



RESIDENTS' HANDBOOK

Dear New Home Owner

Housing Foundation welcomes you to your new home. ***Congratulations!***

We have put together this booklet as a guide to caring for your home to ensure you gain the most out of the features and chattels we have installed for you and your family.

We would like to take this opportunity to wish you well in your new home and trust that it is all that you dreamed it would be!

***Trustees and Staff
Housing Foundation***

Frequently Asked Questions

- How do we know what paint colours to use for paint touch-ups in the future? **See Page 6**
- How do I take care of the outside of my home? **See Page 4**
- What do I do if my gutters are over-flowing? **See Page 5**
- How do I take care of my painted walls? **See Page 9**
- What if my curtains need to be cleaned? **See Page 8**
- What if I spill something on my floors? **See Page 9-10**
- How do I remove spills or stains from the floors? **See Page 10**
- How will I be able to heat my home? **See Page 11**
- How can I save money on water and power? **See Page 12-13**
- What is the best way to look after my garden? **See Page 14**
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- My bathroom mirror forming black edges – why? **See Page 17**
- How can I get my Sky and Broadband hooked up? **See Page 18**

Regular Exterior Maintenance

Painted Weatherboard

Regular maintenance of all finished surfaces, particularly finished timber surfaces is important. Timber is a natural product and requires regular attention to prevent the onset of rapid changes that can ultimately lead to deterioration.

- Exterior painted surfaces will benefit from yearly washing with a sugar soap solution and light water blast to remove surface contaminants such as mould, algae and chalking
- Never use high pressure water blasting on timber surfaces
- Exterior surfaces with high sun exposure will need to be repainted every five years and surfaces with low sun exposure will need to be repainted every ten years
- As wooden weather boards age so sometimes leak (or bleed) resin which rises to surface of the weatherboard. Resin bleeding will stop naturally but it may take 1–2 years. To deal with this you need to scrape off resin as it comes to the surface and once the resin bleeding stops, sand back affected areas. Where a painted finish is required, prime with an aluminium primer and paint with at least two coats of semi-gloss that matches your house paint.

Brick

Our brick houses are built with brick veneer, this means there is a cavity between the timber framing and the brickwork. You must keep the external drainage cavities at the base of the brick walls clear – check regularly that soil and plants are not blocking them.

Regular Exterior Maintenance cont.

Drains and Gutters

Your home has a pre-painted steel roof. Areas of the pre-painted steel roof not regularly washed with rain water (such as wall claddings, unwashed areas and areas of high risk) **must** be routinely washed to remove surface deposits to ensure satisfactory life is obtained from the product. Always wear soft soled shoes when walking on the pre-painted steel surfaces to avoid causing damage.

Once a year you should check your roof to ensure problems such as mould and algae are not developing and that the steel roof fixings are still in place. Ensure your satellite dish cable is not drilled through the steel roof. Things to look for include flashings that have corroded or lifted. Overhanging branches can damage roofing materials so it is important that you keep the trees next to your house well trimmed.

Blocked and damaged drains can cause serious flooding so it's important that you contact a professional drain cleaner as soon as you become aware of problems. Tree roots can cause clay drainage pipes to crack, so take care when you plant trees with extensive root systems.

Colour Schemes

Your home has been fitted with:

INTERIOR

Ceilings:

Trims and Doors:

Walls:

Kitchen Cabinets:

Kitchen Benchtops:

Carpet:

Vinyl:

Living Room Curtains:

Bedroom Curtains:

EXTERIOR

Roof / Fascia:

Weatherboard:

Bricks:

Joinery:

Garage Door:

Cleaning External and Internal Painted Surfaces

Wattyl (Valspar) recommend maximising the life of their paints by following the suggestions below:

- White paint can take up to 2 weeks to fully cure, with tinted colours taking even longer. Avoid cleaning painted surfaces until they are fully cured.
- Very dark colours may show a shiny surface, which is the result of surfactant bleed. A gentle wash with a mild liquid detergent will remove the surfactant and return the coating to its normal appearance. Do not use harsh liquid abrasives eg: Jiff™ or similar brands
- The most effective cleaners are the ammonia free “spray on” type. The use of Ajax Spray ‘n Wipe™ type cleaners (or other similar brands), following instructions as given on the label, have shown the best stain removal with minimum change in surface appearance.
- Never scrub a painted surface. This will polish the surface and cause shiny patches. Use a soft sponge and a gentle wiping motion. Remember to rinse the area to remove any traces of cleaner.
- When re-painting a surface, use a light 180 sand paper and a little bit of filler to smooth off, then re-paint.

You may find some instructional videos and more information on the Mitre 10 or Bunnings website.

