

Frontier Custom Builders Inc.

Caring for Your New Home

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Foundation

Certain care needs to be taken to ensure your foundation system will properly function. By following these simple guidelines, you will enhance the soil condition around the house that will result in improving the performance of the foundation system.

- ❖ Maintain positive drainage at ten (10) to twenty (20) feet around the perimeter of the entire foundation.
- ❖ When using a sprinkler system, ensure the foundation system is evenly watered.
- ❖ Do not let water stand or pond near the foundation.
- ❖ When modifying flower beds, keep the highest level of the bed six (6) inches below the base plate of the house.
- ❖ During periods of little rainfall, trees within twenty (20) feet of the foundation should be thoroughly soaked at least twice a week. Large trees will dehydrate the soil around them resulting in soil shrinkage that in turn puts additional stress on the foundation system.
- ❖ The foundation system should be checked once a month for either sprinkler system leaks or plumbing leaks. Water leaks will hydrate the soil resulting in soil expansion that in turn puts additional stress on the foundation system.

Roofing

Once every three (3) months you should inspect your roof for limbs, leaves, pine needles or other debris that may collect on the roof. It is imperative that the roof be kept clean of all debris. If items are allowed to collect on the roof, the drainage of the roof system will be impaired resulting in damaging water leaks inside the covered structure.

Brick

Cleaning Exterior Brick – Taking care of brick requires very little maintenance. Generally, brick only needs to be washed off periodically to remove dirt that may have splashed on the brick after heavy rains. Follow the guidelines below for washing your brick.

- ❖ Water and stiff brush will clean most brick.
- ❖ A pressure washer can be used, but any pressure in excess of 700 psi can damage the surface of the brick and mortar joints.
- ❖ Do not use muriatic acid or other acids to clean your brick.
- ❖ For difficult stains on the brick, check with the brick supplier for special cleansers.
- ❖ Soft clay bricks, decorated bricks and used bricks are easily damaged. Prior to cleaning your brick, try a small isolated area to ensure the method you are using does not damage the brick or mortar.

Cleaning Interior Brick – Follow the same procedures for maintaining and cleaning brick inside your home that you would for exterior brick. For easier maintenance and cleaning of interior brick, it is recommended that you seal the brick using a penetrating sealer containing tung oil. Your local hardware store should have a variety of penetrating brick sealers containing tung oil for you to choose from.

Stone

Cleaning Exterior and Interior Stone – Taking care of stone requires very little maintenance. Generally, stone only needs to be washed off periodically to remove dirt that may have splashed on the stone after heavy rains. Follow the guidelines below for washing your brick.

- ❖ Water and stiff brush will clean most stone.
- ❖ A pressure washer can be used, but any pressure in excess of 700 psi can damage the surface of the stone and mortar joints.
- ❖ Do not use muratic acid or other acids to clean your stone.
- ❖ For difficult stains on the stone, check with the stone supplier for special cleansers.
- ❖ Some stone are softer than others and are easily damaged. Prior to cleaning your stone, try a small isolated area to ensure the method you are using does not damage the stone or mortar.

Cleaning Interior Brick – Follow the same procedures for maintaining and cleaning brick inside your home that you would for exterior brick. For easier maintenance and cleaning of interior brick, it is recommended that you seal the brick using a penetrating sealer containing tung oil. Your local hardware store should have a variety of penetrating brick sealers containing tung oil for you to choose from.

Stucco

Stucco requires very little maintenance. Most stains and dirt can be removed by washing the stucco with a garden hose. When washing, pre-wet the surface and then start washing the stucco from the bottom up to prevent streaking. You may need a brush or mild cleaners that will not attack portland cement, lime, or oxide pigment colors to clean some areas. Do not use a pressure washer to wash your stucco. Too much water pressure will erode some finishes.

Siding

Siding is an easy product to maintain. You will need to periodically wash and caulk siding to keep it looking new. When washing your siding, start from the bottom and work your way up to prevent streaking. Siding is painted and due to the elements will need to be repainted every several years. It is recommended that you use paint with fungicide to minimize mildew growth that is common in humid climates and moist shady areas. Mildew can removed be from the outside of the house using household bleach.

Stained Exterior Doors

Stained doors have to be re-varnished at least once a year to protect the door and keep the door looking good. Stained doors that are exposed to direct sunlight will have to be re-varnished twice a year. Use a good quality varnish. Failure to keep a good coat of varnish on the door can result in permanent damage to the door.

