



“THE MASTER BUILDER”

HOMEOWNERS’ GUIDE

**AN ARIZONA FAVORITE
DBU Homes**

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HOMEOWNERS' GUIDE

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INTRODUCTION

WELCOME!

We are happy that you have given DBU Homes the opportunity to build your new home.

We hope that you can find time to read the "CONNECTIONS" magazine article on DBU. It will help you get acquainted with our staff and our new home construction business.

HOMEBUILDING

DBU is one of the leading homebuilders in Lake Havasu. Founded by Bill Ullery, the company has become one of the most respected in its field.

The secret to this success is no secret at all. Careful attention to innovative design and quality construction has earned DBU the respect of homeowners and fellow homebuilders alike. Evidence of the Company's success is in its unprecedented growth.

This kind of growth reflects not only a strong Corporate Organization, but also the skills of DBU's employees, subcontractors and vendors. Each group uses the vast experience, market research and professional judgment of local planners, designers, architects and engineers. The result is a blend of local style, modern technique and traditional craftsmanship that create both successful projects and sound investments for homebuyers.

We will design your home to fit your life and give you choices to personalize your home. It's about building the home style into the Arizona lifestyle. In Lake Havasu, we are known as "THE Particular Homebuilder." And yes, we are a different kind of homebuilder, building a better kind of home, designed for the desert. When you raise standards this high, other people notice!

DBU offers quality and innovation to produce the best possible home for your investment.

BUYING YOUR NEW DBU HOME

From the first time you enter our Sales Office to after you have moved into your new home, you will work with representatives of DBU. We make every effort to keep our policies and procedures as streamlined as possible. As a result, several different people will work with you to ensure that you receive the best possible service from us. This section briefly describes the role each person will play in the process of helping you with your home.

DBU SALES REPRESENTATIVE

One of the people providing you a full range of services is your sales representative. They are your main source of information about the home you are buying; its features, the available options, the best financing plan for you, and the procedure we follow.

All of our customers are special; if your sales representative is unavailable to answer questions, please feel free to call a DBU office. Our staff spends much of their time working directly with homebuyers.

SELECTING A MODEL, FLOOR PLAN AND ELEVATION

As you can see from our huge web site, we have a lot of new-home floor plans. Moreover, we have 46 models (all very different) and two of which open daily. And, with a cd Rom disk with over 2,000 plans, surely we can help you with your search for **the** perfect house. How do you get started with this review? Simply check the plans on this web site. Visit our models. Talk to our staff. Most of our clients find the personal contact with our folks the best option. We can answer questions more quickly and save you considerable time.

FINANCING, QUALIFICATION, PAYMENTS

A few new homebuyers prefer to deal in cash and not mortgage finance. Some people finance the new home due to tax benefits and the advantages of keeping their cash in other investments. Most people use mortgage financing because that's the only way they can gain access to the size and type of home they want and need. Just let us know your preferences and we will do what we can to help.

We are happy to recommend any one of a dozen or more reputable mortgage companies in Lake Havasu. We will not hesitate to share general impressions and some details of our past experience with these lenders. We are particularly willing to discuss those lenders who have consistently performed admirably with our other clients. We will give you references of our current and past clients relative to specific lenders if you wish.

One of the first steps is to get pre-qualified. This takes 30 to 45 minutes and is fairly easy. You will be given a list of information you will need to supply for the required credit check. We can help you get started. Our staff can complete most details on our computers or you can do this work at the mortgage broker's office. We can help you select the lender of your choice. We do **not** do mortgage lending ourselves. Why? Simply too many opportunities for conflicts of interest. Our method best preserves the good relationship we desire with our valued clients.

LOT PURCHASE (if you don't already have one in Lake Havasu)

There are still vacant lots in Lake Havasu! Many of those are on the market and multi-listed. DBU Realty, llc is very knowledgeable of this market. DBU does not typically list and sell lots. Thus, in most instances, our realtors can represent you solely, as a buyer. It's a concept called "buyer's agent." The intent is to avoid conflicts and misunderstandings that sometimes occur when agents represent both buyer and seller in real estate transactions. Because of our experience and active involvement in new construction, we can help you evaluate the lot and its potential for the type of home you want to build. Our job superintendents or head contractors should see the lot before offers are made. Some details may need to be specified in an offer to purchase for your protection. This is very important.

LOT PREPARATION (or including the essential tasks in your budget)

Lake Havasu generally enjoys very stable soil. Only a few lots need special attention. We can help you get bids for fill where required. We help with the survey, PERC test (where needed for septic systems), plot plan, grading, and engineering/compaction tests. This work can be done prior to writing a construction contract with DBU. However, most of our clients include lot preparation in their construction contract. They save the cost of a special grading permit. We simply include such details in the new-home budget. We know what to do and how to do it. Properly approached, lot preparation should not be unduly costly or a problem of significance for you.

BUDGET AND CONTRACT

With most construction contracts, we develop a detailed Excel spreadsheet budget. Every detail of importance is included and becomes a vital part of the construction contract. For some projects, such budgets are quite short and simple. On large luxury homes where everything must be bid, the budget may be 2 or 3 pages long. Most new homebuyers make some changes to our standard designs. For example, garages are occasionally shortened. More often, garages are enlarged to accommodate all of the “toys.” We add and enlarge rooms, tile roofs, windows, doors, or just about anything you want done. We are prepared to quote prices for all such changes. If it is something we haven’t done recently, we simply call our subs and suppliers for firm quotes. Usually, they respond within hours. However, sometimes such bidding takes a day or two.

The contract form we use is common to our industry. Similar forms can be purchased at most office supply stores. We will be happy to provide you with a copy and explain the details and most mortgage lenders are familiar with our contract as well. It meets their requirements. And since we seldom make changes to the standard form, it is not subjected to legal department review with each new loan application. For us, such stability is good business.

