for Debris

6 Months

The window wells provide a location for any water around the basement windows to drain to the exterior weeping tiles around the home and prevent potential flooding. If there is debris in the window well, it will not perform the way it was designed and water will build up in the well. This could lead to water coming in through the window and flooding your basement. Please ensure only stone is in the window well, and not on the window sill. Remove any debris including leaves, dirt, paper, tarps, etc.



STEP 1 Remove leaves, dirt, garbage, etc.



STEP 2 Make sure stone is only in well and not on window sill.

## Inspect Exterior Finishes for Secure Attachment

1 Year



STEP 1 Identify loose exterior items.

Your home was built with high quality components designed for the Canadian climate. The exterior finishes on your home offer character, and charm while protecting your home from the elements. During extreme weather, and with large fluctuations in temperatures over the course of a year, the various finishes will move, expand, and contract at different rates. This can cause some pieces to become loose and potentially dangerous. The inspection of finishes like: eaves troughs, gutters, siding, stone, wood trim, etc., for secure attachment is recommended to prevent more severe situations in the future.



STEP 2 Properly re-secure items.

### **Check Caulking around Windows/Doors**

**Spring / Fall**

The caulking around windows and doors on the exterior of your home helps prevent water from penetrating the wall cavity. While these are all sealed during construction, as the different materials move, shrink, and are exposed to the sun, they can pull away from each other, leaving small holes or gaps. Ensure the use of the proper caulk for the application (Silicone, Acrylic).

### **Aerate, Water, & Fertilize Lawn**

**1 Year**

The lawn is the first thing people see at your home, and many homeowners pride themselves for having the greenest lawn on the block. The secret to having a thick green lawn is maintenance. While many homeowners will just throw grass seed from the “green” bag, their efforts and money are often wasted because that seed has nowhere to grow. Aerating the lawn first can increase your success of a greener, thicker lawn. There are two types of aerating (spike and plug), we recommend the plug type as the most effective. An aerator will pull a small plug, about ½” round and 2” deep, out of the ground and onto the lawn. This approach to making a thicker lawn is based on increasing the surface area of your lawn. Instead of a flat surface, each plug hole has turned 1/4 square inch into over 1 square inch of lawn, exposing more area for grass to grow and seeds to flourish. Watering your lawn is also important to promote a green, healthy lawn.

### **Test Garage Door Operation & Lubricate Chain / Track Wheels**

**1 Year**

The garage doors allow you to quickly enter your home, with your vehicle, and avoid undesirable weather. A well maintained garage door will operate quickly and quietly. Firstly, identify if your garage door runs on a chain drive or a belt drive system. There are two parts of the garage door system that require maintenance to achieve proper operation. The chain drive, which attaches the motor to the garage door lifting system and the track wheels. The track wheels can seize causing additional wear on the side tracks. Cleaning and lubing these parts once a year will reduce your chances of being caught in the rain or snow. Call TOUCHSTONE DOORS for annual service @ 905-684-2600

### **In-Ground Sprinklers Winterization**

**1 Year**

Unlike most other water and sewer services buried underground (typically more than 4’ below grade), the sprinkler system is installed just below the surface of the soil. In the winter months, the ground will freeze up to 4’ below grade, and if there is water in your sprinkler system, the pipes and sprinkler heads will burst due to the frozen expanded water. To prevent this, we suggest homeowners drain the sprinkler system in the fall, before freezing temperatures. All systems vary in complexity so it is recommended to have a professional come and drain the system. To have your system drained call Alfred at ALL GREEN @ 905-651-0770.

# TROUBLESHOOTING & FAQ

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Always seek the advice of a professional if you do not feel comfortable completing any of these tasks. This section will cover many of the questions or typical issues that homeowners have come to us in the past about. It will provide any tips or tricks unique to the situation to help save you time and frustration. Before requesting a service call, homeowners are encouraged to look over this section for a solution as our Customer Care Team may refer you to this section before filling out a service request. The solutions offered are to be taken with discretion on your own ability to solve the problem in a safe manner.

## TROUBLESHOOTING

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### NO POWER TO EXTERIOR PLUGS, BATHROOM PLUGS, OR KITCHEN PLUGS

**Step 1:** The GFCI has likely tripped. Press the **RESET** button located on the receptacle.

**Step 2:** If the problem persists check electrical panel in basement. On inside of panel door, there will be a detailed list of all breakers, find the corresponding breaker and ensure it is in the **ON** position (likely the same position of the rest of the breakers).

**NOTE:** These GFCI receptacles will control multiple receptacles. ex. Kitchen, exterior, bathroom.

**NOTE:** You will need to switch the breaker completely OFF before being able to turn back ON.

### LIGHT FIXTURE NOT WORKING

**Step 1:** If light is operated by 3-way switch, try both switches.

**Step 2:** Replace light bulb.

**Step 3:** Check breaker.

### PLUGS & SWITCHES NOT WORKING

**Step 1:** Check electrical panel and ensure respective breaker has not tripped.

### COMPLETE POWER LOSS

**Step 1:** Check with local utility company for power outages.

**Step 2:** If you are the only house without power on your street call the electrician specified for your community listed in the Emergency Contact section (first page) of this manual.

