



# HOME OWNERS GUIDE

## FORWARD

---

Your Barr home is built to give you years of comfort and pleasure. Barr Homes has prepared this Homeowners Guide to help you get the most from your Barr Homes experience.

We begin with an introduction to your involvement in the design and construction process. On several occasions during the process, we seek your input for finishes and construction review. Your participation is important to ensure your new home is built to your specifications.

In the Homeowners Guide, we outline Barr Homes' After Sales Service. If you have a concern or a problem after you move into your new home, we provide details on warranties, repairs and where to go for help.

The largest sections of the Homeowners Guide are devoted to the care and maintenance of the systems and components of your new home. While many of these features are relatively care free, timely maintenance will prolong their life, help avoid problems and keep systems operating at peak efficiency.

The rear sections of the Homeowners Guide contain useful resources, from community contact numbers to a section for warranty information and operating instructions.

As well, through the Tarion Home Warranty Program, Barr Homes provides you with the Homeowner's Package when your home is registered with the program.

The Barr Homes Homeowners Guide and the Tarion Homeowner Information Package are important tools to help you maintain your new home and protect your investment. Keep these resources handy and refer to them often as they contain a wealth of useful information about your home.

# THE BUILDING PROCESS

---

## PRE-CONSTRUCTION MEETING

An exciting part of any new home purchase is choosing how your home will look. At Barr Homes pre-construction meeting, you have the opportunity to customize the finishes of your home to reflect your personality and lifestyle. Select from the latest in kitchen cabinetry and hardware as well as a vast array of flooring collections.

Once your Agreement of Purchase and Sale is firm, Barr Homes will contact you to schedule your first appointment, typically within two weeks of your firm-up date. It is important to note that you have 14 days from your deal becoming 'firm' to finalize all your selections, upgrades and changes. Any delays may result in a change in the closing date for your new home.

## PRE-CONSTRUCTION MEETING: 60 TO 90 MINUTES

Once Barr Homes receives your home plans from the designer, we will contact you to arrange an appropriate time and date to meet at our office to discuss the plans and make any changes. During this meeting you review the working drawings or related documentation (referred to as "change orders") for your home to ensure any structural changes you have made are reflected in the "drawings" and/or "change orders". Note: non-structural changes such as flooring materials or electrical changes are typically reflected on change orders.

We will introduce you to our selection of quality products. You will be shown all the standard specifications included in your new home. In addition, you will be introduced to our custom cabinet supplier, Countrywide Kitchens. If you would like to customize your kitchen or bathroom, an appointment will be confirmed for you to meet with Countrywide's designer.

## FRAME CHECK WALK-THROUGH: 30 TO 60 MINUTES

Once the framing and electrical wiring is complete, but prior to installing the drywall, Barr Homes will schedule a walk-through of your new home with the construction site supervisor.

This is an exciting time as you walk around your new home and become familiar with the building process. You have an opportunity to observe the changes you have made as well as gain a general overview of the construction of your home. At this point, you will also choose the locations of your telephone and cable outlets. Our site supervisor will highlight the many extra features found in a Barr Home. Feel free to ask questions as we value your input and observations during this time.

Note: The Occupational health and Safety Act of Ontario must be adhered to at all times. Therefore, safety hats and steel-toed footwear must be worn, and other safety regulations must be followed.

## PRE-DELIVERY INSPECTION: 2 HOURS

Approximately five days prior to your closing date, you (or your designate) and a Barr homes inspector conduct a Pre-Delivery Inspection of the completed home. All damaged, defective, incomplete or missing items are recorded on a Pre-Delivery List. This inspection also allows us to provide an overview

of the system operations in your home. At the end of the inspection, you receive your Pre-Delivery Package. Among other things, the package contains important documents including your Certificate of Completion and Possession (CCP), your Tarion Pre-Delivery Inspection (this should correspond with the Pre-Delivery List), a Tarion Homeowner Information Package and a Barr Homes Surface Damage Report form.

Note: We do not recommend children attend the inspection or that you use the occasion to show your new home to friends or family. The focus of the Pre-Delivery Inspection is to inspect the house and produce accurate written documentation as to its condition prior to your closing date.

At the time of the Pre-Delivery Inspection or shortly afterwards, you will receive the warranties and operation instructions not already included in the Homeowner's Guide. In some cases, such as with your furnace, the information is attached to the appropriate appliance. Store this information in a safe location for future reference.

### **CLOSING AND TAKING OCCUPANCY**

Typically, the week before closing, your lawyer will contact you to arrange a time to sign the appropriate legal documents and secure mortgage and home insurance details. Your lawyer will also arrange for the transfer of funds to Barr Homes' lawyer. Once the transfer of funds is complete and the necessary registration has taken place, your lawyer will provide you with keys to your new home.

Note: Timing is in the hands of the lawyers. Please do not make arrangements for moving vans or delivery of appliances early in the day. It is our experience that final closing and the transfer of keys happen late in the afternoon. Keep this in mind when scheduling your moving van. This could save you money.

# AFTER SALES SERVICE

---

## HOW TO CONTACT OUR AFTER-SALES SERVICE DEPARTMENT

Office: 613-542-4922

EMERGENCY ONLY: 613-561- 8606

Fax: 613-542-2142

Website: [www.barrhomes.ca](http://www.barrhomes.ca)

Email: [lyann.smith@barrhomes.ca](mailto:lyann.smith@barrhomes.ca)

Mail: Barr Homes  
156 Duff Street  
Kingston ON K7L 2I5

## Emergencies

In the back of this guide is a list of Emergency Contact numbers for such things as Hydro and Union Gas. An emergency is anything associated with water penetration, plumbing, heating or electricity that prevents you from using your home or may cause major damage to the house.

## REPORTING DEFICIENCIES

### Pre-Delivery Inspection List

Your Pre-Delivery Inspection list is forwarded to Barr Homes site office directly after the inspection for follow up action. If all the items are not completed prior to your closing date, the site office will work with you to complete them after your move in. Depending on the season or the availability of materials or labor, it may not be possible to complete certain items before you take possession.

### Service Damage Report

Surface finishes and fixtures in your home may become damaged during construction, during moving in, or during regular living activities. Construction related damages that are documented on the Pre-Delivery Inspection List will be repaired or replaced as required. If, upon closing, you discover new damages that were not present at the time of the Pre-Delivery Inspection, we will attempt to deal with these fairly, provided they are properly reported within 24 hours of closing. On your closing date, please take the time to carefully recheck the interior and exterior of the house for damages and, if necessary, fill out the Surface Damage Report form found in your Pre-Delivery Package. Damages already on the Pre-Delivery List do not need to be re-listed on the Surface Damage Report. A Surface Damage Report form must be signed by a site foreman or sales representative and submitted to Barr Homes' head office within 24 hours of closing, in order to be valid. Surface damages that are not properly reported to Barr Homes head office within 24 hours of closing cannot be claimed under warranty.

### 30 Day Form

This is your opportunity to bring to our attention any new concerns you identified after closing. All outstanding Pre-Delivery List items and all new warranty items are documented on a Tarion 30-Day Form. This form is used to initiate the repairs. It is processed at our head office. After the 30-Day Inspection, Barr Homes will not inspect or process any newer items until your Year-End Inspection unless they are of an urgent nature. Please do not submit service requests to the site office at any time since they cannot be processed from that location.

### Exterior Items

If construction activity is ongoing around your home, some of the exterior finishes may not be completed at the time of the 30-Day Inspection. Once all exterior construction is complete, and the landscaping installed, you may inspect them yourself and report any exterior deficiencies on the form provided to you at the 30-Day Inspection (Service Inspection List – Exterior). This allows you to report items that were not apparent at the 30-Day Inspection due to incomplete exterior construction. Unless the items are urgent, Barr Homes will keep your exterior list on file until the Year-End Inspection.