Your mortgage lender, before your application is approved, will require a signed contract. The budget must be complete and correct. We will supply them with a plot plan and a complete set of prints for your specific project. An independent third-party appraisal will be required for the protection of everyone involved. This is the way it should be. During the course of construction, we will be required to provide the lender with lien releases on every expenditure prior to any payments to DBU. A title company will be involved as a requirement of your lender.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

As the general contractor, we help you with pre-qualification and application for mortgage financing. We help with the land purchase. We provide all essential documents to your lender and the title company. We submit the permits and make any changes and revisions as required by the city. We help you with color and material selections including appliances, cabinets, etc. We schedule all work with our subs and suppliers. Many of these folks have been with us a dozen or more years. They know our rigorous standards. They know that they will be paid weekly and they know that the checks won’t bounce. Financial stability in this business is vitally crucial to long-term success. We’re among the best anywhere in this country.

Our construction superintendent for your specific project will be on your job site on most days, sometimes two or three visits when necessary. The city building department and the county health department are also involved in a series of inspections. Your mortgage lender will conduct inspections prior to each draw or payment to DBU.

With such rigorous service and frequent inspections, what if anything is left for you to do? Actually, not much. If you wish, you can travel...go on vacation. Some of our winter visitor clients return home with the intent of having a completed new home when they return the next fall or winter. This works fine. Your lender and an independent appraiser do their final inspections anyway. We do a final walk-through with clients when they return or at their convenience. If you are in town, we would prefer that you participate in weekly visits to the job site with the construction superintendent. This is done by appointment.

How does our performance compare with other general contractors in the state of Arizona? One former inspector for the Registrar of Contractors told us that he could find no other general contractor in the entire state of Arizona with fewer complaints filed over a ten-year period for a similar number of homes built. Impressive! We will be happy to provide you with a list of the original owner of every home we have ever built. We can also give you a phone list of all of our current suppliers and subs. Call anyone. You should check references before undertaking any new home construction project.

INTERIOR DESIGNER

We can recommend several professional interior designers in Havasu. Most have extensive experience and degrees in this field. We also have access to other design professionals who assist DBU.

CUSTOMER CARE REPRESENTATIVE

The first contact our customer care representative will have with you will be at your pre-constructing orientation. A customer care representative will meet with you again at your new home just before you close. He or she will explain the operation of your home in detail and the DBU procedure for warranty work.

GET IT IN WRITING

It is the policy of DBU to maintain the best possible reputation for honesty and integrity in our dealings with our homeowners. Accordingly, the policy of the company is to "get it in writing" during the process of making the sale and constructing the home. In doing this we hopefully eliminate the confusion and misunderstandings that are sometimes the result of verbal communications.

BLUEPRINTS

Generally, blueprints and drawings are not a part of the contract. The exception would be a bid situation in which the buyer presented the builder, a predrawn set of plans and specifications. In this instance, a contract is drawn based on the specific plans.

In most DBU projects, a contract is drawn based on one of more than 100 DBU models. Usually, the buyer selects a floor plan with either the "STANDARD" or "LUXURY" features. Changes and upgrades are specified

and noted in a budget that is a part of the contract. After the contract is signed, DBU invests in a set of working drawings that must reflect the details of the contract. There are nearly always errors in the drawings that should be corrected by both buyer and builder.

The drawings are the property of DBU and have a value of between \$600 and \$1,000 or more. A set is usually lent to the buyer for the purpose of editing and checking for errors relative to the contract. Such prints are copyrighted and cannot be legally used by other people to build a house.

OPTIONS AND CHANGES

Our policy is to ask you to make your major option selections at the time you sign your purchase contract. However, options may be added or deleted at your convenience. Understandably, the earlier the better. Changing the foundation for example, after the slab is poured, could be expensive. DBU job sites are restricted to DBU employees, subcontractors and vendors working directly for DBU on specific assignments. Under no circumstances, are other contractors allowed on a DBU construction site. Such a contract violation would present untenable legal liability hazards for DBU as your prime contractor. Changes are negotiable within the framework of paragraph 8 of the construction contract.

SURVEYS AND EASEMENTS

Usually, the lot is purchased prior to initiating construction of the home. Prior to construction, professional surveyors must survey your home site and the corners must be staked. DBU will then place the home on the site using the property corner pins as a guide. This placement will take into consideration lot location and orientation, the aesthetics of the street and the requirements of the governmental agencies involved.

Every residential lot has certain easement rights of access for the installation and use of utility lines, sewer, water, telephone, power, streetlights, mailboxes, and may include natural gas, cable TV, or drainage easements. For zero-lot-line housing, easements also exist for certain types of homeowner maintenance. Such easements are permanent features of the land. Ask us about the particular easements existing on the home site you have chosen.

COVENANTS, RESTRICTIONS AND ZONING LAWS

Every municipality establishes ordinances controlling activities in each type of zoning. DBU will build your home in accordance with these regulations. Before you make any alterations to your property, you should check with the appropriate governmental agency or Architectural Committee to be certain you are within these regulations.

INSPECTIONS

Because of our desire to offer the most favorable financing possible, and to build in the most desirable communities, DBU conforms to a multitude of construction codes and regulations. Our only reason for pointing this out is to inform you of the protection you enjoy. Each DBU home is subjected to as many as ten separate inspections at various stages of construction to ensure conformity with governmental building codes, FHA and VA requirements. Due to the complexity of this situation, we must remind you that, until closing, the home you are building is a DBU project construction site. Accordingly, only DBU employees and

tradesmen may perform work on the home. As construction progresses, the job site will be locked and secured.

ENTRY ON PROPERTY

You understand that the construction site could be dangerous and you agree that you will be responsible for any damage to persons or property caused by or related to entry of the job site by you or your family members or guests or anyone under your employ prior to the closing and you will indemnify DBU for any such damages. You will not make any additions or changes to the Home prior to closing without a proper DBU change order.

THE CONSTRUCTION SITE

We encourage you to visit our model as much as you like. However, since construction is dangerous and even an idle site poses hazards, it is our policy that you do not visit your home unless accompanied by a DBU representative.

Once your home has been framed and the electric wiring, plumbing, heat, and air conditioning are installed (but before the drywall is installed), we will arrange an appointment for you and a DBU representative to walk through your home. At this pre-drywall orientation you will be able to inspect your home's structural components, and our representative will answer any questions you may have about your home.