## **TOILET DOES NOT FLUSH PROPERLY**

**Step 1:** Inspect for potential clog, use plunger to remove

**Step 2:** New toilets adhere to strict water efficiency requirements. Try holding the lever down for a longer period of time until toilet has completed its flush cycle.

## **TOILET CONTINUES TO RUN AFTER FLUSHING**

**Step 1:** Remove tank lid, ensure flapper device is connected to flush lever with chain or cord.

**Step 2:** If the problem persists, call **Plumbtech & Heatech**.

## **SUMP PUMP MALFUNCTION**

**Step 1:** Make sure sump pump is plugged in and respective breaker at electrical panel is **ON**.

**Step 2:** Lift pit cover and remove any accumulated debris in pit that is blocking pump inlet.

**Step 3:** Make sure exterior discharge pipe is not obstructed by snow or debris.

## **TICKING SOUND IN WALLS**

**Step 1:** This is a common occurrence from drain pipes expanding and contracting as warm and cold water are washed away.

## **LEAK IN PLUMBING SUPPLY LINES**

**Step 1:** The kitchen sink and toilets are supplied with water shut off valves. Turn off respective valve for leaking device.

**Step 2:** For any other leak, close shut off valve located at water main in basement.

**Step 3:** For hot water leaks, close shut off valve located at hot water heater.

## **LEAK IN PLUMBING DRAIN LINES**

**Step 1:** Stop using fixture until drain line is repaired or replaced. Call **Plumbtech & Heatech** for service.

## **WATER HEATER NOT TURNING ON**

**Step 1:** Ensure power is plugged in.

**Step 2:** Check vent at exterior is clear of debris / snow.

**Step 3:** Check gas valve and heat dials are turned on at blower motor and heat dial.

**Step 4:** The water heater is a rental unit. Call water heater supplier for service, phone number is located on unit.

## **FURNACE CHECKLIST**

- Step 1:** If thermostat batteries are dead an indicator light will flash, replace batteries.
- Step 2:** Set thermostat to **HEAT/COOL** cycle.
- Step 3:** Check furnace breaker at electrical panel is in **ON** position.
- Step 4:** Check furnace switch is **ON**
- Step 5:** Gas valve to furnace is turned on (lever direction in line with pipe).
- Step 6:** Inspect filter is clean and not clogged.
- Step 7:** Check exterior exhaust vent is clear / free of debris and snow.
- Step 8:** Have you changed thermostat? (Ensure compatibility)
- Step 9:** Have you recently had A/C unit installed? Did installer demonstrate heat system still operating?
- Step 10:** Call Rob Dewey at **Plumbtech & Heatech Services @ 905-641-9300**

## **UNEVEN TEMPERATURES AROUND HOME**

- Step 1:** Inspect, clean, or replace furnace filter as needed.
- Step 2:** Heat balance home by opening or closing floor register vents to adjust air flow to areas.
- Step 3:** Large rooms, rooms with large windows, rooms above garages, and rooms with multiple exterior walls may present extra difficulty in even heating.

## **AIR CONDITIONER UNIT NOT SUPPLYING COOL AIR**

- Step 1:** Check for clogged or dirty filter and clean as necessary.
- Step 2:** If thermostat is too low it can freeze up the condenser unit resulting in unit failure. Turn up thermostat if it was set for an extreme cold temperature.
- Step 3:** Make sure programmable thermostats do not vary by more than 2 degrees for temperature settings.

## **DAMPNESS AROUND BASEMENT WALLS**

- Step 1:** Most times this is caused by condensation. Use a dehumidifier in the basement to remove excess moisture in basement air.
- Step 2:** Do NOT air dry cloths in home.
- Step 3:** Turn on bathroom exhaust fans to remove any moist air.
- Step 4:** Keep objects away from foundation walls to allow for proper air circulation.

## **CRACKS ON BASEMENT CONCRETE SLAB**

- Step 1:** Cracks are common during the curing on concrete. Attention is need if the crack is greater than ¼" wide.

## CONDENSATION ON WINDOWS

Condensation will form in any home, new or old, if there is excess moisture in the home. This is a common occurrence that can quickly be dealt with. Please remember there are a number of factors that influence humidity levels: hanging clothes to dry (please avoid this), having many plants, not running fans when needed, the number of people in the house, etc.

**Step 1:** Check relative humidity levels in home are between 45%-55%

**Step 2:** Turn on exhaust fans in bathrooms and range hood fan to expel moist air.

**Step 3:** Ensure dryer vent is properly attached to exhaust vent.

**Step 4:** Use dehumidifier in basement to remove excess water from air. This can be required more during the first few years as the home dries out.

**Step 5:** Lower or turn off humidifier.

**Step 6:** Ensure window coverings are open slightly to allow air flow around windows.

## HARDWOOD FLOORS HAVE GAPS, CUPS, OR ARE CREAKING

Hardwood floors are delicate flooring options and will often respond very quickly to changes in temperatures and moisture levels in the home.