Exterior and Interior Caulking

Every six (6) months you should check the exterior and interior caulk around your residence. Over time caulk will shrink and crack resulting in possible areas for air and moisture to enter. Some of the areas you need to check include:

- ❖ Windows
- ❖ Doors
- ❖ Thresholds
- ❖ Tubs
- ❖ Showers
- ❖ Flashing
- ❖ Metal Roof Pans
- ❖ Fireplace Caps
- ❖ Sinks

Air Conditioning and Heating

The maintenance schedule for these units is contained in the specific warranty documentation that you received for these units at closing.

Hot Water Heaters

The maintenance schedule for these units is contained in the specific warranty documentation that you received for these units at closing.

Remote Gas Fireplaces

The maintenance schedule for these units is contained in the specific warranty documentation that you received for these units at closing.

Wood Burning Fireplaces

The maintenance schedule for these units is contained in the specific warranty documentation that you received for these units at closing.

Garbage Disposals

To clean your garbage disposal, grind ice cubes regularly in the disposal. Then use hot water and baking soda once a month to prevent residual grease and soap build up. If your disposal becomes frozen, there is allen wrench fitting on the bottom side of the disposal, which can be reached from inside the lower cabinet. Use the appropriate size allen wrench to loosen the disposal motor. If you have to remove contents from the disposal area, make sure the circuit breaker to the disposal is turned off and the disposal is disconnected from the power source. Severe injury will occur if the disposal is turned on while you are cleaning the disposal.

Smoke Detectors

Your smoke detector may be the only device that saves your families life. Check all of your smoke detectors once a month by pressing the test button. An alarm should sound. Once a year, change the batteries in your smoke detectors. Periodically clean your smoke detectors. Dust or dirt can interfere with your smoke detectors sensors causing them to malfunction.

Other Appliances

The maintenance schedules for these units are contained in the specific warranty documentation that you received for these units at closing.

Carpet

Carpet rarely wears out in terms of fiber wearing away. Rather, its appearance simply deteriorates over time to a point at which it is no longer acceptable. The information given within this booklet pertains to carpets made of synthetic, or man-made, fibers and may not be appropriate for natural fibers such as wool

A comprehensive carpet care program consists of four elements:

- ❖ Preventive maintenance
- ❖ Regular vacuuming
- ❖ Removal of spots and spills
- ❖ Overall cleaning on a regular basis

Walk off mats should be used at all entrances to absorb soil and moisture.

Use coasters under legs of furniture to distribute weight and prevent crushing the pile.

When moving heavy objects on carpet, use large pieces of cardboard under pieces as a protective barrier.

Note: No carpet is absolutely stain proof. Some carpets have stain resistant treatments to improve your ability to clean up stains, not prevent stains. Carpets with soil resistant treatments reduce the rate of soiling, but all carpets require regular care and maintenance.

Prompt attention to spots and spills is essential. No carpet is stain proof, although many are stain resistant, which allows time to act. Be on guard at all times when a fresh stain has occurred.

Absorb wet spills as quickly as possible by blotting repeatedly with white paper towels or cloth towels. Always blot; never rub or scrub abrasively, as a fuzzy area may result. When blotting, work from the outer edge in toward the center of the spot to avoid spreading the spill. Always follow up with water to remove detergent residue that may become sticky and cause rapid re-soiling. Draw out any remaining moisture by placing several layers of white towels over the spot and weight them down with a heavy object that will not transfer color. A jug of water is perfect.

Call your carpet dealer for recommended cleaning products. Always test cleaners in an out of the way place, such as closets, to determine color fastness.

Wood Floors

- ❖ Dust mop your floor to keep it looking new and free of harmful dust and dirt. Dirt particles left on the floor can mar the surface. *Do not use a vacuum with a beater bar.*
- ❖ Use doormats at outside room entrances and in front of kitchen sink and refrigerator to help keep dirt and grit off your floor and to prevent excessive wear damage.
- ❖ Wipe up spills immediately. Use manufacturer's recommended products for general maintenance.
- ❖ Buff your floors periodically with an Orbital Buffer. Use a manufacturer's approved cleaner with a white nylon pad or terrycloth bonnet to remove scuffs and minor scratches and to restore luster.
- ❖ Use felt pads under all furniture legs.
- ❖ Be aware that pet claws will scratch your floor. *This is not covered by any warranty.*
- ❖ Protect your floors from direct sunlight.