### Urgent Items

If an urgent problem arises that was not apparent during the 30-Day Inspection, it can be reported to Barr Homes head office by phone, fax, email or through our web site ([www.barrhomes.ca](http://www.barrhomes.ca))

### Year-End Form

Approximately one month prior to your first-year anniversary date, we suggest that, as you notice any repair items after the 30-Day Inspection, you prepare a list to bring these items to our attention during the Year-End Inspection. Please contact Barr Homes if you would like our representative to attend your home and do your Year-End Inspection with you. Our Builder's One Year Warranty, outlined at the end of this guide, identifies the items covered under our One Year Warranty service.

### Two Year Form

Approximately one month prior to the second-year anniversary of your closing date, you can report any deficiency items on the Tarion Second Year form (provided in your Tarion Home Warranty Package). Please submit your list as prescribed in the Tarion Home Warranty package online or by fax, email or mail. The Builder's Two-Year Warranty, outlined at the end of this guide, identifies the items covered under our two-year warranty service.

## REPAIRING DEFICIENCIES

### Barr Homes Standards

We are committed to meeting or exceeding the standards of Tarion's Construction Performance Guidelines of the Tarion Warranty Program. This entire book can be accessed via our website links to Tarion's website or by going to [www.tarion.com](http://www.tarion.com) and clicking the Construction Performance Guidelines tab.

### Scheduling Appointments

Business hours for all inspection appointments and service appointments are Monday through Friday between 8:00am and 4:00pm. Please keep in mind that certain items, especially those involving drywall and paint, require several visits on separate dates to complete. Your cooperation and patience are appreciated as we work together to resolve these items. Normally, the 30-Day repairs and the Year-End repairs take two to four days to complete. Seasonal repairs may not happen until suitable weather conditions allow and they do not normally require access to the house.

### Furniture and Personal Items

We will not undertake a repair if there is a risk of damaging furniture or personal items. Please ensure that vulnerable items are safely moved and covered up.

### Sub-Trades

On occasion, a Barr Homes sub-trade will call you directly to schedule a repair date. This can happen if materials are on back order or a follow-up appointment is required. Sub-trades may also repair exterior items on your home without scheduling an appointment, if they are working in your neighborhood.

### Settlement and Shrinkage

During the first year after construction materials dry out, your home goes through a period of minor settlement and shrinkage. This process often results in the appearance of cracks in drywall, concrete, caulking or grout. Nail pops, floor squeaks and door misalignments may also show up. If you would like Barr Homes to address these items, please report them to us at the Year-End Inspection.

Note: Repairs to any settlement cracks or nail pops is a one-time courtesy service provided by Barr Homes and includes patching or caulking as required. The sanding and painting of the affected areas is not included as part of this courtesy service.

### Completing Repairs

With the exception of seasonal items, we strive to complete all items from a Barr Homes 30-Day Form or Year-End Form within four months of the inspection. We use proper materials and workmanship to complete the repairs to meet or exceed current standards. To assist us in keeping your file up to date, please confirm completed items with your initial, either on the service person's copy of the list or on a sub-trade's work order. Once all items on the list are completed, we request your signature on a

separate form. This allows us to keep your file current, and to follow up on incomplete items. On the day of the repairs, our service personnel will be prepared to deal with the items on the relevant form (30-Day or Year-End Form). Service personnel will not have time to deal with new items and cannot report new items on your behalf. Aside from emergencies, Barr Homes will not accept deficiency reports by phone.

## **INTERIOR CARE AND MAINTENANCE**

### **CLIMATE CONTROL – HEATING/COOLING**

#### **FURNACE AND AIR CONDITIONER**

Your home has one of the highest quality heating systems available. The main supply and return ductwork is sealed to reduce leakage.

##### **Troubleshooting**

After settling in to your new home, you may find the heating/cooling system is not balanced to your preferences. Certain rooms may be warmer or cooler than you desire. You can change the balancing by adjusting the dampers installed in the individual duct leading to each room. If you wish to adjust dampers, they can be accessed either from the unfinished area of the basement or by removing the heat register and reaching in to the duct. To identify which duct supplies which room, have one person in the room and one person in the basement. Remove the floor register in the room and tap inside the duct with a spoon. The sound will carry to the basement. The person in the basement will be able to determine which duct is leading to that particular room.

Note: Balancing changes can seriously affect the overall performance of the heating and cooling system. In particular, if too many dampers are closed, the total airflow from the furnace may be affected and poor overall heating and cooling performance may result.

Cold rooms are often a result of improperly altered balancing, furniture or drapes blocking the vents or dirty furnace filters. The thermostat for the heating and cooling system senses the air temperature at that location. During periods of extremely hot or cold weather, it is not uncommon to have a temperature difference of as much as 5° C between different areas within the house. If the furnace does not seem to warm the rest of the house, ensure a lamp or some other heat source is not warming the thermostat.

Furnaces are equipped with a shut off switch for maintenance and repair purposes. It is located in the basement. If your furnace fails to start, ensure this switch has not been accidentally shut off.

##### **Maintenance**

The manufacturers' warranties, operating and maintenance information for your furnace and air conditioner (if installed) are contained in the rear section of this Homeowners Guide or attached to the side of the furnace plenum.



In order to maintain safe and efficient operation of the furnace and water heater, ensure snow and vegetation do not cover or impede the flow of air through either the air intakes or exhaust vents. Change or clean the furnace filters every two to three months for maximum efficiency. Digital thermostats are battery powered. The batteries will require replacement from time to time.

## CLIMATE CONTROL – VENTILATION AND CONDENSATION

Ventilation is important in your new home. Your home is much more airtight than homes of the past and accidental air leakage is significantly reduced. We have installed an HRV (heat recovery ventilator) to provide a controlled amount of ventilation on a continuous basis. The HRV is unaffected by outdoor weather conditions. It continuously brings in a small amount of fresh air and removes stale, humid air year-round. For occasions when you experience increased levels of humidity and contaminants, the HRV can be turned up to increase the removal rate. Your HRV is a fully ducted heat recovery ventilator system. This is a dramatic improvement over relying on exhaust fans to provide good indoor air quality. The fully ducted HRV installed by Barr Homes continuously extracts contaminated air from sources in the kitchen, bathrooms and laundry area, and exhausts the contaminants directly outdoors before they can circulate to other parts of the house. The result is significantly improved air quality throughout your home. Fresh air, preheated in the HRV, is supplied to the furnace ducting system. To ensure the best distribution of fresh air throughout your home, your furnace fan is intended to operate on a continuous basis.

### Ventilation is Important in your New Home

While your home is new and until it is at least 18 months old, the new materials used to build the house (mainly the lumber and concrete) release moisture as they dry out and cure. This occurs with all new construction and adds a considerable amount of moisture to the indoor air. Condensation or ice on windows is a sign the humidity is too high for the current weather conditions. If the humidity is not controlled, water damage to the window frames, paint and drywall may occur. Damage of this type is not covered under warranty.

## CLIMATE CONTROL – HUMIDITY

Below are a few hints on dealing with excess humidity.

- Run your HRV or exhaust fans continuously except during days of very humidity in the summer or extremely cold days in the winter.
- Do not cover heat registers or block air returns vents
- While bathing, washing or showering, always run the HRV or exhaust fans. Run the range hood on high while cooking. Keep these ventilation devices running for at least 15 minutes afterward to ensure the excess moisture is removed
- Avoid moisture-producing activities, such as hanging wet clothes to dry indoors, running a humidifier, or growing excessive numbers of houseplants, during the first year
- If you have a central air conditioner, run it continuously during the spring, summer and fall.
- Consider installing a dehumidifier in your basement and run it continuously for the first year. Even after the first year, humidity control is very important

The level of humidity in a house is dependent on the lifestyle and number of people living there. As the outside temperature drops during the fall and winter, you should also reduce inside humidity levels. Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation and Health Canada both recommend keeping humidity levels around 30% during very cold weather to avoid condensation. A humidity meter (hygrometer) allows you to monitor humidity changes. Keep in mind that lowering the relative humidity below 30% may affect other items in the house, such as shrinkage cracks in drywall and hardwood flooring. At very cold temperatures, it may be impossible to keep windows completely free of condensation without causing wood to shrink or twist.