LOAN PROCESSING

At the time your purchase contract is signed, we will provide you financing information. We will contact you to arrange an appointment to discuss the financing options available to meet your mortgage needs.

Loan processing can be time consuming, since employment and income histories are required for a two-year period prior to your purchase. A timely response to a mortgage broker request for information will help speed the processing. Normal processing time is 4-6 weeks from the date you make application.

Closing costs charged to the buyer will vary due to mortgage amounts, purchase price and the type of loan. Customary charges may include title company fees, mortgage origination fees, credit report fees, appraisal fees, mortgage discount points, flood certification, underwriting fees, document preparation and tax service fees. Your mortgage broker will give you an estimate of the closing costs and prepaid items for the transaction at the time of your loan application appointment.

Should you have questions about financing or the progress of your loan application, please contact your mortgage lender.

INTERIM CONSTRUCTION FINANCING

DBU will consider paying interim construction financing (**ICF**) costs and all closing and mortgage financing costs on new construction. However, the building contract must be modified to reflect these costs. This is necessary since DBU home prices are based on the current **cash** price. This gives buyers the lowest possible

new home cost in a very competitive market. Moreover, most buyers want to know exactly, the base cost of the home. Some will find private financing or simply pay cash. Some will finance the construction phase costs of the new home with personal funds having previously arranged for mortgage financing at the completion of construction. Those people with such disposable resources can save a lot of money.

Some builders advertise an "all in one package." Check such offers closely. They seldom will be to your advantage financially. Buying your own lot and paying cash or negotiating ICF or Interim Construction Financing costs and closing costs into your building contract may save you several thousand dollars. Having a home built on your lot is nearly always \$4,000 to \$6,000 less expensive than buying a "spec" house. The spec house investor's profit is the difference. Typically, you can compute the differences by studying current ads.

Typically, buyers and mortgage brokers request the builder to pay all ICF costs. The cost of the house is adjusted to reflect the ICF cost. The language is very specific, "Builder to provide interim construction financing." "Builders' contribution to buyers' non-recurring closing costs not to exceed \$x,xxx.xx", may then be added. The mortgage broker will provide an estimate of construction time based on the number of days the Registrar of Contractors defines as a "timely" period of construction. The buyer may need some additional time for lot grading or filling or special custom changes. The cost of ICF interest is computed accordingly.

It is usually the expectation of the buyer and lender that, should the construction time exceed the number of days considered appropriate for the completion of the project, that the penalties will be in the form of interest paid by the contractor on ICF. On occasion, DBU does go over on the estimated time and we do pay the additional interest exactly as required in the contract.

We do keep an internal record of these expenditures and we do measure our performance at the end of each year on "timely" construction. During the past two years, we have managed such projects to our advantage. However, some contractors go bankrupt by miscalculating and mismanaging construction scheduling and related ICF costs. It is risky for the builder.

On occasion, a buyer will assume responsibility for paying all ICF interest. In such instances, the lender should inform the buyer of the potential liability should the contractor not complete construction on schedule. There are no other penalties in most home building contracts for delays on small residential construction projects. In some instances, by mutual agreement (sales price adjusted accordingly), the language will read, "Builder to provide ICF not to exceed \$xxxx.xx." The buyer must pay all interest above the stated amount and therefore assume responsibility for such costs should the project take longer than expected (weather, strikes, acts of God, etc.). Very few buyers select this option.

COLOR SELECTIONS

DBU is committed to building homes that are attractive and pleasing year-after-year. We achieve this commitment by offering a wide range of exterior styles and a large choice of colors appropriate for the community, both inside and outside of the home. In order to comply with master plan architectural

guidelines, from time to time we may have to limit a choice of exterior style or exterior color. Unless the community is one in which we must specify the exterior color package, you will have an opportunity to select your preference.

Along with all basic selections, our cooperating vendors offer samples for carpet, tile, roofing, paint, and a variety of window treatments. These choices are available to you, should you choose to coordinate all selections with our professional assistance. All color selections will be made at our Design Center. After you have completed the "Color Selection Sheet," changes should be limited. It is very important that when you make your selections you allow yourself enough time to choose what you want and double-check your selection for accuracy.

DBU will not begin your home without a completed Color Selection Sheet. Therefore, we ask that you complete your color selections within fifteen (15) days of signing your purchase contract.

If you are purchasing a home already under construction, our ability to offer upgraded amenities will depend on the availability and the status of the construction of your new home. To avoid delaying completion of the home, we may have to limit color selections to those that can be obtained in time to meet our construction schedule. If flooring has already been placed in the home, it is normally our policy not to encourage changes at that time.

Such selections will be made timely in accordance with a request from us. Your selections will be final and binding. If you have not made such selections within the time period requested by DBU, we may make such selections for you (which selections will be binding upon you) or we may deem you to be in default of this Agreement.

SUBSTITUTIONS

As outlined in your purchase contract, DBU reserves the right to make substitutions if normal supplies of material are disrupted beyond our control. In those instances, you can be assured we will substitute a product of equal or superior value, consistent with the highest quality that we maintain in our homes.

Determination of equivalency will be in our sole opinion. Unless specified herein to the contrary, you agree to accept all color selections and appliances, if any, installed in the Home or ordered by DBU for installation in the Home as of the Agreement Date. You understand that all furniture, decorator items, special landscaping, and other items displayed in or about our models are for marketing purposes and do not constitute representations, assurances or warranties as to the home you are purchasing and are not a part of this Agreement.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, insulation may be of lesser thickness and R-value than indicated certain areas where the design of the home does not permit greater thickness. Examples of locations where thickness and R-value may vary include locations where studs are placed in the walls, at corners and windows and where the roof trusses attach to outside walls. The R-values are based on the representation of the manufacturer and/or installer of the insulation, and we do not warrant or represent that these R-

values are correct. We have the right to make substitutions as to the type, thickness and R-value of insulation installed in the home as long as there are no substantial changes in the R-value of the insulation installed in a substantial portion of the Home.