If you experience cupping in your hardwood floors, your home's air is too moist, follow these steps to reduce the relative humidity level in your home:

**Step 1:** Turn on dehumidifier.

**Step 2:** Turn on exhaust fans in bathrooms and range hood fan.

**Step 3:** Monitor relative humidity levels in home (Ideal range (45% - 55% R.H.))

If creaking or gapping has occurred, your hardwood has shrunk due to low relative humidity levels. Follow these steps to correct the problem:

**Step 1:** Adjust humidifier level higher to add moisture to the air.

**Step 2:** Turn off dehumidifier and raise A/C temperature 1 degree.

**Step 3:** During summer open a window and let in fresh air. (Do not leave open)

## GAS FIREPLACE NOT TURNING ON

**Step 1:** Ensure gas line is turned on.

**Step 2:** Make sure pilot flame is on.

**Step 3:** Call for fireplace servicing. It is common for insects to block fireplace burners.

## FOUL SMELL COMING FROM FLOOR DRAINS

**Step 1:** If the heating or cooling equipment is not running, the floor drains can dry up.

**Step 2:** This smell comes from the dried out floor drains.

**Step 3:** Pour 1 liter of water down the drain to fill the drain traps and stop the odor.



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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**Q: I installed under cabinet lighting in my kitchen after closing, but the switch does not turn them on or off.**

A: If you installed under cabinet lighting in your kitchen after closing, you will need to have the wires in your kitchen hooked up by a certified electrician. The wires left hanging below your cabinets are not live, as this would present a severe risk of electrical shock to you and your family. Please call the electrician specified for your community, you can find this information under the Emergency Contact section (first page) of this manual. Please note, we recommend the installation of “LED” lighting.

**Q: My bathroom toilet continues to run long after I have flushed it.**

A: Lift the back cover off the tank of the toilet and make sure the pull chain attached to the handle is not caught on anything. If the chain is caught or there is an obstruction in the valve flap at the bottom of the tank, simply remove the obstruction or release the chain. Sometimes dirt builds up on the rubber seal. Rub your finger over the seal to clean it.

**Q: I have flicked a switch in the home, but it does not appear to do anything.**

A1: When a fireplace is installed, there are 2 nearby switches to control the flame and fan separately. When the fan switch is turned on the fan will not always turn on immediately, as it has to wait for the box to heat up.

A2: Some receptacles in the house have a switch capability for use with a lamp or power system. It is possible this switch could be turning the receptacle ON or OFF.

**Q: The plugs in my kitchen / bathroom / porch are not working, it has 2 buttons but I don't know what they do.**

A: These plugs are called Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters (GFCI) which protects you from electrical shock. There are TEST and RESET buttons on the plug which test if the plug is still functioning properly. By pressing the TEST button, the receptacle will ground itself out and should no longer provide power. You can then press the RESET button which will reset the receptacle back to proper working order. If you have pressed the RESET button but it still does not work, please contact a professional to identify the problem.

**Q: There are spaces between my brick / stone that are not filled with mortar. Did the bricklayers miss a spot and should these spaces be filled?**

A: These gaps should NOT be filled. They are purposely left open to help the wall cavity breathe and wick off excess moisture. If you fill these holes, you could cause moisture damage to the exterior walls of the home.

**Q: My basement walls look wet and I am concerned about mould formation on the walls and ceiling, is this normal?**

A: Yes, this dampness on the foundation walls is expected during the first few years after the home was built. Concrete is known to sweat during the first year of curing, as it continues to develop its strength the water from the mix evaporates into the air.

**Q: My basement concrete floor has a crack in it. Why is it cracked and will it be fixed?**

A: Your basement slab was poured after the footings, walls, and roof were constructed. During the process of curing the concrete, the slab can shrink, expand, and settle into place. This movement is a common occurrence, and most slabs will crack to find its final resting location. Since the slab was poured after all structural elements in the home were complete, your homes structural integrity is still firmly intact. This crack is purely cosmetic and does not compromise your homes strength and will not be repaired. Please note, cracks have to be within a specified width to be repaired or considered warrantable.

**Q: Why are there cracks in the drywall at the corners and edges of the ceilings?**

A: This is normal, your house is settling into place as the different products dry at different rates. Different homeowner lifestyles can affect the severity of these cracks from home to home. The drying of these products causes shrinkage which can lead to small cracks at drywall joints. After the first year of your homes life, it will be very close to its final resting position. These cracks can be repaired and it is best to repair them after the first year. Repairing these before the first year can result in the crack coming back because the home is still moving. Please book a date (after 1 year) with our service department to have these cracks repaired.

## SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

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In addition to our provided guide, some of our suppliers offer their own care & maintenance guides required to maintain warranty for their products. This information includes cleaning instructions for your windows, and counter tops, which can be found in your Tarion Package that was given to you on the day of your PDI. Please include this information with that binder for quick reference.