### **Maintenance**

Maintain proper humidity levels by maintaining the ventilation devices installed in your home. Clean the HRV filters, HRV exchanger core, HRV inlet grilles and the range hood filter. It is also important to wipe condensation from windows to avoid damage to the finished surfaces. For specific instructions on cleaning your HRV, refer to the manual provided by the manufacturer. Your HRV has exterior intake and exhaust grilles. Regularly inspect and clean the grilles (especially the intake grille) to ensure they are clean.

### **Make the Best Use of Your HRV**

Your HRV is a powerful tool for improving the indoor air quality in your home. You can run it on low speed and clean the filters every few months and it will efficiently and effectively ventilate your whole home. On some occasions, however, you may want to adjust your HRV to better optimize the indoor air quality in your home.

- Consider turning off your HRV during very hot, humid summer days to avoid drawing hot humid air into your house. It will reduce air conditioning costs and keep the house cooler.
- Consider turning off your HRV during the coldest dry winter days to avoid drawing extremely cold dry air into your house. It will reduce heating costs and avoid drying the house too much.
- If you notice condensation on your windows on very cold days during the winter, consider turning the fan speed too high to exhaust moist air and exchange it with fresh dry air. (A simple way to temporarily increase the HRV fan speed is to turn on the bathroom timer for 30 minutes)
- Consider temporarily turning your HRV off, if you detect unpleasant outdoor odors, such as a skunk smell. Once the odor is gone from the outdoor air, turn on your HRV and run it on high for 30 minutes to refresh the indoor air. Ensure snow and vegetation do not cover or impede the flow of air through either the air intakes or the exhaust vents.

### **A Word About Mold**

Ventilation and moisture control are two important tools for controlling the growth of mold in your home. Mold spores are allergens to some people and, if left unchecked, molds can damage your house. Provided they have sufficient moisture, molds grow at normal room temperatures, on wood, carpet, drywall, soap scum or any organic material.

Avoid mold problems by eliminating potential sources of moisture, such as humid air, leaks, spills, overflows, standing water or condensation. Run your HRV or exhaust fans on high while you and your family bathes, showers and washes and keep it running for at least 15 minutes afterwards. Use the range hood while cooking and also keep it running for at least 15 minutes afterwards. Regular vacuuming, cleaning the furnace filter and cleaning bathroom tiles also prevent mold growth. Outside

the home, maintain proper drainage away from foundation walls, avoid spraying the house with a sprinkler, keep the eaves troughs clean and repair cracked or damaged caulking.

## **CLIMATE CONTROL – INSULATION IN ATTICS AND WALLS**

Your home is one of the best-insulated and sealed houses available today. A well-insulated and sealed house reduces your energy costs and is very comfortable. Your attic is insulated with either batt insulation or blown-in insulation, depending on the slope of the ceiling. Your walls have batt insulation. Your home has a fully sealed interior air-vapor barrier system installed on the interior of the home where it is protected and continuous. Remember, when hanging pictures or other items on exterior walls to attach fasteners into the wood studs or use shallow nails or screws to avoid damaging the vapor barrier. Daylight seen from the attic in the eave area is normal. The soffits and baffles located in this area help ventilate the attic. The roof vents also ventilate the attic and you may see daylight through these, as well. Snow builds up on top of the roof vents and may restrict attic ventilation and cause a buildup of warm humid air in the attic. It is important to keep vents clear of excessive snow. Although your home is very well sealed, it is not air tight, and some drafts may be detected on very windy days. This is normal. Drafts felt in front of windows on very cold days are often due to convective air movement over colder glass surfaces. Range hoods are equipped with dampers; however, they also do not provide a perfect seal.

### **Maintenance**

Maintaining proper attic ventilation from the roof vents is important. After heavy winter storms, this may require clearing snow off the roof vents.

## **ELECTRICAL**

The electric panel installed in your basement contains circuit breakers. Each breaker controls several plug outlets or light fixtures. If you overload one of the circuits, the breaker will trip. Irons, vacuum cleaners, power tools, blow dryers, electric blankets and space heaters are some of the appliances that could trip a breaker. To reset the breaker, first push the tripped switch all the way to the “off” position until it clicks. Then click it back to the “on” position. If the fault reoccurs, there may be too many electrical appliances on that circuit. Receptacles in the bathrooms, certain kitchen receptacles and receptacles on the exterior of your home are the GFCI (Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter) type. They are designed to prevent electrical shocks in moist areas. Pushing the small reset button located on the receptacle itself resets this type of receptacle. A reset button located in one of the bathrooms (normally the powder room) controls all the other bathroom receptacles in your home. Check both the circuit breaker in the main electrical panel and the reset button on the receptacles, if the receptacle is not working.

Smoke alarms/carbon monoxide detectors are connected directly to the house wiring. Low quality candles that give off visible black smoke will eventually cause a smoke alarm to malfunction. Excessive dust or soot from candles may accumulate in the alarm and cause it to sound.

### **Maintenance**

Maintenance includes changing the batteries and cleaning the smoke/CO detectors, changing burnt light bulbs and resetting tripped breakers. A general practice is to change smoke detector batteries twice per year, in the spring at the start of daylight savings time and in the fall when switching back to standard time. To clean the smoke alarms and CO detectors, inspect them to ensure they are free of bugs and dirt and gently vacuum the outside surface. Test your smoke alarms after cleaning.

## **FIREPLACE**

Gas fireplaces are direct vent, sealed combustion units. They draw their combustion air from outside and exhaust the combustion gases out through a vent in the outside wall near the fireplace. Refer to the instruction and warranty booklets (in rear section of Homeowners Guide or with Pre-Delivery Inspection materials) for complete information on the fireplace. There is also a set of operating instructions located behind the grille at the bottom of the fireplace.

Note: The glass and the surrounding mantle assembly become very hot to the touch after extended use of the fireplace. This is normal and is not a fire hazard; however, it can burn flesh. Take care to ensure animals and people do not touch the glass or fireplace surround while the fire is lit.

### **Maintenance**

Gas fireplaces are easy to use and require very little maintenance. The glass window can be removed for cleaning purposes by removing the two screws under the top grille. The pilot light can be left on all year. If it is extinguished, instructions for relighting it are located behind the lower grille. There may be minor oil residues left on your gas fireplace from the manufacturing process. The best way to remove the residue is to burn it off. The first time you use the fireplace, keep it burning continuously for about six hours. During this time, the unit may emit a burning smell, and a small amount of smoke, which may set off smoke alarms. After doing this, the fireplace should not have a burning smell.

## **FLOORS – COVERINGS**

Variations in the thickness of different types of flooring may result in slight changes in height where they meet. Beveled transitions are installed, where required, to ease the height change. Some types of floor coverings come with manufacturer's instructions and warranties. Where relevant, a copy of the instructions and warranty are included in the rear section of this Homeowners Guide or with the Pre-Delivery Inspection materials.

### **Hardwood Floors**

Hardwood flooring is a natural wood product and it is affected by changes in humidity and temperature. Spaces between the boards can appear during the winter and then disappear again in the summer. This is unavoidable because of the higher average humidity in your home during the summer compared to the winter. Humidity is naturally much lower during the winter and it is undesirable to keep them at summer levels because of the potential for condensation on windows during winter's cold temperatures. To minimize wood movement, maintain the RH (relative humidity) levels in the house between 30 and 50 percent year-round and the temperature between 15°C and 27°C (60°F to 80°F).

Prefinished wood floors require no maintenance except a regular cleaning with a soft bristle broom or a dust mop to remove dirt and grit that can scratch the surface. Provide chair and table legs with anti-

scratch pads to avoid dents and gouges. Using water to clean wood floors will dull the finish and may damage the wood. Occasionally, use a cleaning product specifically created for wood floors to restore the luster and beauty of the wood. Do not use self-polishing acrylic wax intended for sheet vinyl as it can make wood floors slippery and dull and may require refinishing the floor. Water left on the floor, or high humidity levels inside the house will result in boards that crack, split, cup, buckle or crown.

