

Trees and shrubs

Before planting any trees or shrubs, please consult with builders. Please note there are gas, water and electrical pipes underground.

Planting trees and shrubs can make your garden more attractive – but be careful: trees and shrubs take moisture from the soil. If the soil is clay, new planting may cause it to shrink, while removing existing trees and shrubs may make it swell. Excessive shrinkage or swelling could damage foundations.

Much depends on the type, size and location of the trees and shrubs, and the type of clay. You should obtain advice from an expert before planting new trees and shrubs. No large trees are allowed.

**Insurance Cover**

After the builder warranty has expired, your home will continue to be protected by insurance cover provided by NHBRC until 5 years, for structural damages ie. Walls and foundation.



- We wish you a pleasant and enjoyable stay in your new home –

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GUIDE TO YOUR NEW HOME

A practical guide looking after your new home

Terra Nova



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MOVING IN

Moving-in days are inevitably busy – try not to let all that excitement distract you from some of the more important tasks in hand.

On moving day, take care to protect your new floor finishes from dirty or potentially damaging footwear. Before you start filling your home, you need to inspect it carefully, making sure any potential defects and deficiencies are noted.

Pay particular attention to:

- Sanitary ware (including baths, basins and WCs)
- Glass (including windows, mirrors and shower screens)
- Fireplace/ Heater surrounds
- Kitchen fittings and appliances
- Wall tiling
- Floor tiling and laminated flooring.

Carefully inspect your home on moving-in day makes it easier for the builder to put right any defects you may find. Later on, it might be impossible to prove who caused them, so you need to note them immediately.

As well as checking your home, you should also confirm that:

- All keys have been handed over
- All windows and doors open close and lock properly
- Any 'extras' you ordered have been provided
- All services (gas, water and electricity) are connected and are in working order (you should also agree on meter readings).

Over the coming days, you should carry out several tests and checks to make sure everything's in order:

Ensure you have been given operating instructions for all systems and appliances.



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CARE & MAINTENANCE

Over time, things like doors, drawers, windows and cabinets may require a little adjustment here and there. This is to be expected, and is considered as part of normal maintenance.

Gas geyser

These systems should be serviced at least once a year by a competent installer in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations. The manufacturer should be able to provide details of an approved installer.

WARNING: Never attempt to service or alter an unvented system yourself. This could result in an explosion.



Chimneys

To prevent chimney fires and reduce the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning, chimneys should be swept at least once a year (unless the notice plate suggests alternative maintenance arrangements).



Gutters

Gutters should be cleaned out at least once a year to remove leaves and debris. Wet patches on the walls below may indicate that gutters or downpipes are blocked.



Paintwork

External finishes will dull over time and, where appropriate, should be washed on a regular basis. Outside woodwork should be regularly repainted or stained to preserve the wood. The first repainting outside will probably be needed in about two years, but after that – provided it is properly done – repainting or staining should only be necessary every four to five years.



Lawn care

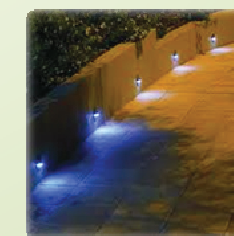
Regular mowing of the grass in front of your house is done by TNU. For a lush and green grass you are still responsible for fertilising, watering and weed control which should be done on regular intervals



Drives and paths

Gravel, stones and other loose surfaces may be displaced over time. They may need adding to or replacing as part of normal maintenance.

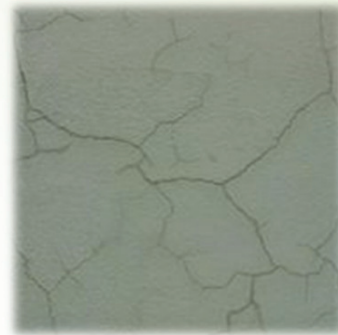
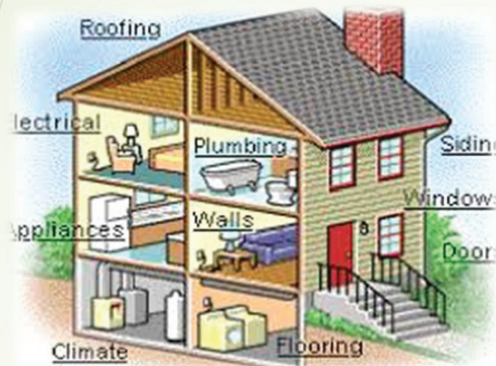
In soft landscaping, such as lawned areas, some settlement of the ground may occur and should be made good as part of normal maintenance.



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Settlement Cracks

These usually occur in new or relatively new buildings. It is caused by the ground compacting beneath the building. Some movement occurs as the ground adjusts to accommodate the new load. Also adjustments can occur as different construction materials settle down with different shrinking rates. These cracks can also appear with the changing of seasons – changing temperature and moisture content as the materials expand and contract. Hairline cracks are in fact harmless. Hairline cracks are not structurally significant, but cracks which increase in width gradually over a period of time should be investigated.



Expansion Joint

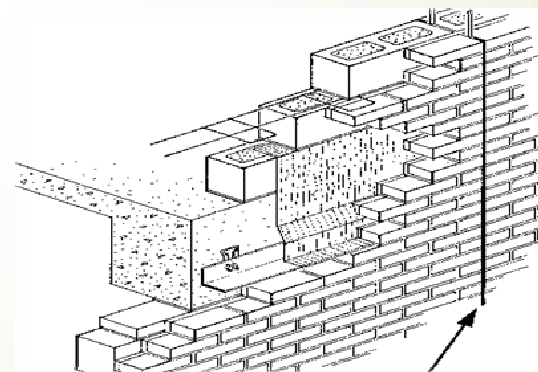
Expansion joint systems are used to bridge the gap and restore building assembly functions while accommodating expected movements.