COMPLETION DATES AND CONSTRUCTION DELAYS

In a business with as many variables as home construction, it is impossible to quote exact completion dates in advance. Building delays can be caused by various governmental agencies, material delivery, weather, labor disputes, governmental inspections and a host of other factors. While we attempt to provide you with realistic and accurate information as to construction completion, due to all of the variables, please be aware that we can only provide you with estimated completion dates. Construction time for small sized homes is normally four to five months, from the trenching of footings.

We request that you keep your moving plans flexible. To save your family worry, inconvenience and money, please don't make a firm commitment about moving until we have made a firm commitment to you by scheduling your buyer orientation and closing appointment.

We encourage you to plan for a one to two week overlap, whereby you retain possession of your old residence after taking possession of your new DBU home. This will allow a leisurely move with very little extra cost.

UTILITIES

Various utility companies serve the areas in Arizona where DBU builds. Either a municipal or private water company provides water service to your new home.

As a usual procedure, the power companies will not install electrical and gas meters until notified by the city or county that the home has passed all the required inspections. Normally, if the utility company is holding a start order from you or DBU, the meter will be set from one to three days after the inspection report is received.

DBU has no control over the speed of the final governmental inspection or the installation for the meter. If you have a timing problem, we will do all we can to assist; however, the responsibility for acquiring permanent utility service remains with the buyer.

DBU normally has electric and water in operation prior to closing of the home as a convenience to our construction crews. A gas meter installation requires action on your part. You are required to transfer the accounts into your name **prior to closing**. After a 24-hour grace period, DBU will close its accounts with the utility companies. To ensure that you will not have to pay extra to reconnect the utilities, you should take the appropriate measures to establish service in your name prior to the closing. Your customer care representative can inform you how to contact the utility companies for permanent service in your name.

ENVIRONMENTAL: THE HOME AND ITS OCCUPANTS MAY NOW OR IN THE FUTURE BE EXPOSED TO

VARIOUS ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS IN OR NEAR THE HOME (INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, RADON GAS IN THE SOIL, ELECTROMAGNETIC FIELDS FROM POWER LINES AND APPLIANCES, THE PRESENCE OF SURFACE AND UNDERGROUND UTILITY FACILITIES, AND THE POSSIBILITY OF AIR, WATER AND SOIL POLLUTION). WE DO NOT CLAIM ANY EXPERTISE CONCERNING SUCH CONDITIONS. WE MAKE NO REPRESENTATIONS OR WARRANTIES, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, ABOUT SUCH CONDITIONS, AND EXPRESSLY DISCLAIM ANY LIABILITY FOR ANY TYPE OF DAMAGES THAT SUCH CONDITIONS MIGHT CAUSE THE HOME OR ITS OCCUPANTS. YOU MAY WISH TO CONTACT YOUR LOCAL, STATE OR FEDERAL ENVIRONMENTAL AGENCIES OR INDEPENDENT CONSULTANT FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION.

MOVING IN AND CLOSING

CLOSING PROCEDURE

It is the custom everywhere, that buyers do not take possession (or move furniture in, etc.) until a proper closing has been accomplished.

Simply stated, this means that the paperwork is done and the builder has received payment for all contract work, all change orders, all upgrades and all outside-of-escrow payments.

The builder secures a series of final inspections including a certificate of occupancy inspection. The C.O. is presented to the buyer once all payments are completed. At that point, the locks are changed and the buyer takes formal possession.

There is nearly always some minor work to be completed after the closing. This is covered under the home warranty.

Should there ever be a major problem or a disagreement not easily resolved, the contract requires an arbitration process. There is also a provision for withholding some funds until work is completed. This allows for a closing process while mutually agreeable work is finalized. Most lenders and mortgage companies will not allow a closing until their own appraiser has inspected the property and it is 100% completed. The buyer and builder handle minor details beyond that.

We hope this short summary helps you understand our terminology, the process and common practice. We're certain everything will go smoothly. We nearly always finish on an appropriate schedule. We seldom ever have major problems on our projects and if we do, they get properly fixed.

Most of our business comes from referrals and word-of-mouth. Thus, satisfied customers are the lifeblood of our business. And we will do our best to earn your support and enthusiasm.

After your home has received its final city and governmental inspections and is approved by our personnel, a DBU representative will contact you to arrange a buyer walk-thru orientation prior to close of escrow.

At your buyer customer care or construction walk-thru orientation, you will meet with a DBU representative who will acquaint you with a working knowledge of your new home. At this meeting, you may identify any concerns that need to be addressed. These, if any, are typically minor items that would not affect the livability of your home, and are usually corrected within the first week of occupancy.

During your orientation, our representatives will provide you with information regarding landscaping (not normally included in construction contracts) and will answer your questions about DBU warranty service and homeowner maintenance and upkeep.

Immediately following the orientation, you may be scheduled to visit our closing agency (the address will be provided to you when you are ready to close). For this appointment, your mortgage lender will have sent all of the final paperwork necessary to fund your loan, a representative from our closing agency will contact you to let you know the exact amount you must bring to closing in the form of a Cashier's or Certified Check. If you do not hear from our closing agent prior to your orientation, please call your mortgage lender to determine the date of your closing.

You will be given the keys to your home the day your mortgage lender issues funds to our closing agent. DBU will remove the contractor's lock and install the new lock. No one but you will have a house key.

INSURANCE FOR SINGLE FAMILY HOMES

All mortgage lenders require homeowners' insurance before you can close on your new home. Check with your mortgage lender. The original policy must be sent to your lender prior to the preparation of your closing documents.

LANDSCAPING

DBU does not provide landscaping, unless specifically noted in the contract and budget. Your sales representative will be able to give you suggestions for reliable landscaping contractors. DBU does do a basic final grade that will meet code requirements.

LEGAL DOCUMENTS

For your protection, we strongly recommend you keep all documents pertaining to your home purchase in a safe place such as a safety deposit box. The most important set of papers is the purchase contract, all addenda to the contract, the mortgage note, deed, closing statement and title report.

REQUESTING HOMEOWNER SERVICE

REQUESTS

We prefer your requests for service are in writing, so that all of your concerns can be identified and a record of repairs maintained by DBU. You may call our office between 8:30 a.m. and 12 noon, and from 2 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. to request a service appointment. Your Customer Care Representative will still need to call you to schedule a time when you can jointly review your service request in your home.