### **Vinyl Flooring**

Vinyl (resilient) flooring requires limited maintenance. Dust mop to remove loose dirt and wash with lukewarm water and a mild detergent. Harsh detergents can cause fading discoloration, or brittleness. Scuffmarks can usually be removed with brand name products such as New Beginning and Shine Keeper. Avoid leaving water or wet items on the floor for extended periods, since this will result in staining. High heeled shoes and chair legs will make permanent marks on vinyl flooring. Plywood underlay seams and staples will sometimes show through the vinyl. They may be more or less visible depending on the vinyl color and the lighting conditions in the room.

### **Carpeting**

Carpets require weekly vacuuming throughout to maintain their original appearance and extend the life of the carpet. Dirt penetrating to the base of the carpet fiber is a major contributor to carpet deterioration. More frequent vacuuming may be required in moderate and heavy traffic areas, such as halls and doorways. Remove spills immediately to help prevent spots and stains. Club Soda is a useful emergency spot remover. Always blot up a stain with a clean towel. Do not rub the spill into the carpet. Annual cleaning by professionals will extend carpet life and give it a better appearance.

### **Ceramic/Marble**

Ceramic is long lasting and relative easy to maintain. Soap and water are effective cleaners. Do not use harsh abrasive cleaners, especially on marble. Improper cleaning can cause stained grout and surface scratches. The joints between the tiles are water resistant as long as the grout used in these joints is not deteriorated. If the grout joints deteriorate, have them cleaned out and re-grouted. The caulking around the bathtub and shower may crack or separate during the first year due to shrinkage. When this occurs, remove the caulking, clean and dry the area, and then re-caulk with an appropriate silicone caulking. Barr homes will repair and cracks or separations at the One Year service date as part of our courtesy service. We will also replace tiles that crack due to settlement at the One Year service date as part of our courtesy service. However, a perfect color match cannot be guaranteed due to change in dye lots.

### **Maintenance**

Maintenance items for hardwood include regular cleaning to remove dirt and grit, protecting the bottoms of chair legs and table legs, and maintaining proper humidity levels (between 30 – 50% relative humidity year-round).

Maintenance items for carpet include regular vacuuming, removing spills as they occur and annual professional cleaning.

Maintenance items for ceramic include regular cleaning, replacement of cracked silicone caulking and replacement of cracked grout.

## FLOOR – NOISES AND SQUEAKS

As your house dries out after construction, the framing materials will shrink and twist slightly, sometimes resulting in a squeak, cracking noise or popping noise. The sub floor is firmly screwed to the floor joists; however, connections between joists and beams, and connections between walls and floors make it impossible to have a totally noise-free floor assembly. Over time, some noises disappear. Barr Homes will repair excessive noises once, at the Year-End service date. Many floor noises cannot be repaired unless accessible from the basement.

### Maintenance

Maintaining proper humidity levels in the house is essential to prevent excessive dryness during the winter. Keep the house between 30 and 50% relative humidity year-round.

## FOUNDATION – CONCRETE WALLS/CONCRETE FLOORS

The foundation walls of your home have additional insulation to decrease heat loss from the basement. The below grade portion of the wall is insulated on the exterior where it keeps the concrete basement wall warm and dry and provides a drainage path to the weeping tile system. This also provides extra protection against basement leakage.

Surface pitting, cracking and rough textures are normal occurrences in concrete. The purpose of the concrete basement floor is to provide a flat, hard surface for storage, and a base for floor covering materials. It is not a structural component of the foundation, and it is not meant to have a perfectly smooth surface. The basement floor, in the area of the floor drain is normally sloped to allow drainage from the areas of the furnace and hot water tank. However, the entire basement floor is not sloped toward the floor drain from every location. Basement floors and walls may develop cracks due to settlement and shrinkage of the concrete. This is normal and does not indicate a structural problem. Basement walls and floors may have areas covered with a white dust. This is efflorescence. As the concrete cures and releases moisture to the basement, the water draws salts out of the concrete and deposits them on the surface. Efflorescence is normal and can be removed with a stiff brush and water. During the first year after construction, concrete releases a significant amount of moisture to the air. Consider running a dehumidifier continuously in the basement to remove excess moisture in the air and keep the maximum humidity in your home below 50% relative humidity.

If you plan to paint your floor, choose a product with a concrete conditioning agent that will permit continued curing. A reliable paint dealer will be able to advise you. Generally, concrete should not be painted within the first year. When storing items in the basement, do not store them directly on the floor. Raise boxes, paper and wood and fabric items off the floor to permit air to flow around the items and prevent mold growth.

## INTERIOR DOORS AND TRIM

Temperature changes, humidity changes and normal shrinkage affect wood doors, jambs, and trim during the drying-out process. This may lead to tightness or slackness of the doors in their frames, slight warping and gaps between the trim and drywall. This occurs whether or not the tops and bottoms of the doors are painted. Do not adjust or plane doors due to these variations. Usually, they will re-adjust themselves. If not, ask us to make adjustments at the year-end service date. Baseboards and trim will

sometimes appear to be coming away from the wall, especially along stairways. This is a result of the house drying out. Ask us to repair these cracks at the Year-End service repair date.

#### **Maintenance**

Periodically clean and lubricate hinges and other door hardware. Controlling inside humidity levels will minimize cracking and permanent warping. Occasionally, you may have to use a hammer to re-seat door pins that may raise themselves.

### **KITCHEN AND BATH – CABINETS AND COUNTERTOPS**

Your new kitchen cabinets and countertops are designed and manufactured to provide many years of excellent service. Warped or cracked doors will be replaced or repaired at our discretion at the Year-End service date.

#### **Maintenance**

Regularly clean fingerprints and food spills from cabinet surfaces using warm water and a non-abrasive cloth followed by a thorough drying. Avoid abrasive cleaners or products containing ammonia, as they may damage the cabinet finish and cause them to yellow. Regularly clean laminate countertops with a soft moist cloth and detergent or a cleaner designed for the surface material. Abrasive cleaners and bleach may mark the surface. Avoid leaving liquids on the surface for extended periods. Do not use the countertop as a chopping block or cutting board. Hot pans may leave marks or delaminate the countertop surface. Keep countertop seams dry to prevent the surface from bubbling and lifting.

As the house settles and dries, adjustments to the cabinet doors and drawers will be necessary. Make adjustments to the hinges and sliders with a screwdriver.

### **PLUMBING – FIXTURES**

Faucets, toilets, sinks, tubs and shower stalls are not indestructible. They can chip, crack or dent from an impact. Stainless steel fixtures and sinks do not usually stain if properly maintained.

#### **Maintenance**

Regularly clean all fixtures using a non-abrasive cleaner designed for the appropriate surface. Steel wool pads are not recommended. Use a non-abrasive cleaner or a commercial stainless-steel cleaner. Scraping or banging metal utensils in a sink can cause scratching or dulling of the surface. Creaking noises and flexing from fiberglass-acrylic shower floors or bathtubs is normal.

Use cleaners and waxes specifically formulated for fiberglass or acrylic tubs and shower stalls. Do not use powdered or abrasive cleaners to clean fiberglass or acrylic. The caulking at the bathtub may crack or separate due to shrinkage. Should this occur, remove the caulking, clean and dry the area and then re-caulk with a silicone specifically formulated for showers and tubs. Barr Homes will repair cracks or separations at the Year End service date as part of our courtesy service.

### **PLUMBING – EXTERIOR FAUCETS**

All exterior faucets are equipped with a second shut off valve inside the basement at the ceiling level. Your exterior faucets must be drained in the fall to prevent residual water in the pipes from freezing and

possibly fracturing the pipe. The exterior faucets are also equipped with hose bibs. These anti-siphon devices are installed to prevent water in a house being drawn back into the water system in your home.

#### Exterior Faucet Winterization Procedure

1. Turn the basement shut-off valve to the closed position and leave it closed all winter.
2. Disconnect your garden hose, turn the outside valve to the open position, and leave it open all winter.
3. Pull the small pin on the hose bib (this backflow preventer is attached to the outside faucet) and let the water drain out.
4. Go back in the basement and open the small bleeder nut, located on the side of the shut-off valve. This allows any water that may still be left in the line to drain. Leave the bleeder nut open all winter.

