



Mechanical Systems

Part II – Plumbing

Plumbing Care and Maintenance

Gas Water Heaters

- Before requesting warranty service for no hot water, carefully read the manufacturer's manual and check the gas water heater pilot light. If the pilot is not lit, refer to your owner's manual for instructions on lighting the pilot.
- If you need to drain the water heater to remove sediment which can build up and cause the element to burn out, please read the manufacturer's instructions. Remember to turn off the circuit breaker on the water heater; turn off the cold water supply to the heater; open a nearby hot water faucet; open the heater tank completely prior to turning the electricity back on. If you don't you will dry fire the elements and they will have to be replaced.

Electric Water Heaters

- Be sure to turn the power off to the water heater prior to conducting any maintenance on or adjusting the temperature of the water heater.
- The water heater should be inspected annually by a qualified service technician for damaged components.
- Drain the water heater monthly until the water is clear (approximately one gallon of water). This will remove any possible sediment from the tank. Remember to refill the tank completely before re-starting.

Toilets/Water Closets

- Do not use any type of abrasive when cleaning the toilet seat. Toilet seats should be placed in the closed position, never dropped, as this will weaken/loosen the hinges.
- It is recommended that you do not use a bowl cleaner in the toilet tank as some of these products will warp the rubber flapper and cause the toilet to run after flushing. If a warranty call is placed for a running toilet and this is the cause, you will be charged for the repair.
- The toilets in your new home are water saving toilets. Therefore, please remember this before placing a warranty call due to a "slow flushing toilet".
- Should you have a toilet stoppage, try a plunger first before placing a warranty call. In most cases, this will clear the stoppage.

Hose Bibs/Exterior Faucets

- Winterize your outside faucets (hose bibs) prior to winter. It is very important that the outside faucets be drained to prevent them from freezing and bursting. Frozen and/or burst pipes caused by freezing are not covered by warranty.
- Each fall the outside faucets must be drained to prevent them from freezing. Shut off the outside faucet by turning off the inside shut off valves. Lift the ring on vacuum breakers on the hose bibs. Open the outside faucet – this can be left open to allow excess water to drain out. Bleed the lines – open the bleed valve (cap) that is located by the inside shut off valve to let the excess water drain out of the line.
- In home equipped with Frost-Free hose bibs, there is no vacuum breaker or plastic ring, simply remove any hose and shut off the hose bib at the exterior faucet and turn off the inside shut off valves.
- In the spring, follow the procedure in reverse order to have your outside faucets operable.
- Heartland Homes is not responsible for frozen and/or burst pipes as a result of freezing. You will be charged the current service rate for repairs and payment must be made at the time of the warranty call.

Sump Pumps

- The sump pump will come on when the water level is approximately 1" above the pump handle. You can check to see if the sump pump is working properly by starting the sump pump manually at least once per month.
- During the first year, the sump pump should be cleaned often, especially at the pump pit. Remove any debris or materials that may accumulate and could clog the water inlet.
- Before checking the sump pump or cleaning it, it is advisable that you read your owner's manual.

Garbage Disposal/Food Disposer

Do:

- Grind food scraps only with a strong flow of cold water
- Grind citrus and melon rinds
- Dispose of small amounts of fats and grease with the disposal on and a strong flow of cold water.
- Flush the disposal for cleaning; allow disposal to run for 25 seconds after grinding is complete, while continuing with a strong flow of cold water.

Do Not:

- Dispose of coffee grounds or fibrous waste like asparagus or corn husks; this can damage the unit.
- Use hot water for grinding waste; however, draining hot water through the sink is OK.
- Turn off the motor before grinding is complete.
- Operate the motor without a strong flow of cold water.

Welled Exits

- It is very important to maintain the cleanliness of the welled exit. Debris (leaves, grass, or dirt) can clog the drain which will cause water to build up in the well. This will cause water to build up in the wall and eventually come in through the door. Heartland Homes is not responsible for any door leaks due to clogged welled exit drains.

Emergency Calls

- Emergencies that will be taken care of after regular working hours are:
 - a) Major sewage stoppage – if this occurs more than 30 days after the settlement date of your home, you may be charged for this type of call.
 - b) Broken water pipes, resulting in the MAIN water valve being shut off.
 - c) NO hot water – response time is 24 hours after receiving call if under warranty.
 - d) Should a call be received after hours and it is determined that it is not an emergency; you will be instructed to call the office on the next working day to schedule an appointment. Please remember that the warranty mechanic that is on emergency call will in no way schedule an appointment for you. This is to be done by the homeowner through our office.
 - e) When an appointment is scheduled for a specific day, we do expect you to be home on that date. Should our warranty mechanic find no one at home, we will leave you a “Sorry We Missed You” doorknocker and you will have to call to reschedule the appointment.
 - f) The vendor does not schedule appointments for a specific time; however, they can give you an approximate time if you call their Warranty Department the day of your warranty call. The vendor can also phone you at work when they are on their way to your home.

Drainage Systems for Crawl Space Homes

Your house has a crawl space (e.g. lower levels of bi-levels and tri-levels, basements) that has a drainage system, which prevents water from accumulating under the concrete floor. A perimeter drain is used to carry any water that has seeped through the block back outside.

This drain, usually a 4" plastic pipe, runs from underneath the footing and is stubbed out into the yard at a point lower than the slab. Special consideration should be given to this gravity-type drain at and following pre-settlement.

- Make a visual inspection to be sure end of drain is free of debris. If water is not free to come out, the water could back up in your basement or crawl space.
- Note the location of the drain and if possible, record it in a place where you keep your warranties and other information.
- Periodically check to be sure drain is free of debris.
- Caution anyone digging in the area (Local Electric & Phone companies, Cable TV companies, etc.) so that they don't accidentally cut through the drain.
- This drain is cut to ground level after the yard is landscaped and will not be highly visible from the street. Do not move the pipe, as you could rest it at a level too high to allow the water to drain, causing it to backup into the basement or crawl space.