Interior Maintenance

Curtains

We have installed curtains to give you extra insulation in the winter and keep you cooler in summer. To ensure the heat from the winter sun is kept in the house and to reduce the need for extra heating, close the curtains (if possible) before the sun goes down, thereby trapping the heat inside.

They are easy-care and their special technology thermal backing discourages mildew from forming.

Curtain Cleaning

- Remove hooks, rings and trims before cleaning
- Either gently vacuum with appropriate attachment or cold **HAND** wash
- **DO NOT** soak, bleach, rub, wring or tumble-dry
- **DO NOT** use pegs or fold over clothesline
- For best results hang curtains by their hooks to dry in shade, coated sides not touching
- Hang and steam on fabric side
- Possible shrinkage 3%
- Dry Cleanable

Interior Maintenance cont.

Vinyl

Sweep or static mop the floor regularly to remove dirt and grit. This will reduce the possibility of scratching of the surface.

Everyday dirt and grime can be simply cleaned using a mild detergent dissolved in a 5 litre bucket of warm water – rinse with clean water and dry with soft cloth to avoid streaking.

DO NOT USE POLISH ON YOUR VINYL FLOORING AS THIS WILL TAKE OFF THE COATING AND ANY MARKS WILL NOT BE REMOVABLE.

Tips:

- Spillages, including fats and oils, lipstick, mustard, iodine, nail polish, paints, ink, shoe polish, dyes, crayons, and some fruit juices should be mopped immediately to avoid staining
- If staining occurs, eucalyptus oil or white spirit applied with a soft white cloth may assist in removing the stain – wash off residue with clean water
- In most cases, scuff marks can be removed with eucalyptus oil or white spirit applied sparingly with a piece of towelling – rinse with water
- Chair mats are recommended when using castor chairs.

Interior Maintenance cont.

Carpet

Properly maintaining your carpet will extend it's useful life and help retain it's appearance for longer.

You should vacuum thoroughly at least weekly and clean up any spills immediately. Vacuum regularly with a strong, well-functioning vacuum cleaner with the correct brush height.

Remember, you cannot over-vacuum and vacuuming should begin the day the carpet is installed. Frequent vacuuming is your carpet's best friend.

Stain Removal

DO NOT RUB OR SCRUB SPILLS AND / OR STAINS

- Step 1 – SCOOP up solids before cleaning
- Step 2 – BLOT as much liquid as possible using clean white towelling or a paper towel
- Step 3 – CLEAN – Apply spot removal agent/s to clean towel – do not apply directly to carpet
- Step 4 – RINSE with cold or lukewarm water only. **WARNING:** If you do saturate your carpets stand on towels to absorb water from the carpet
- Step 5 – DRY – Blot dry with absorbent material such as paper towelling or use a cold air fan to complete drying.

Handy Indoor Tips

You can contribute to a healthy indoor environment by reducing moisture and making sure unhealthy materials aren't brought into the house.

Specifically:

- Reduce moisture by drying clothes outside or use a vent dryer inside
- Avoid over-watering of indoor plants
- Use the range hood and extraction fans provided in your home and leave the bathroom window open as much as you can
- Cover pots when they're boiling on the stove
- Allow houses need to be aired. Open the windows regularly during the winter to remove stale air
- Choose fabrics (for furniture, rugs etc.) that don't give off harmful chemicals – see www.enviro-choice.org.nz

Water, Power and Heating

Heating

It is recommended that living room temperature should be above 18°C from 5pm to 11pm in the evenings and that bedroom temperatures should be above 16°C from 11pm to 7am overnight. These recommendations match those of the World Health Organisation for healthy indoor temperatures.

Your home has been designed and built in line with current building code standards which means that it is designed to retain heat as much as possible. You have been provided with an in-built heater in the living room which comes with an instruction manual – it's worth reading the manual so you can use your heating system efficiently.

The in-built heater is large enough to warm the main living areas of your house, but may not be sufficient to keep you as warm as you like on cold days, if so you may need to consider an additional heater. Ideally, you should only heat the room when you need to.

The most appropriate heating are generally portable or fixed heaters. Some key points to think about when deciding what's right for you:

- Oil column or panel heaters are often most suitable for a bedroom, providing overnight background warmth
- Heat pumps are normally 3-4 times more efficient than straight electric heaters – but they are expensive to install and their efficiency drops down when they are below 0°. Because your home shouldn't need much heating, the high cost of a heat pump may not be recovered in your operating costs. Take a look at your winter power bills, if they are getting high, then a heat pump may be worthwhile
- **DO NOT** use LPG gas heaters. They generate a lot of moisture which is bad for you.