Mail or fax all requests for service to DBU at the following address:

DBU Homes, 735 Little Dr., Lake Havasu City, AZ 86406 www.dbuhomes.com

Local phone 928-453-2414, toll free: 1-800-345-2414, fax 928-453-1186 e-mail dbu@dbuhomes.com

EMERGENCY HOMEOWNER SERVICE

Generally, emergency service is available only from a subcontractor, such as the plumber. In the event of a serious problem affecting the habitability of a house, such as a complete power outage, A/C, heat failure, plumbing leaks in a wall, major roof leaks or complete sewage backup, call DBU. If the office is closed, call Bill Ullery on his cell; 928-716-3014. Prior to making a call for emergency service, please refer to the Homeowner Maintenance section of this booklet or the appropriate manual to be certain the problem cannot be corrected by you.

Prior to closing, contact DBU for the names and telephone numbers of the subcontractor for plumbing, electrical, air conditioning, roofing, etc. Typically, such subcontractors will respond appropriately to emergency calls.

HOMEOWNER MAINTENANCE

AIR CONDITIONING

Thermostats - The thermostat (usually located in a hallway) helps to keep your home at an even temperature throughout. Adjusting the registers in the various rooms may further regulate individual room temperatures. The usual setting for a thermostat is 80 degrees on a summer day, in the desert. Any large deviation from this setting will result in an increased utility bill.

In the winter the heat pump occasionally enters a defrost cycle, and the indoor and outdoor fans shut off leaving only a steady humming sound (the compressor). If you are near the return air (filter area), you may feel cold air falling (the coil is defrosting). **DO NOT TURN THE UNIT OFF. DO NOT CHANGE THE TEMPERATURE,** or in any way adjust the thermostat during a defrost cycle. The duration of the defrost cycle will vary from one to ten minutes, according to the amount of frost on the outside coil.

Registers - The registers throughout your home help to regulate the flow of air and to maintain the desired temperature. By opening and closing the registers and dampers, you can regulate the amount of cool or warm air that enters a room. Once the registers and dampers are adjusted, they, together with the thermostat, will maintain the temperature in your home. Closing registers and doors to rooms not in use, is a good way to reduce your cooling and heating costs. In addition to the air outlets, your home will have an air intake (return) register. Neither these nor the other registers should ever be obstructed.

Filters - Your air-conditioning system has an air filter to help keep the air in your home clean. For maximum efficiency, this filter should be replaced monthly. Clogged filters can cause a unit to malfunction. The

instruction manual for the system will tell you the location of the filter and how to clean and replace it.

Insulation - Your DBU home has been designed to provide the proper insulation for our climate. Open doors, windows, fireplace flues and clogged filters are more often the cause of inadequate cooling or heating than deficient insulation.

Inspection - a professional repairman should check a heat pump system periodically. See your instruction manual for the frequency of this care. (See also "Electrical Service Entrance.")

APPLIANCES

Manufacturer's instruction manuals and other papers accompany your new electrical or gas appliances. Look through them carefully; remove, fill out and mail any return postcards necessary to record warranties and keep a list of the authorized service agencies in the back of this booklet.

Read all instructional literature so that you will know how to get the best from what you own. If an electrical appliance fails to work, before calling DBU's appliance subcontractor, be sure the appliance is plugged in and no circuit breakers are tripped. If a gas appliance fails to work, check to see if the pilot light is lit. If you suspect a gas leak, turn off the main gas valve near the meter and call DBU or DBU's plumber.

BATHTUBS, SINKS AND SHOWERS

Tile and Porcelain Enamel - The surface of these fixtures is hard, smooth and glossy like a mirror. It is destructible. Carelessness causes chipping, scratches and stains. A blow from a heavy or sharp object will chip the surface, and scraping or banging metal utensils in a sink will gradually scratch and dull the surface. The finish is then susceptible to stains, which become increasingly difficult to remove.

Shiny new fixtures can also be dulled or stained within a short time through improper or excessive use of strong abrasive cleaners. Most household cleaners are mildly abrasive, but used with plenty of water, some of them are not harmful; however, a non-abrasive cleanser is safer. Aerosol bathroom cleaners are generally non-abrasive. If you prefer a dry material, baking soda and Bon Ami Powder (Not Bon Ami Cleanser) are non-abrasive.

Marble Tubs and Sinks and Vitreous China-Porcelain Enamel - Do not use abrasive cleaners such as Ajax or Comet on such surfaces. Liquid cleansers such as Top Job, Windex, Gel-Gloss, 409, or Pine-Sol work very well on these products. To restore the gloss, polish with Pledge, Johnson's paste wax or Jubilee every 6 weeks to 2 months.

Stainless Steel - Stainless steel fixtures and sinks generally resist staining and they need a thorough scrubbing only occasionally. Use a non-abrasive cleanser or a commercial stainless steel cleanser. Stainless steel sinks will dent when they receive a strong impact.

Fiberglass Tubs and Showers - Never use powdered cleansers or any type of abrasive on fiberglass tubs and showers. Special fiberglass cleaners are available at most supermarkets. Spray window cleaners are also

effective. For long-term protection, wax your fiberglass units with a high quality automobile wax immediately on move-in and after major cleaning.

Shower Enclosures - To clean shower enclosures, an ordinary dish washing detergent (not soap) will do a good job unless hard water minerals have been deposited. For these, use a commercial glass cleaner containing ammonia or one tablespoon of household ammonia in a quart of water. Be sure to check caulking while cleaning. If necessary, use a 20-year caulk to seal any gaps.

WARNING: Be sure to read the caution note on the label before using ammonia. Never use steel wool or scouring pads on the metal portion of these enclosures. It will remove the protective finish applied by the manufacturer and cause unsightly scratches. To prolong the life and beauty of your plumbing fixtures follow these precautions:

1. Don't let food wastes stand in the sink. Dispose of food waste through your disposal as it accumulates.
2. Don't use sinks to hold paint cans, trash, or tools when you are redecorating. Cover them when painting walls and ceilings.
3. Don't step in a bathtub or shower stall with shoes on for any reason. Shoe soles carry hundreds of gritty particles that will scratch the surface.
4. Don't use sink, tub or toilets as receptacles for photographic or developing solutions. Developer stains are extremely difficult to remove.