The term "movement joint" has been widely adopted in preference to "expansion joint" as it more appropriately encompasses the fact that building movement results in both compression and expansion of the material installed.

For example, when a structure heats up, the building materials from which it is built expand. This causes the "expansion joint" to close down, thereby compressing the expansion joint system installed in the gap.

Conversely, when the temperature drops, the materials cool causing the joint gap to open. This requires the expansion joint material to expand to follow the joint movement.

In a building structure or concrete work, a joint or gap between adjacent parts that allows for safe and inconsequential relative movement of the parts, caused by thermal variations or other conditions.



SETTLING IN

Like most new things, a home needs to be taken care of. In the first few months, it's especially important that your home is allowed to "settle" – this includes allowing it to dry out gently.



Each and every house is different – that's what makes a home. Yours has been individually built and handcrafted by human beings, not robots! That means there will inevitably be some variation in the finished appearance of different elements of the construction. This is due to the nature of the materials and the ways in which they are applied. Slight variations are normal and to be expected – complete uniformity is quite rare.

During this period, you may notice minor cracks in walls, gaps in joinery and white deposits on the walls – all are completely normal in new homes, and may occur regardless of the measures you take to ensure that they do not. However, you can certainly reduce the chance of this happening by following the steps outlined in this section.

Drying out

Small cracks in the walls and gaps in joinery are both common signs of shrinkage. This happens when timbers and other materials contract as they dry out. It's extremely unlikely that these cracks are anything structurally significant, and they can normally be put right very easily with ordinary filler and a simple lick of paint.

To keep cracks and gaps to a minimum, you need to allow all the materials used in constructing your home to dry out gradually. Shrinkage is accelerated by heat, so you need to be sparing with it. Try to keep an even temperature throughout your home and, if you move in during the winter months, don't be tempted to turn the central heating up to its highest setting.

Leaving your windows open (or at least the vents within their frames) will help to ventilate your home and allow moisture to evaporate more naturally.

The length of time your house takes to dry out depends on how it was built and what sort of weather conditions there are when you first move in. Generally speaking, it will take around nine months to a year.



Efflorescence

The appearance of a white deposit on the wall (known as efflorescence) can also be an effect of the drying-out process. These white deposits are actually natural salts that come out of the wall materials, and are quite normal. These salts are not harmful and usually disappear over time, and where they appear on internal walls, they can be brushed or wiped away. However, if the white deposits continue to appear on internal walls, it could indicate something more serious, such as a water leak. If that's the case, you need to contact your builder or a competent tradesperson as soon as possible.

**Condensation**

Condensation is caused by steam or water vapour coming into contact with cold surfaces, such as walls, ceilings and windows.

Condensation can be the result of evaporation of moisture from building materials, which is quite common in new homes. If allowed to persist, condensation can result in the appearance of mould on interior surfaces and even on furnishings.

Condensation will gradually reduce as the building dries out, but you should avoid contributing to it if you want prevent the appearance of mould on walls and ceilings.

There are a number of things you can do, even after the building itself has finished drying out, to protect your home against harmful levels of condensation:

- Open windows or window vents to allow trapped moisture to escape.
- If a mechanical ventilation or heat recovery (MVHR) system has been installed in your home, ensure that you familiarise yourself with the manual and manufacturer's guidance. It is important to understand how these systems operate in order to run your home effectively.
- Cover pans when cooking to reduce steam and use the extractor fan where possible.
- Always use the extractor fan when bathing or taking a shower, or open window for ventilation.
- Stop moist air spreading around your home by keeping doors closed when cooking or bathing.
- Avoid drying clothes indoors, especially on radiators.
- If you have one, make sure your tumble dryer's venting duct leads outside (unless it is a self-condensing dryer).



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TAKING CARE

Extreme care needs to be taken when carrying out work around your home. Even if you're just hanging a picture or putting up shelves, there might be electrical devices, gas pipes and/or cabling in the way. So, before you start drilling holes or hammering in nails, always take care to establish the exact position of cables which are embedded in walls or under floorboards. You can do this using a cable detector.



OBLIGATIONS BY THE HOME BUILDER

The construction phase is deemed to be from the date that the contract is effective until the occupation date.

- **First three months following occupation/registration**

The Home Builder will be required to contract to rectify, at his own expense, any deficiency related to workmanship and materials during a 90 day period as from the occupation/registration date.

- **First twelve months following occupation/registration**

The Home Builder will be required to contract that for the first twelve months following occupation he will undertake, at his own expense, to repair any roof leaks that occur.

EXCLUSIONS FROM THE WARRANTY

The following are items, which are specifically excluded from the Standard Home Builders Warranty:

- Wilful acts or omissions of the consumer or any persons residing in the housing units;
- Fire, explosion, lightning or damage caused by a third party;
- Storm, flood, frost or earthquake or any other convulsion nature;
- Structural alterations, repairs, modifications or alterations to the housing unit as originally constructed and which affected the original structure;
- Condensation, inadequate maintenance or abnormal use of the housing unit or the imposition of any load greater than that for which the housing unit was designed or the use of the housing unit for any purpose other than that for which it was designed;
- Subsidence or landslip from any cause not related to a defect in the foundations;
- Any change in colour, texture, opacity or staining or other ageing process;
- Loss of or damage to any finishes unless they have to be repaired or replaced due to a structural defect in the residential structure;
- Wear and tear, deterioration caused by neglect or damage occasioned by the failure of the consumer timeously to notify the Home Builder of any defect;
- Anything which is of a petty nature and which any reasonable consumer could be expected to rectify him or herself;
- The electrical and plumbing systems; or
- Misuse or abnormal use of the private drainage system.

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