To find out more, Consumer New Zealand produces a useful and comprehensive range of information on types of heating devices and recommendations on brands of heaters. It also includes a heater size calculator so you can work out what size heater you need for a room. Visit

www.consumer.org.nz.

Water, Power and Heating cont.



Water Efficiency

When buying a new dishwasher, washing machine or other appliance that uses water, choose one that is at least a 3-star rating in water efficiency on the Energy Rating Label.

Kitchen – use the minimum amount of dishwashing detergent and only do full loads. When buying a new dishwasher, choose one that is at least a 3-star rating in water efficiency.

Bathroom – turn the tap off when you're brushing your teeth or shaving and take shorter showers – you also save time and hot water costs.

Laundry – ensure you have a full load of washing or adjust the water level. You can save water by reducing the rinse cycle and also use 'Eco' cycle. If washing by hand, plug the sink rather than use running water. Save water by reducing the rinse cycle and also use the "Eco" cycle. If washing by hand plug the sink rather than using running water

Outdoor Use – wash your car using a bucket and rinse off with the hose. Wash your car on the lawn if possible to avoid detergent from entering the storm water system. Use a broom to clean driveways and paths rather than hosing down. Buy a trigger gun hose attachment to prevent water wastage.

Garden – Avoid watering the garden during the hottest parts of the day, the best time is first thing in the morning before the heat of the day. Consider using a drip system which places water near the roots of plants.

There is a water meter in your home which you can use to gauge your daily water use and make changes accordingly; this is located at the front of your property.

Water, Power and Heating cont.



Handy Tips for Saving Power or Water

- Make sure all switches are turned off when not in use
- Use cold water for laundry and wash only full loads
- Use sun and wind to dry your laundry
- Repair leaky hot water taps
- Close windows and curtains at sunset in the winter – use curtains to retain heat in winter and provide shade in summer
- When buying a new appliance, ask what the Energy Rating Label is (for electricity and/or water). The Star Rating lets you compare the energy efficiency of similar models; the more stars on the Energy Rating Label, the more energy efficient the appliance is
- Check hot water cylinder to see if it is set at 52°C (140°F) – switch hot water off if away for more than two weeks
- Put an extra blanket on the bed instead of using an electric blanket
- Fridges and freezers operate most efficiently when they're full but not overloaded – leave space around the back of your fridge or freezer for air to circulate
- Always use LED efficient light bulbs in the light fittings
- Put heaters away from windows so they heat the room more efficiently and turn off heaters in rooms you're not using
- Use the thermostat and timer on heaters so they only come on when you need them and automatically switch off when they reach a certain temperature
- Clean your dryer's lint filter every time you use it
- Use the power options on your computer to save electricity when you're not using it
- Replace faulty seals on fridge-freezers and ovens

Gardening

Grow your own

A small, well organised garden can provide you and your family with fresh vegetables and herbs throughout the year. It will help save you money as well as improve your health.

A larger communal garden can also be developed. The Community will be benefited by their own vegetable and fruit production and the compost activity will provide social improvements.

If the community gets involved it will be able to reconnect with nature, leisure and relaxation. It is an excellent way to help children to be environmentally aware and it is a practical addition to any school science or environmental issue.

Storm Water Planting

As part of the storm water discharge design you may have some planting done for your section as this is part of the Council approved design plans. When we have severe rain, the planting helps to drain the water away so your section doesn't flood. Please don't remove these plants.

It is possible that in the future, Council may inspect your section and if the planting has been removed they will ask for it to be re-instated (which will be at your cost, so we do ask that you leave this planting as it is).

Caring for your Lawn

During hot periods the lawn does need water (mornings or evenings are best but not during the hottest part of the day), try not to let cracks open up as this is a sign of moisture levels being too low.

Fill dips that form through settlement with fresh soil early and lightly compact to avoid ponding on the lawn

Weeds: Either remove by hand or spot spray weeds, catch them early so grass has the best chance.

Do not mow short for the first few mow, young short fresh cut grass does not handle hot days well and until the lawn matures it is easy to pull the grass out by the roots. You, as the householder, are responsible for mowing the grass beside the footpath outside your home.

Composting

Helpful Composting Tips

A compost bin we highly recommend is the Bokashi Bin, which is an eco-friendly composting system. The Bokashi Bin uses a special mix (sprinkled on top of the waste) to help ferment the waste rather than let it decay, in order to eliminate odours and other unpleasantness associated with composting. For more information visit www.compostcollective.org.nz.

Make sure the Bokashi Bin is in a warm place but out of direct sunlight, near the kitchen would be ideal. You can include food scraps, tea bags, coffee grounds, citrus, onions and garlic. DO NOT include meat scraps, dairy products or oils.