Follow the reverse of the procedure to enable the use of the exterior faucets in the spring (after the concern of freezing is passed).

Leaks and water damage that result from a cracked exterior faucet or hose bib assembly are not covered under warranty.

## PLUMBING – TOILETS

The Ontario Building Code requires your home to have low flush toilets. These toilets use significantly less water compared to the traditional toilets you may be accustomed to using. On occasion, it may be necessary to flush more than once to remove all the waste in the toilet bowl. Low flush toilets also tend to block more easily. A toilet plunger is useful to have available. If the toilet backs up during the first week you occupy your house, Barr Homes will verify that there is no construction material causing the blockage. Should a problem arise after the first week, it is your responsibility to contact a plumber of your choice.

## PLUMBING – WASTE PIPES/WATER PIPES

A water supply line automatically feeds the basement floor drain with a small amount of water. This prevents the trap in the drain from drying out and allowing sewer gas to enter the basement. The supply line may be connected to the laundry tub faucet, if the laundry tub is located nearby. Cleanout caps are located near the bottom of main drain pipes and where the building sewer pipe leaves the house. Keep these cleanouts accessible for service.

## PLUMBING – HOT WATER TANK

Your new home is equipped with a natural gas on demand hot water supply unit. You must set up the rental of this tank with Direct Energy. Included with your new home guide is a Direct Energy brochure with rental prices for the current year and contact information for Direct Energy. The hot water unit is a rental and therefore, all maintenance is the responsibility of the rental company. This information is available by reading the sticker on the side of the unit.

As with your furnace, both the combustion air supply and the exhaust are connected directly to the outdoors. Your gas furnace and gas water heater require these air supplies to work properly. High



efficiency furnaces and water heaters do not require a chimney. They exhaust their combustion gases through plastic pipes in the wall or roof of your house. Ensure these pipes are kept clear of snow, vegetation and any debris.

## WALL AND CEILING FINISHES

Drywall joints are finished in a four-step process. This includes three coats of plaster, a sanding and then another check after painting. All drywall joints and paintwork are done by hand. While Barr Homes strives to provide a perfectly flat and smooth wall surface, minor imperfections, such as bumps, creases, waves and divots are sometimes visible. These types of imperfections are considered normal, provided they are not readily visible when standing more than five feet from a wall. Certain lighting conditions and viewing positions may exaggerate minor imperfections. Due to the shrinkage of the framing materials during the drying out and settlement period of a new home (up to two years), nail pops, cracks and minor defects may appear in the drywall. Nail pops are small bumps on a drywall surface appearing as a result of the drywall working itself out. These are more likely to occur at the peak of cathedral ceilings, above windows and around archways and the borders of the ceilings. Roof truss lift can result in cracks between walls and ceilings. This happens in varying degrees to every new home and cannot be controlled by the builder. However, maintaining proper humidity levels in the winter will minimize these conditions.

### Courtesy Service

Barr Homes offers a courtesy drywall repair service at the time of the Year-End service date. We will repair and patch settlement cracks and nail pops at that time. Sanding, painting and other wall refinishing of the repaired areas are not included in this service. Please consider this, should you choose to wallpaper or paint during the first year of occupancy.

We also, depending on the circumstances, will do repairs that are not required as part of the Tarion Warranty but are part of our commitment to customer satisfaction. When we do these types of repairs, we have a form that is to be signed noting that repairs are a courtesy only. Please sign this form prior to repairs being done. No courtesy repairs will be done unless that completed form is returned to our office.

## WINDOWS AND EXTERIOR DOORS

Your home is equipped with high-quality energy-efficient windows. The thermal pane glazing units have low-e coatings, are filled with argon gas and assembled with insulated spacers. The low-e coatings and the argon gas decrease heat loss through the glass. The insulated spacers decrease heat loss at the edge of the glass in the location where the highest heat loss occurs in a window. The frames of your windows are PVC. Although the windows are weather-stripped, they may not be absolutely draft free in very cold and windy conditions. During very cold outside temperatures, convection on the inside surface of windows creates the perception of a draft. This results from the upward movement of warm air and the downward movement of cold air over the inside surface of the window. If the humidity of the inside air is high enough, condensation and ice can form on the inside surfaces of the window. This does not mean the window is defective or lacks insulation.

Refer to the section on Climate Control – Condensation, for more information.

Thermal pane units are sealed to prevent air movement between the double panes. Should the seal of the thermal pane fail within the warranty period; the window supplier will supply you with a new pane. Refer to the window warranty in the rear section of this Homeowners Guide or with the Pre-Delivery Inspection materials. Labor costs to replace the pane are not covered under warranty.

Steel and fiberglass doors require painting to protect the door. If the door surface begins to crack or is damaged, paint or refinish the door. Hinges on exterior doors are normally painted. Exterior doors have an adjustable weather-stripping on the bottom of the door. If daylight is visible around the door, ask us to adjust the weather-stripping at the Year-End service date or you can adjust it yourself.

### **Maintenance**

Your new windows require little maintenance other than to keep them clean (including the areas around the sash and closer mechanisms). Occasionally clean and lubricate the top and bottom track of basement sliding windows. It is important to clean the small drain holes in the bottom of the track of slider windows since they are easily blocked.

Adjusting or replacing weather-stripping on doors is sometimes required after time, depending on the traffic. Doors and trim will require painting. Condensation, if allowed to accumulate, will build up into a block of ice at the bottom of the window. Ensure that the windows are kept dry to prevent damage to the finishes beneath the window. Refer to the earlier section on Climate Control for more information on condensation.

## **EXTERIOR CARE AND MAINTENANCE**

The roof and exterior walls of your Barr Homes house are designed and built to be attractive, durable and provide protection from the weather and intruders. Although most of the exterior materials and finishes are low maintenance, they still require regular review to identify potential problems and deal with them before they lead to damage.

### **WINDOWS**

The maintenance of window and exterior doors is covered in the previous section.

### **CLADDING**

Cladding is the finishing material used to protect the outside walls of your new home. Common cladding materials include masonry (brick and stone), and siding (wood, metal, vinyl, wood composites and concrete composites).

#### **Masonry**

Brick and stone finishes are designed to last the lifetime of the house. Mortar usually lasts 25 years and the brickwork will likely require repointing at that time. Masonry, brickwork and mortar joints are not waterproof. Masonry, brickwork and mortar joints are not waterproof. They are porous and absorb moisture. Masonry walls are constructed to take this into consideration. You may notice the lowest course of brick has occasional gaps in the mortar. These 'weep holes' are provided to allow drainage of

moisture from behind the brick. Do not block these holes. Hairline cracks in the mortar are normal. Mortar cracks of 2mm or more will be repaired at the Year-End service date. Occasionally inspect the brickwork for signs of movement and cracking. Although hairline cracks are not usually a concern, cracks that increase or change should be investigated.

### **Siding and Trim**

Metal, vinyl and composite sheet siding and trim are low maintenance and durable. The color may fade slightly, depending on the exposure to the sun. Constant spraying with a garden sprinkler may cause discoloration. Under normal conditions, metal siding is strong, but it can dent. Vinyl siding becomes very brittle in extremely cold weather and may shatter on impact.

Painted wood surfaces should last at least five years, depending on exposure to the sun and elements. Factory finished wood siding should last ten years. Peeling paint or wood knots bleeding through the paint will be repaired at the Year-End service date.

### **Maintenance**

Use extreme care with high-pressure washers when washing any type of cladding. They can force water through the cladding into the wall system and result in internal wall damage. Avoid sprinkling water directly on any cladding system. Allowing a sprinkler to spray water against the cladding for long periods of time can eventually force water through the cladding and into the wall system. Although the cladding is designed to either shed water or remove a limited amount of moisture from the cavity behind, it cannot handle large amounts of water. For the same reason, avoid draining water from the roof directly onto the cladding system. Clean metal, vinyl or composite sheet siding and trim annually with a mild, non-abrasive detergent.