Do Not:

- ❖ Do not use the following products on your floors:
 - Ammonia
 - Fantastik
 - Formula 409
 - Endust
 - Pledge
 - Future
 - Mop N Glo
 - Murphy's Oil
 - Other similar products
- ❖ Do not allow water to stand on your floors for any length of time. Check areas such as your powder room vanity for any small leaks.
- ❖ Do not walk across your floor in high-heeled shoes or with any sharp object protruding from your shoes.
- ❖ Do not allow furniture to rest on the floor on small metal tips or hard domes.

Ceramic Tile

Floors, Countertops, Backsplashes

Ceramic tile pieces, regardless of size, will vary somewhat in color. This is a fired product of a kiln process that gives a durable finish that will last for years. However, each tile may vary in color and finish.

Most ceramic/porcelain tiles do not require a sealer, although the grout joint is porous. The use of a grout sealer will help retain the natural color of the grout and will help keep food from staining it.

Frontier Custom Builders, Inc., does not seal grout joints unless the process is agreed to before the laying of tile begins. We will gladly give you a price on doing this process or instruct you on

how to do it yourself. Most of the tile showrooms in Houston sell grout sealer and will be happy to provide you with instructions.

To clean your ceramic tile, you use warm water and a soft cotton mop or terry cloth towels. We do not recommend that you use vinegar, bleach, or acid as part of your weekly maintenance program.

Please feel free to question your supplier as to the care and maintenance of the product you selected.

Marble

To clean your marble floors, simply use warm water and a clean cotton mop or terry cloth towel. Do not use abrasives, such as a soft scrub, that will dull shiny finishes.

After many years of use, marble will sometimes lose some of its shine. There are companies that can buff the surface to make it look new again. Make sure you use a qualified company. Improper buffing can cause irreparable damage.

Granite

To clean your granite surfaces, apply a bath of warm soapy water with a soft terry cloth and then buff to a dry finish. Do not use abrasives, such as a soft scrub, that will dull shiny finishes.

After many years of use, granite will sometimes lose some of its shine. There are companies that can buff the surface to make it look new again. Make sure you use a qualified company. Improper buffing can cause irreparable damage.

Slate

It is recommended that slate be sealed with a professional sealer. See the slate provider for recommended brand names and application. Frontier Custom Builders, Inc., will gladly give you a price on doing this process.

Protect all exterior doorways and wet areas with rugs to prevent staining or discoloration of slate.

To clean your surfaces surfaces, apply a bath of warm soapy water with a soft terry cloth and then buff to a dry finish. Do not use abrasives, such as a soft scrub, that will dull shiny finishes.

Solid Surface Kitchen Counters

High-density solid surface kitchen counters such as Corian and Bakron are stain and scratch resistant. However, stains and scratches may still occur; therefore, you must be aware of the upkeep and care of these products so that they can serve you well for many years.

- ❖ Do not let hot items, such as pots and pans, or any heat producing appliances touch the surfaces of Corian or Bakron. Always use a buffer such as a cutting board or trivet to act as a barrier against excessive heat damage.
- ❖ Always use a cutting board in food preparation.

- ❖ Clean stains with a Scotch-Brite pad and detergent.
- ❖ Do not use any harmful chemicals in your maintenance program.

Contact the manufacturer for additional information regarding the maintenance of these products.

Cultured Marble

Because of the hard gel-coat surface and non-porous surface, cultured marble resists staining. Care is very simple. Routine cleaning with a soft cloth or sponge or non-abrasive aerosol foam cleaner is all that is normally needed to give many years of trouble-free services. Do not use harsh abrasive cleaners.

Plumbing Fixtures

Care should be given to the cleaning of your plumbing fixtures. Although the finishes of these products are extremely durable, harsh abrasives or polish can damage them.

To clean your plumbing fixtures, simply wipe them gently with a damp cloth and blot dry with a soft towel. Do not use a soft scrub or other abrasive products.

Warning: Scrubbing Bubbles Bathroom Cleaner and Lysol Basin Tub and Tile Cleaner must not be used on the clear knob handles and levers. Use of these cleaners can result in cracked or severely damaged handles. If overspray gets into the handles, immediately wipe them dry with a soft cotton cloth.

New Sod and Plants

Check with your landscaper for specific watering instructions for your new yard. Typically new sod and plants need to be watered more frequently during periods of hot temperatures until they have established their root systems.