

Handy Hints for Home Care and Maintenance - Part One

Now that you have moved into your Beautiful Brand New Covington Home the fun begins! Moving your furniture in, decorating your rooms, hanging the curtains, putting up your blinds, and getting your **Dream Home** all 'settled in.' You may even be contemplating some DIY projects to make your New Home perfectly 'YOU.'

You are very busy indeed! That is why we have thought about what you need to know as you move into your New Home. Here are some Helpful Pointers on how to care and maintain your New Home.

- **It is very common (in fact it is a given) that **concrete cracks**. When you get those cosmetic concrete cracks we recommend you **caulk** them with concrete caulk. A good brand is **Sika Flex**. There are other good brands available at your local hardware store as well.
- **You may not have thought of window **well covers**, but if you wish to purchase them we can give you the name a number of a couple good contractors. Our window wells are part of the foundation, so the covers are each custom made. This is personal preference, so it is up to you.
- **Your New Home has been graded for **proper drainage**. It is very important that you **do NOT alter** or modify the drainage and grading. To do so will void the warranty. Work with your landscaper and any other contractor you may hire to ensure that that drainage is not modified.
- **Always leave the downspout tip outs in the **DOWN** position. If you or a Contractor you hire buries the downspouts, make sure they are

properly directed towards the original drainage Swales that we installed prior to your move in.

- **Always **maintain** your drainage **Swales** for proper flow of water **AWAY** from your home.
- **Do **NOT** plant anything next to the foundation that requires **spray irrigation**, and keep all plants on drip irrigation a minimum of 10" away from the foundation.
- **Make sure to properly **winterize your irrigation** every year. If you are uncertain how to do this, then hire a professional.
- **Do **not** ever leave a **garden hose** attached to a hose bib outside during the winter or ANY time the temperature falls below freezing.
- **In the Springtime perform a proper **start up** on your irrigation system.
- **To keep the **wheels and tracks** on your overhead garage door in proper shape use **silicone** spray.
- **There are **weep holes** located on the exterior of the windows in order to facilitate drainage of water from driving rains. Keep these holes **unclogged** and free of debris. And do NOT ever caulk them in.
- **Remember to keep your **window tracks clean** and free from dirt and debris. Use a light coat of silicone spray if your window sticks in the tracks.
- **Change your **furnace filter** monthly.
- **If your furnace ever stops working try these few steps **prior to calling** for service. It could save you money on a service call. **(1)** check the furnace circuit breaker and power switch **(2)** check to see if the furnace filter is dirty **(3)** check to see if outside vent is covered.

- **Have your **furnace serviced yearly** after the first year or two.
- **Change the **filter** on your **humidifier** (if you have one) twice during the winter and make sure it is set for Summer and Winter settings. And always make sure the humidity is set at the manufacturer recommendation.
- **Periodically check in your **mechanical room** to ensure all appliances are working and clean.
- **To prevent any laundry room drain or floor drain from **sewer odors** add 1 cup water mixed with vegetable oil and pour down drain.
- **Make sure to properly secure the **drain hose** on your washer into the washer drain.
- **Use **RainX** to help keep your **shower** enclosure(s) clean and spot free. Also keep. Squeegee on hand to squeegee off water after use.
- **Barkeepers Friend is a GREAT cleaning agent that **helps to remove scuffs** from stainless steel and porcelain.
- **Do **NOT** use any **abrasive** cleaners on faucets and other metal finishes.
- **Sealing of granite is a personal preference. Please contact the granite fabricator and installer if you would like to **seal your granite**.
- **Tile and grout is not sealed -in the homes we build we use **Denshield** behind the tile for **water resistant construction**. Therefore, sealing the grout is not necessary. However, sealing grout and tile is personal preference.
- **We recommend that you use **Bona hardwood** solution to clean your hardwood floors. This is available at any home improvement store.
- **Use **mild soap detergent** to clean granite, laminate, and others surfaces in

your new home. We recommend that you research cleaning detergents prior to using them on your surfaces.

- **Use **mild soap** and/ or water to clean your **cabinets**. The cabinets are **prefinished** and many cleaning agents have a negative impact on them.
- **Check your **sprinkler clock** during and after a lightning or thunderstorm, as the electrical current from the **Lightning may trip the GFI** and turn off the power to the clock.
- **Your appliances have what we like to call '**New Characteristics.**' You will want to **run your appliances** before using. Run the dishwasher a couple times, fill a couple pitchers with water from the water line in your refrigerator, make a batch of ice and throw it out, turn the oven on a few times to burn off any residue from manufacturing, and turn the fireplace on (with the windows open) for a few hours.
- **For any questions pertaining to **characteristics and care of stucco**, please follow this link to the manufacturers website.
<http://omega.omega-products.com/pg--50--Technical-Bulletins.aspx>
- **Use the paint that we leave for you to touch up your paint as needed. Generally paint will not blend very well after a year or so. We leave touch up paint kits for you to touch up your paint, but we do stress that **after a year** the paint changes in chemical composition and **will not touch up as well.**