Clean wood siding and trim annually using a brush and mild, non-abrasive detergent. Rinse the wood with clean water afterwards but avoid saturating the wood with water. Never cover exterior cladding with soil; the cladding system is not designed to be in constant contact with moisture. Keep planting beds at least six to eight inches below the base of the cladding.

Note: Heat from barbeques can cause serious damage to siding: vinyl siding will distort, wood siding or trim may burn, and all types of siding can be discolored.

## **CAULKING AND SEALING**

Caulking is an important part of the exterior defense of your home. Caulking is used to seal around penetrations through your walls and roof (at pipes, plumbing and vents), at locations where two types of cladding meet (at brick and vinyl siding, for example) and around some windows and doors. Also referred to as sealant, caulking fails by drying out and cracking. Caulking and sealing are designed for specific applications; some last more than ten years while others may deteriorate more quickly when exposed to heat and constant sun. As your new house settles and components dry out, some of the caulking will be stressed and may crack or peel. Caulking will be repaired at the year-End service date. At some locations, a spray-in-place foam insulation is used to seal larger openings or difficult to seal spaces. This foam insulates and is an air barrier. For the most part, it should not be visible, and it does not require maintenance.

## Maintenance

After the first year, check the caulking periodically for cracking or surface deterioration, especially on the roof and exposed areas that are subject to frequent changes in temperature. Remove and replace old caulking when it becomes weathered, before it has failed. Ensure you use the appropriate caulking for the application.

## ROOF

The roof on your home is designed to provide superior protection for many years. Your roof has twenty-five-year shingles and felt paper along the eaves and valleys. Valleys have aluminum flashing.

## SHINGLES

Slight variations in color from batch of shingles to another are common and not considered a defect. Take extreme care whenever walking on shingles, especially on very hot days. Shingles become very soft in hot temperatures and are easily damaged. In the winter, shingles become very brittle when frozen, allowing them to break easily if walked on. It is not uncommon for shingles to lift or push up during the first year. Barr homes will repair loose and lifted shingles as part of the year-end service.

## ROOF VENTS

It is essential that roof vents are kept clear of snow to allow proper ventilation from the attic. Snow build up on top of the roof vents will prevent the ventilation of warm humid air from the attic and contribute towards the formation of an ice dam. Keep vents clear of excessive snow.

## ICE DAMMING

The Greater Kingston region experiences heavy snow, rain and freezing rain during most winters, along with drastic changes in temperature. These conditions contribute to the formation of ice dams on roofs. Ice damming occurs when snow or ice on the upper portion of a roof melts, flows down the roof and then freezes on the lower edge of the roof. Normally the water runs harmlessly off the edge of the roof. Any restriction that traps ice or snow near the eaves of a roof, however, can impede the flow of water and promote ice damming. If the resulting ice dam is sufficiently large, it can allow water to back up under the shingling beyond the areas protected by the felt paper membrane at the eave and result in water penetration of the roof.

The Ontario Building code requires a felt paper membrane under the shingling at the eaves over heated areas of the house. This helps to prevent leakage from ice damming but does not always eliminate it. Two key factors reduce the formation of ice dams: limiting the transfer of heat to the attic space from the heated space below and ventilating the attic space. The higher amount of attic insulation in your home and the continuity of the ceiling air barrier system both reduce the flow of heat from the heated space of your home into the attic space. Ventilating the attic space further helps to keep the attic temperature as close as possible to the outdoor temperature. Eaves troughs can contribute to the formation of ice dams. Ice damming resulting from the installation of eaves troughs is particularly prevalent at the lower end of roof valleys where water flow from adjacent roof areas is concentrated and snow accumulation is greater. You may want to consider installing heat trace cables. Heat trace cables are intended to melt enough of the ice dam to allow the backed-up water to drain. Ice damming

is a common occurrence in the Kingston climate and cannot be completely prevented. Limited damming is not a cause for concern. Water penetration due to ice damming is not covered under warranty.

### **Maintenance**

Prevent ice dams from forming by ensuring the attic vents are kept free of snow and do not allow excessive snow to build up in the valleys and eaves. Install heat trace cables, if necessary. Periodically check for loose or lifted shingles after severe windstorms. Also check for snow blown into the attic after winter snowstorms.

## **OVERHEAD GARAGE DOOR**

Your overhead garage door is professionally installed and has a manufacturer's warranty. A copy of this warranty will be provided to you at the Pre-Delivery Inspection. Do not attempt to adjust the spring tension; this must be done professionally.

If Barr Homes installs an electric garage door operator, we do not install a handle on the door. A copy of the door operator's instructions and warranty are included with the Pre-Delivery Inspection materials. On hot days, the rubber weather-stripping on the top and sides of the door may adhere to the paint, making the door difficult to open. A dull kitchen knife, slid between the door and the rubber, will release the weather-stripping and allow you open the door.

### **Maintenance**

Lubricate all moving parts and clean the tracks and rollers once a year.

## **FOUNDATION**

The below grade portion of the exterior foundation wall has full height insulation to reduce the heat loss from the basement. The exterior insulation keeps the concrete basement wall warm and dry and provides a drainage path to the weeping tile system. This also provides extra protection against basement leakage. Refer to "Foundation" under "Interior Care and Maintenance" for more information on maintaining the interior surfaces of the foundation.

Foundation walls are subject to major temperature changes. The below ground portion of the wall is a fairly constant temperature while the portion extending above ground is subject to the summer heat and winter cold. Temperature changes cause concrete and masonry to expand and contract. Combined with the normal settlement of the house, this may cause cracks to appear on the basement walls. These cracks do not affect the strength of the wall. If a crack should leak within the two-year warranty period, we will repair it. Minor cracks in the foundation finish coat (parging) are normal and do not require patching. Barr Homes will repair any loose parging, at the time of the Year-end service repairs. We do not recommend patching cracks in parging, since the color difference is usually more visible than the crack itself.

## **GRADING AND DRAINAGE**

The grading around the house is designed to drain water away from the foundation wall. The drainage pattern of each individual lot is part of a site-grading plan established for the entire development. Minor changes may be made during construction to facilitate particular lot conditions.

Settlement of the soil around the perimeter of the house will be repaired if it is causing water to drain back towards the foundation. This is done at the time of the Year-End repairs. To assist water drainage on your lot, swales and catch basins are frequently installed. Swales cannot be changed. They must be kept free of landscaping, interlock, leaves, debris, gardens, shrubs and sheds. During the spring thaw, remove snow and ice in order to assist the flow of water. Swales and catch basins are designed to drain water away under normal rainfall conditions. Heavy, prolonged rainfalls or spring thaw conditions may cause some water ponding for short periods of time. This is normal. Do not change the grading on your lot as this could affect not only your lot drainage but that of neighboring lots as well. Leaks caused by a homeowner changing the lot grading with improper landscaping are not covered by warranty.

Note: Do not make any alterations to your yard until the municipality has determined the final drainage patterns are acceptable and has released Barr Homes from further responsibility. Until final acceptance is received from the municipality, do not add fences, decks, pools, or any other landscaping that could interfere with required remedial work.

## **DOWNSPOUTS**

Avoid landscaping and gardening that directs or holds water against the foundation. Ensure eaves trough downspouts direct water away from the foundation walls and away from the edges of the driveway. Use downspout extensions or sloped splash blocks to keep rainwater away from the wall, Water ponding in the area of downspouts after a heavy rain is normal.

## **WINDOW WELLS**

Your home may or may not have window wells. If your house does, keep the wells free of weeds, dirt, ice or other debris that may inhibit proper drainage. Window wells are installed with a four-inch drainage pipe extending down to the weeping tile. This pipe is normally filled with crushed stone to allow water to pass through. Do not store garden hoses, toys and other items in window wells, Leaks resulting from a poorly maintained window well are not covered by warranty.

### **Maintenance**

Use downspout extensions or sloped splash blocks to direct rainwater away from your house. Keep window wells free of weeds, dirt, ice or other debris that may prevent proper drainage. If you have a catch basin within your lot lines, it is your responsibility to keep it free of leaves, debris and ice in order to permit water to flow and drain freely.