Benefits of Composting

Composting is a great way of reusing your kitchen scraps and garden rubbish and it's fantastic for your garden. It improves soil fertility and texture and retains moisture and nutrients. Your garden will require less garden chemicals because compost rich soil grows healthier more productive plants. It reduces the amount of garden rubbish going to landfills and the amount of methane generated (methane is a greenhouse gas).

Worm Farms are fun to make and make good pets for children! They are an excellent way to help children become environmentally aware and are a fascinating addition to any school's science/environment curriculum. Problem-free worm composting is possible all year round, inside and out.

Recycling

Reduce

- Don't use plastic bags – use cloth bags for groceries
- Try to buy loose fruit and vegetables instead of pre-packed
- Buy concentrated products that use less packaging
- Buy products such as washing powder in large containers to reduce packaging
- Try to get off mailing lists for junk mail.

Reuse

- Repair rather than replace household goods
- Use refillable and rechargeable products when possible, for example, rechargeable batteries and cameras
- Use and refill your won durable drink bottle.

Recycle

- Cans, glass, plastic aluminium and paper can be recycled in a transfer station. Choose products in packaging that you know can be recycled
- Green kitchen food scraps (no meat/fat/grease/dairy products), vacuum cleaner dust and garden waste can be treated in the compost area
- Choose products in packaging that you know can be recycled.

Inorganic Waste

The following is classed as inorganic waste and can be put out for a yearly inorganic collection (pre-book through Auckland Council):

- Large appliances (fridges, freezers, washing machines and ovens) and Small appliances (kettles, irons and vacuum cleaners)
- Furniture (beds, couches, chairs, kitchen items and ornaments) and Renovation items (carpet, timber (without any exposed nails), tools, fixtures and fittings, baths and sinks)
- Sporting items (gym equipment, bicycles and toys) and Outdoor items (lawnmowers, barbecues, garden tools and outdoor furniture)
- Electronics (TVs, computers, phones and DVD players).

Helpful Recycling Tips

- Auckland Council provides a recycling collection – Check what day your collection is and your bins must be out at the curb by 7am for collection
- Contact the Auckland Council if you think your bins are too small
- You can also find our more about recycling through www.plastics.org.nz and www.reducerubbish.govt.nz
- If your new bins haven't been delivered to you within 7 working days of you moving in please contact the Auckland Council on 09 301 0101.

Condensation

It is likely that you already know what condensation is: water which collects as droplets on a cold surface when humid air is in contact with it.

Condensation occurs due to you and your family's activity within your home and given the right conditions, condensation will form on any surface but is often more visible on windows.

To reduce condensation in your home, try keeping windows open for some of the daytime, even if only by a little bit, to allow ventilation to reduce moisture and keep your home drier and healthier. When cooking, doing laundry or showering, make sure you let the water vapour escape outside by opening windows or turning on a ventilation fan everytime. Dehumidifiers are useful as their sole purpose is to reduce moisture in the air. It draws moisture-laden air from around the room, extracts the water and deposits it into an inbuilt container. You can easily dispose of the water by removing and emptying the container.

Looking after your Bathroom Mirrors

Mirrors are made when silver nitrate is applied to a piece of glass, but when the silver nitrate is exposed to oils, chemicals or moisture particles, it can begin to react with these particles and cause black edges to occur around the mirror. This happens if water is constantly splashed onto the mirror and not dried immediately after, or if you use particularly harsh cleaning products that when left to drip and not wiped away immediately after, can react with the mirror and cause black edges.

To prevent black edges forming around your bathroom mirror the following tips may come in handy:

- Keep bathrooms well-ventilated during showers to avoid condensation that can run and pool at the edge of the mirror
- **Never** spray cleaners directly on a mirror. Spray a cloth first, then wipe
- When in doubt, gentler is better. A damp cloth can clean a mirror exceedingly well or try wiping the mirror with newsprint to avoid lint.

Utilities

Broadband Internet and Phone

Your street has been laid with Fibre and not copper. This means you will only be able to get Ultra Fast Broadband, not ADSL or VDSL. This is necessary as you will need to be able to use a landline.

You will need to contact your internet service provider to have a technician come out to install internet directly to your house. Cable has been installed on the street but a technician will need to connect the fibre in your street to your house.

Explain to the technician that your home has been Star wired. This is a free service and the only cost will be your regular monthly internet charge.

Satellite TV (Sky)

If you are planning to purchase a satellite TV subscription (such as SKY) you will need to organise this yourself by contacting the company and organising installation etc. with one of their technicians. If there is a cost involved you will need to be responsible for this.

If you require a television aerial only, you will need to organise for a technician to install this at your own cost. A quick Google search will reveal a number of specialist technicians who can help.