By observing these suggestions and the preceding instruction, you will prolong the newness and luster of your fixtures. (Also see "Drains" and "Plumbing").

CABINETS

Kitchen and bathroom cabinets should never be cleaned with harsh abrasives. Wood cabinets may be cleaned like any other wood furniture unless it has been plastic coated. An excellent product for hiding minor nicks and scratches in wood cabinetry is Old English furniture polish. Keep cabinet doors and drawers closed when not in use.

CARPET

Given proper care, the carpet in your home will provide years of service. You should vacuum at least once a week using a powerful upright vacuum cleaner. You should also plan to give your carpet a professional cleaning at least once a year to remove deep down dirt and stubborn stains.

In regard to stains, always attack immediately. Even half an hour after the accident can be too late. A number of good quality stain and spot removers are available. However, we suggest you seek the advice of a carpeting expert as to what is best for your brand and style of carpet. With very severe staining or

spotting, don't hesitate to call in a professional. The small expense will pay off in longer carpet beauty and service.

COUNTER TOPS

Your kitchen counter tops are constructed of top quality ceramic tile or plastic laminate materials. Because laminate products are sheets of very hard plastic laminated to a wooden base, you must be careful not to disturb the bond between the wood and the plastic. To avoid such a problem, always be sure to use a hot pad for anything coming directly from a burner or the oven.

Laminated plastic tops are very easy products to maintain; however, there are a few ways to increase their life and prolong their beauty:

- * Most spots, glass rings, etc., will usually wipe clean with a damp cloth and mild soap. For more stubborn stains, we recommend Formica brand cleaner. NOTE: BE CAREFUL OF THE INKS USED IN MARKING GROCERY PRODUCTS, ESPECIALLY MEAT AND PRODUCE. THEY ARE OFTEN INDELIBLE AND CAN BE EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO REMOVE.
- * Seal miters with paraffin wax. Do not let water stand in this area.
- * Never cut items directly on the counter top. They will scratch, and knife marks can become unsightly hiding places for dirt.
- * Counter tops are not constructed for sitting. Excessive weight can cause warping or drawer malfunctions or even cause the top to pull away from the wall.

If your bath vanities (and perhaps your bath sinks) are made of a cultured marble product, they will give you classic good looks and utilitarian service. It too will scratch and burn if mistreated. Always be especially careful with razor blades, manicure equipment and bathroom appliances. Cigarette burns are almost impossible to remove without professional assistance.

Care for your cultured marble with any good quality, non-abrasive bathroom cleaner. If hard water minerals collect, they may be removed with a mild ammonia solution of one tablespoon to each quart of water.

DOORS

All doors can have minor problems from time to time. However, most door problems can be handled with minimum skill.

Sticking is the most common problem with doors. If swelling in damp weather causes the sticking, fold sandpaper around a wood block and sand the edge that binds. If the sticking is a result of uneven alignment, which can occur as your home settles, check to see that the hinge screws are tight and holding

properly. If they are tight and the door is still out of alignment, sand or plane the edge that binds. If this "first aid" doesn't solve the problem, you should call your customer care representative.

Always paint or varnish any areas that have been sanded or planed to protect those areas from moisture and further swelling.

Exterior doors should be painted or varnished whenever the house is painted. Aluminum doors do not need painting. Special care to the tracks of aluminum sliding glass doors is recommended. Always keep the tracks clean of debris. A very small amount of oil is also recommended on a periodic basis, at both the bottom of the door and the lock mechanism. Silicone lubricant is good for the tracks.

Bi-fold closet doors offer tremendous convenience to the homeowner, as well as enhancing the looks of your home; however, the mechanics are more complicated than a hinged door. Gentleness is the key; no up or down pressure should be applied. Pull toward you when opening and let the door open itself.

Bi-fold closet doors have adjustment areas should they become difficult to operate or jump from their tracks. These are easily found on the rear side of the doors. Also, bi-fold doors are installed in matched sets. If you should remove the doors for any reason, be sure to put each section back in its original position.

The moving parts of garage doors should be lightly oiled about every three months. The screws and bolts that fasten the hardware to any wood areas should be tightened in about a year because the wood shrinks a little as it ages. If a door sags, tighten the appropriate turnbuckle to bring it back into shape.

DRAINS

Each plumbing fixture in your home has a drain trap, a J-shaped piece of pipe designed to provide a water barrier between your home and the danger of sewer gas. These traps hold water, which prevents the airborne bacteria and odor of the sewer gas from entering the house. If any fixture is used infrequently (particularly in the desert), it should be turned on at regular intervals to replace evaporating water and insure that the barrier remains intact. Traps, because of their shapes, are also the points at which drains are most likely to become clogged.

When the drainpipes from a sink, shower, or tub stops up, first use a plunger. Be sure the rubber cap of the plunger covers the drain opening and the water comes up well over the cup edge. Working a plunger up and down rhythmically 10 to 20 times in succession will build up pressure in the pipe and do more good than sporadic, separated plunges. Be sure to plug the overflow outlet with a piece of old cloth, and close the other drain when working on a double sink.

If the plunger doesn't work, try using a plumber's snake, which can be rented or purchased at a hardware or plumbing store. Be sure to turn the handle of the snake in the same direction when removing it as you did in inserting it. This will usually keep any matter attached to the snake from coming loose before it is removed.

If the drain can be partly opened with the plunger or snake, hot water (no hotter than 140 degrees for

plastic pipe) may finish the job. If not, you can open the trap under the fixture. Put a bucket or pan under it to catch the water. A piece of wire may help dislodge the blockage. The snake can also be run in at this point.

Although it is sold commercially as a drain cleaner, never use caustic soda to open a drain. It will combine with the grease from soap or food wastes to form an insoluble compound. Potash lye or caustic potash may be added to finish opening a drain, but never use them on a completely stopped up drain. They may take as long as overnight to work, and if you ultimately have to open the trap, the chemicals would be a hazard.