## **DECKS**

Decks are built with pressure treated and cedar wood. Both woods are exterior grade materials. The deck is either secured to the house foundation or sitting on concrete piers. The bottom of the stairs sits directly on grade.

### **Maintenance**

A wood sealant or stain applied to the deck will prolong the life of the deck and prevent the wood from fading and splitting. Split wood due to lack of proper maintenance is not covered under our warranty.

## CONCRETE SLABS AND INTERLOCK

Concrete floors and porches often develop cracks due to the nature of the material, natural settlement and exposure to extreme temperature changes. This is not a cause for concern. Cracks of more than mm will be filled at the time of the Year-End service date. Salt or other ice melting products can easily damage concrete porches and garage floors. Even if not applied directly, slush and melting ice from cars and foot traffic will deposit enough salt to cause damage. The area in front of and underneath the overhead garage door is especially prone to salt damage during the winter. This is due to the sun's heat warming the floor during the day and the night time cold causing it to freeze. The frequent freeze/thaw cycles in that area allow the effects of the salt to work more rapidly. Chipping and scraping ice from the floor, even for safety reasons, can also damage the concrete surface. A very small chip in the concrete allows water to penetrate. When combined with the freeze/thaw cycle, pitting and spalling can occur. This type of erosion is not covered under warranty.

Interlock walkways are prone to settlement during the first year since they are laid over backfilled areas. Settlement that causes water to pond will be repaired at the Year-End service date.

### Maintenance

Annually apply a good quality concrete sealer to help protect concrete and interlock from salt damage. Barr Homes recommends using urea-based de-icing agents on concrete and interlock surfaces. Refer to "Foundation" in the previous section for more information on maintenance of the interior surfaces of the basement concrete floor slab.

## LANDSCAPING

If the landscaping and other outside work is incomplete when you move in, we request your patience. This type of work is very dependent on the weather and soil conditions. The landscaping will be arranged as soon as conditions permit. Please be aware that not every lot can be completed during the first month of good weather and your understanding is greatly appreciated.

## SOD

Watering of sod is a homeowner's responsibility. Frequent, even daily, watering during the first two weeks or so is essential. Once the grass has 'taken', weekly watering is usually adequate, if you water deeply to promote deep root growth. During the growing season, lawns require up to one inch of water per week, preferably applied in one watering. Short, frequent watering promotes shallow root growth and a lawn dependent on frequent watering. Barr Homes does not replace sod after it is laid if it dies from lack of care. Walking on freshly laid sod or sod saturated from the spring thaw will create humps and dips. This is a homeowner maintenance task. Compacted snow and ice left on your lawn can cause 'winter kill'. This is common along the sides of driveways.

## EXISTING TREES

We attempt to save existing trees, wherever possible, during construction. However, grading and servicing the project may disrupt the water table and have a detrimental impact on trees and shrubs. Therefore, we cannot warrant existing vegetation. Any existing tree removal is the homeowner's responsibility.

## NEWLY PLANTED TREES

New trees require proper fertilization and maintenance to ensure their good health. Due to the compact root system of a newly transplanted tree, it often does not receive enough water from rainfall.

Frequently water the tree pit during the spring and summer months to provide sufficient water and nutrients for your tree's root system. Keep tree pits (the soil area at the base of the tree) cultivated and free of weeds. Weeds extract valuable moisture and nutrients from the soil. To avoid this competition, regularly remove weeds, including their grass. Cultivate the top four to six inches of soil around the base of the tree in approximately a three to four-foot circle. This permits air to get to the roots more easily and allows the tree to breathe.

Keep the cultivated area at the base of the tree in a saucer shape (outer perimeter forming a four to six-inch high ridge) for the first two years to provide a reservoir for capturing and holding water. Never raise the level of earth above the base of the tree trunk. This can suffocate the tree and weaken it, perhaps killing it. Also, avoid planting flowers or grass directly around the base of the tree for the first two years, for they, like weeds, compete with the tree for needed nutrients. Generally, fertilize trees once per year in either early spring or late fall. Consult your garden supply center for the proper fertilizer and follow the manufacturer's instructions. Regularly inspect your trees for insect damage. Regardless of the health of a tree insects can occasionally attack it. Again, consult a garden supply center for specific instructions.

### Maintenance

Properly fertilize and water your new lawn, trees and shrubs.

## LOT SURVEYS

Once the foundation is poured, a survey certificate accurately locating your house on the lot is prepared as part of your legal documents. The survey pins at the corners of your lot may no longer be accurate due to grading and movement of soil. Do not rely on them to install fencing. Obtain the services of a surveyor to locate the lot lines and ensure your fence is built on your property. Always call the local utilities to locate underground services prior to digging.



# SOME IMPORTANT MAINTENANCE TIPS

---

## SPRING

- Clean or replace filters in furnace, HRV and range hood
- Service furnace
- Fertilize sod and trees
- Check roof for missing/loose/broken shingles, flashing, etc.
- Check exterior caulking for deterioration
- Repair soil settlement around foundation walls
- Clean air conditioner – vacuum exterior unit and remove debris/vegetation

## SUMMER

- Clean or replace filters in furnace and HRV
- Fertilize sod
- Run dehumidifier/check basement for dampness
- Maintain appropriate relative humidity levels inside the house
- Check exterior paint for peeling/cracking
- Remove vegetation/debris and clean exterior exhaust vents and intake vents
- Clean drain holes in bottom track of basement windows

## FALL

- Clean or replace filters in furnace, HRV and range hood
- Fertilize sod and trees
- Lubricate track/rollers/hinges of overhead garage door
- Apply concrete sealer to garage floor and porch
- Test smoke alarms and CO detectors
- Winterize exterior faucets
- Check eaves troughs and downspouts for blockage
- Check roof for missing/loose/broken shingles, flashing, etc.
- Ensure window wells are free of debris/dirt
- Check weather-stripping around exterior doors

## WINTER

- Clean or replace filters in furnace and HRV
- Check attic space for snow blowing in after snow storms
- Monitor excess snow/ice buildup on roof
- Maintain proper attic ventilation from the roof vents
- Remove snow and ice from window wells and exterior vent areas
- Maintain appropriate relative humidity levels inside house
- Dry up condensation on windows to avoid damage to the finished surfaces

# WARRANTIES

---

The following summarizes the Tarion Warranty Program Builder's Warranties

## ONE YEAR WARRANTY

Barr homes warrants for one year that your new home is:

- Constructed in a workmanlike manner and free from defects in material;
- Fit for habitation;
- Constructed in accordance with the Ontario Building Code; and
- Free of major structural defects

## TWO YEAR WARRANTY

Barr Homes warrants your home for two years against the following:

- Water penetration through the basement or foundation walls;
- Defects in materials, including windows, doors and caulking, or defects in work that result in water penetration into the building envelope;
- Defects in work or materials in the electrical, plumbing and heating delivery and distribution systems;
- Defects in work or materials which result in the detachment, displacement or deterioration of exterior cladding (such as brickwork, aluminum or vinyl siding)
- Violations of the Ontario Building Code affecting health and safety (including, but not limited to, violations relating to the fire safety and the structural adequacy of the home); and
- Major structural defects.

## WHAT IS NOT COVERED?

The following conditions and/or items are not covered by the Builder's Warranty:

- Damage resulting from improper maintenance, such as dampness or condensation caused by the homeowner's failure to maintain proper ventilation levels or improper operation of a humidifier, hot tub or any other moisture-producing device.
- Alterations, deletions or additions made by the homeowner (such as changes to the direction of the grading or the slope of the ground away from the house)
- Defects in materials, design and work supplied or installed by the homeowner/purchaser
- Secondary damage caused by defects under warranty. While the defects themselves are covered, the personal or property damage they cause is not. However, your homeowner's insurance may cover secondary damage.
- Normal wear and tear, such as scuffs and scratches to floor and wall surfaces caused by homeowners moving, decorating and/or day-to-day use of the home.
- Normal shrinkage of materials that dry out after construction (such as nail "pops" or minor concrete cracking).
- Settling soil around the house or along utility lines.
- Damage from floods, "acts of God", wars, riots or vandalism.