WARNING: Because potash lye and caustic potash are highly corrosive, always pour them slowly into the drain to prevent splattering.

Never pour water into the chemical. Wear old clothes, rubber gloves, and goggles or safety glasses.

Never uses a plunger on a drain after chemicals have been added; the water may splash and cause an injury or damage to you or nearby surfaces.

If the stoppage is in the line past the trap, try using the snake at the clean-out plug nearest the blockage. These plugs are located on the drain lines throughout the house.

To avoid stopped up drains, a cardinal rule is to never pour grease into a drain or toilet. Ordinary washing soda (not baking soda) added to a drain on a regular basis will help keep it clear of grease from soap and cooking utensils. Run hot water through the drain, turn off the water, add 3 tablespoons of washing soda, and follow it with just enough hot water to wash it down the drain opening. Let it set for 15 minutes and run more hot water.

SPECIAL NOTE: Your food waste disposal has special instructions to avoid stoppage, blockage and heavy grease buildup. Refer to the manufacturer's instruction manual for details. (See "Plumbing" and "Toilets.")

The pipes that are connected to your garbage disposal have been designed to withstand repeated vibrations from operating the disposal. Every month or so, the connecting rings on the pipes should be tightened by hand to prevent the pipes from leaking.

DRIVEWAYS, WALKS AND PATIOS

All driveways, walks and patios in DBU homes are constructed of concrete. We have anticipated normal stresses on these areas and have provided contraction, expansion and control joints to minimize cracking. However, cracking is one of the characteristics of concrete, particularly in Lake Havasu City.

Unanticipated cracking sometimes occurs from unforeseeable conditions, such as a severe heat or changes in the home site grade that prevents proper run off from rain or watering. Ordinarily, the cracks are of no

serious consequence.

Minor repairs can be made by following these steps:

1. Roughen the edges of the crack if they are smooth.
2. Clean out loose material or dirt.
3. Soak old concrete thoroughly. (The crack should be sopping wet but the water should not be standing in it)
4. Fill the crack with patching cement slightly higher than the crack to allow for shrinkage. Commercially prepared patching mixtures need only the addition of water, but be sure the mixture you buy is appropriate for concrete.
5. Cover and keep damp for several days. The longer the drying time the stronger the patch will be.
6. When the cement has partly set, remove the excess cement with a wire brush. At this stage, the surface of the cement appears sandy.

DRYWALL

Drywall hairline cracks are a result of your home settling or (typically in Lake Havasu), the changes of extreme heat or humidity. These cracks can be repaired with caulk and lightweight spackling after the first year.

ELECTRICAL RECEPTACLES

The wiring in every DBU home meets the code requirements and safety standards for the normal use of electrical appliances. Ordinarily, small appliances that require your personal attendance for operation may be plugged into any electrical receptacle without fear of overloading a circuit.

THE USE OF LARGE APPLIANCES, OR OF MANY SMALL APPLIANCES ON THE SAME CIRCUIT, MAY CAUSE AN OVERLOAD OF THE CIRCUIT AND TRIP A BREAKER. If this happens frequently, contact DBU's Customer Care Department or the electrical subcontractor to determine whether additional wiring is needed to meet your requirements.

Municipal electrical codes require all bathrooms, kitchens, garages, and exterior convenience outlets to be wired to breakers that utilize Ground Fault Interrupter circuits (GFI)

These circuits are very sensitive and any undue resistance or overload will trip the breakers. Do not use heavy appliances or more than one appliance at a time on these circuits. (See "Electrical Service Entrance" and "Electrical Trouble Shooting").

ELECTRICAL SERVICE ENTRANCE

The electrical wiring and equipment in DBU homes are protected by circuit breakers. They are the safety valves of your home's electrical systems.

The electrical service entrance, which provides power to the service panel, has been designed for the electrical needs of your home. Do not tamper with this cable.

Every home has a master circuit breaker located in the service panel box along with smaller circuit breakers. When the master breaker is tripped, the electricity in your home is cut off. Circuit breakers may be reset by first switching the breaker to FULL OFF and then to FULL ON.

Your air-conditioning unit has heavy-duty cartridge fuses located in a small box next to the service panel or on the roof next to the unit. Simply by pulling them from their retaining clips and installing a new cartridge may replace these. BE CERTAIN TO TURN OFF POWER BEFORE REMOVING CARTRIDGES. (See "Electrical Receptacles" and "Electrical Trouble Shooting")

ELECTRICAL TROUBLE SHOOTING

Refer to the following checklist BEFORE reporting electrical problems.

- * If receptacles won't work, check to be certain the circuit breaker has not been tripped. If so, reset it. If not, make sure a wall switch that is in the OFF POSITION does not control the receptacle. If it is on a ground default circuit (kitchen, baths, and garage) look for another GFI receptacle and reset it. Depending on the amperage load, two or more rooms may be connected to one GFI receptacle.
- * If lights won't work, check the bulb in another area, then check the circuit breaker to see if it is tripped. Also, check the wall switches.
- * If your disposal or dishwasher won't operate, for the disposal, first push the reset button located on the disposal. Second, check to ensure both appliances are plugged into the proper receptacle. The duplex receptacle under your sink is especially wired with one outlet for the dishwasher (always hot) and for the disposal (connected to a wall switch). Also, check the circuit breaker.
- * If the bath or utility exhaust fans won't run and makes no noise (hum) or movement at all, the problem is likely electrical. If there is any movement or humming noise, the problem is in the fan unit. Also, check the circuit breaker.
- * If a receptacle sparks when plugged into, be certain the appliance is off before plugging it in. If it still sparks, try another outlet. If you get sparks from a second outlet, the problem is in the appliance cord. If you do not get sparks from the second receptacle, have the receptacle inspected. An electrician should check sparks from wall switches.

- * If a wall switch or receptacle is hot to the touch, you should immediately trip the circuit breaker, servicing that fixture and contact an electrician. (See "Electrical Receptacles" and "Electrical Service Entrance.")