- Damage from insects or rodents, unless it is the result of construction that does not meet the Ontario Building Code.
- Damage caused by municipal services or other utilities.
- Surface defects in work and materials noted and accepted in writing by the homeowner at the time of possession.
- Damage caused by the homeowner or visitors.
- 

## OTHER WARRANTIES

Appliance and product manufacturers may provide warranties extending beyond the Builder's Warranty. Any such warranties and operating instructions are included in your Pre-Delivery Package or in the rear section of this Homeowners Guide. Direct any claims to the appropriate manufacturer as outlined in their warranty. Please contact us if you need any assistance.

## TARION WARRANTY CORPORATION

A Homeowner Information Package from Tarion is provided as part of your Pre-Delivery Package. Barr Homes is committed to meeting or exceeding both the industry standards and the Tarion Standards found in their Construction Performance Guidelines. This document is available on their website at [www.tarion.com](http://www.tarion.com). The Tarion Warranty Corporation your One-Year and Two-Year Builders Warranties. In addition, Tarion Warranty Corporation covers major structural defects under their seven-year warranty.

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

---

## CONTACT INFO

Who should I call if I have questions about the construction or service at my house?  
Your primary contact is Barr Homes head office at 613-542-4922.

## CONSTRUCTION

Can I visit the house during construction?

No. For safety and insurance reasons this is not allowed. You will have an opportunity to visit the home with our site supervisor prior to the installation of the drywall, and again with our inspector prior to closing.

There does not seem to be any progress on the construction of our house lately. Why?

Construction progress is affected by factors such as permit availability, trade schedules, material delivery, and weather. There may be times when progress appears to be at a standstill, and other items when a lot of progress is made very quickly.

When can I pave my driveway?

The backfill around the house needs time to settle. It is best to wait for close to a year before paving in order to avoid future settlement problems. Normally, driveway paving begins in the month of June each year and finishes by October.

When will the outside be painted?

Normally, exterior painting begins in late May. It may take some time until the exterior paint is complete on all homes that were built during the winter.

## CLOSING DAY

Where do I get my house keys?

Keys will be available from your lawyer on closing day. You will also need to bring the Certificate of Completion and Possession (Tarion Warranty Certificate) given to you at the Pre-Delivery Inspection.

Where are my garage door keys?

If your lawyer did not give them to you, they are hanging on a nail inside the garage beside the door.

**Can I schedule things such as movers, phone connection, appliances, etc for closing day?**

We recommend that you do not. The closing process and transfer of the keys normally happens in the afternoon of closing day. It may save you time and money to schedule these things a day or more later.

**Where do I pick up my mail?**

Canada Post will provide you with this information on their website or by calling them at 1-866-607-6301.

## REPAIRS

**I just moved in and the repairs from my Pre-Delivery List are not complete. When will they be rectified?**

Depending on the time between your Pre-Delivery date and your closing date, repairs may be in progress. A representative from Barr Homes office will contact you to set up appointments for the outstanding items. If parts need to be ordered, they may take several weeks to arrive. Follow up repairs will be added to your 30-Day form.

**I just moved in and noticed some items need to be fixed right away. They are not on my Pre-Delivery List. Who do I call?**

Unless they are of an emergency nature, we would prefer to wait until you submit your 30-Day list.

## INTERIOR

**Why are the gaps between the hardwood floorboards?**

Hardwood is a natural wood product and changes in dimension with changes in humidity. Lower humidity levels may cause the boards to visibly shrink.

**Why are the hardwood boards puckering and showing ridges?**

Hardwood is a natural wood product and expands in width when the environment is humid. If the boards do not have room to expand, they push upward with a visible pucker or cupping. Proper control of the indoor humidity levels will prevent this from happening.

**Why is there no air return duct in all the bedrooms?**

The HVAC contractor calculates the size and location of the supply ducts and air return vents after the floor plans are drawn up by the architect.

**Why are my windows full of moisture? There is ice forming along the bottom edge of the window.**

If warm moist air inside the house comes in contact with the window glazing on a cold day, moisture may condense on the windowpane at the edges of the glass near the frame. On very cold days, the condensation may freeze, forming ice. You need to ensure moist air in your home is removed at its source. Run the HRV on high for 15 minutes after a shower and use the range hood when stovetop

cooking to lower humidity levels. Refer to the section “Climate Control – Ventilation and Condensation” for more information.

#### **Where can I get a set of plans or blueprints for my house?**

Barr Homes does not provide working drawings or house plans. If you require this type of information, plans are available for your viewing at the sales office.

#### **Why has my front walkway sunk down a few inches after the snow melted?**

This is due to the normal settlement of the backfill around the house. Barr Homes will repair this type of settlement, once, at the time of the Year-End service repairs. If your Year-End repairs happen during a winter month, the repair will be delayed until the following spring.

#### **The snow has melted and I notice the sod is very lumpy. The landscapers have not rolled it since it was installed.**

The lumps will even out when the frost is out of the ground. Avoid walking on wet sod and freshly installed sod. The landscapers roll sod once, immediately after it is installed.

#### **Why are there no survey pegs on my lot?**

Survey markings may no longer be visible after the lot is graded and landscaped. Please do not use wooden stakes as evidence of lot lines. A survey certificate, included in your Sales Agreement, may be helpful. Alternatively, a surveyor can accurately mark out your lot lines.

## **AIR CONDITIONING**

#### **My air conditioner does not work. The house is not cooling down.**

Ensure that you check the following before calling:

1. Thermostat is set to “cool” and at least 5 degrees below the house temperature.
2. Breaker switch is fully in the “on” position.
3. Exterior wall switch (located near the A/C unit) is on.

If the unit still does not start up, please contact your service rep. Remember that the air conditioner takes time to cool off the house. Sustained high outdoor temperatures will cause the indoor temperature to rise temporarily. You can save on cooling costs by closing window coverings during the day.

## **FIREPLACE**

#### **Why is the fireplace giving off a burning smell?**

The burning smell is normal for a new fireplace. It is the oil left on the unit from the manufacturing process and it needs to burn off. The best thing to do is leave your fireplace on for six hours continuously to burn the oil off. You may need to open some windows to keep the smoke alarms from sounding.

**The fireplace pilot light went out and I can't get it to light.**

The proper instructions for relighting the pilot light are located on a plate behind the lower grille of the fireplace.

## **ELECTRICAL**

**Why are the outside plugs not working?**

The Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI) has probably tripped. The GFCI outlet is located by the front door or in the garage. Reset it by pushing the small reset button on the outlet. If the GFCI is not tripped, check the circuit breaker in the main electrical panel.

**Why is the plug not working in the main bathroom or Ensuite bathroom?**

The GFCI in the powder room has probably tripped. The reset button needs to be pushed to restore power to all three bathroom plugs.

**Why is the ESA sticker on the breaker panel not signed?**

Once the final electrical panel has passed, the ESA will forward the paperwork to Barr Homes' electrician. The sticker on the panel is not normally signed as part of this process.

## **FOUNDATION**

**Why has the front porch slab (basement floor slab, garage floor slab) cracked?**

As the concrete cures and hardens, it shrinks and may crack. Settlement and changes in temperature also contribute to cracking. Generally cracks do not indicate a defect and do not require repair. Floor slabs are not a structural component of your home.

**Why is the foundation cracked?**

As is the case with floor slabs, concrete foundation walls crack as a result of shrinkage and/or settlement. Generally cracks do not indicate a defect, and do not leak. If you detect leakage at a foundation crack, contact the Service Department.

**Why is the garage floor or porch floor starting to flake?**

Salt, combined with the winter freeze/thaw cycles, can cause serious erosion to concrete surfaces. Most often the front edge of the garage floor is affected. It is important to keep these areas clean and to apply a suitable sealer to the concrete once a year to prevent salt damage.

## RESOURCES

---

We want you to be informed every step of the way.

Here is the contact information for Barr Homes staff:

### **Sales Associates**

Mike Scrannage: 613-544-4141

Rob Blasko: 613-530-6737

### **Head Office**

Main Contact Number: 613-542-4922

Fax Number: 613-542-2142