FIREPLACES

Each fall, as fireplace usage begins, we receive calls regarding "smoking" fireplaces; that is, smoke is coming into the room and not going up the chimney. To avoid this problem and other potential difficulties with your fireplace, it is important you follow these simple guidelines:

1. Before using the fireplace, be certain the chimney damper is open. After the fire is COMPLETELY out, close the damper so conditioned air will not escape through the chimney.
2. Modern homes are sealed against outside elements for air-conditioning purposes. Hot air rising from a chimney must be replaced within the home or unequal pressures develop and smoke will return inside. To avoid this problem, open an outside door or window. Also, it may sometimes be necessary to close room registers, since the draft from the heat pump operating will compete with the natural fireplace draft.
3. Never build a fire directly on the fireplace floor. Always use hand irons or a grate, and a well-fitted fireplace screen.
4. Start the fire slowly so there is a gradual buildup of heat and smoke. This will start the updraft more easily and will help avoid firebrick cracking due to sudden temperature change.
5. Adding a handful of salt to the fire occasionally will help prevent the accumulation of soot, and it will add color to the fire. The chimney should be cleaned periodically. This can be done at the same time the heating and cooling system is cleaned and inspected.
6. Clean the ashes at regular intervals. Never put ashes directly in garbage can. Put them in a metal can, set them outside for several days, and douse them with water, even though they may appear to be out. After several days have passed, put them in a garbage bag and place them in the trash receptacle. Be very careful with ash disposal!

FLOOR TILE

Your DBU home may contain vinyl or ceramic tile. Give daily care to either floor by removing loose dirt with a broom, dust mop, or vacuum. Wipe up spills immediately. But if a spill dries, remove it with a damp sponge, cloth or mop.

Damp mop occasionally to prolong the period between cleaning. When floors are dull or cannot be refurbished by mopping, give them a thorough cleaning.

To clean resilient floors, use a good detergent diluted as recommended by the manufacturer. Use just enough mechanical action with a mop, cloth, or floor scrubber to loosen dirt. Then take up the cleaning solution, rinse the floor and let it dry. Some resilient floors (vinyl) are designed to never need waxing, but most of them require a coat of floor polish, such as a "mop and dry" product.

To clean ceramic floors, use clean water with a small amount of ammonia or Pine Sol. Use just enough mechanical action with a mop or cloth to remove the dirt. Rinse with clean water and let the floor dry. **DO NOT WAX CERAMIC FLOOR TILE.**

The best polish for most resilient floors is a water emulsion wax. Use either a floor finish or a wax on the clean dry floor. Finishes provide hard films that don't smear but do not respond to buffing. Wax polishes leave softer films with slightly lower gloss that can be buffed to restore appearance.

Apply moderate coats: the right amount is the least that can be applied without streaking. Let it dry about 30 minutes before exposure to traffic. Periodically, -usually once or twice a year, take off the build-up of old polish or wax with a remover. Dilute it as recommended, apply, rinse, and then let dry, and apply a new coat of polish.

KEYS AND LOCKS

No key used during the course of construction of your new home, will operate the locks after you have taken possession.

Passage door hardware in any home can work loose through use. Keep a careful watch to avoid excessive play in the doorknob escutcheon plate. In the event a doorknob or privacy lock should become inoperative, it is usually because looseness has allowed the interior mechanism to slip out of place. Removal and reinstallation of the fixture (a simple process) will usually correct the problem. Doors with key-type hardware are more complicated and usually require the services of a locksmith.

LANDSCAPING

Proper care of the grounds around your home will not only add to the beauty of your home, but it can protect the structure of your home and lower your utility bills.

Your home site was designed by professional contractors to provide drainage away from the building (and to provide a certain amount of water retention on some home sites). Do not change this drainage pattern. When filling with dirt, always allow a 6-inch minimum between the earth and any wood siding or stucco; otherwise, water may enter the joint between the footing and the wall material or cause decay of wood.

When watering your plants, do not allow sprinklers to spray against the exterior walls of your home. Doing

so causes discoloration, wall buckling and can cause interior flooding regardless of whether the wall is masonry or wood.

Avoid planting grass, shrubbery, and flowers next to your home, as water may settle below house footings causing severe problems, such as floor and footing cracks.

For specific help in planning and maintaining your home site, we recommend the Sunset magazine series of gardening books as the best single source of information.

LOUVERS

If your home has a pitched roof, the crawl space between the ceiling and the roof will have louvered openings at both ends of the home or along the roof ridge with eave venting. These are to allow warm, moist air collecting there to escape. Such openings should remain unobstructed all year round. If they are closed, harmful quantities of moisture may accumulate. Flat roof homes have special vents installed on the roof to accomplish the same task. These should never be obstructed.

MOTORS

Many heavy-duty appliances such as refrigerators, air conditioners, washing machines, dryers, dishwashers, etc., have motors that require servicing from time to time. Consult the appropriate service manual for care of these motors.

PLUMBING

Your plumbing has been installed by a professional DBU subcontractor and generally should need only minimum maintenance for a number of years if cared for properly. If any problem does arise, tend to it promptly to prevent a bigger, and often more costly problem from developing.

You and your family should become familiar with the various water supply intake valves in your plumbing system. Toilet and sink intake valves are located under the appropriate fixture. The main intake valve is normally located adjacent to the front hose bib.

The high-tech plastic pipe used in most DBU homes should last the lifetime of the home, but if a joint should loosen; your best response is to call a professional for repairs. Lake Havasu City's well water contains minerals harmful to copper and other metals. Therefore, you should use filters or a salt type water softening system in your new home. If any water-using appliance appears to be leaking, check the drain before calling a repairman. A partially blocked drain can cause overflowing (see "Drains.")

Faucets, like all plumbing with moving parts, are apt to require more repair than nonmoving fixtures. The less needless strain you put on faucets, the less frequently they need repair.

Cleaning the aerators will be the most frequent task in maintaining your faucets. This attachment to the faucet adds air to the water as it leaves the faucet, reduces splashing, and provides some savings because less water is used. To clean an aerator, unscrew it from the mouth of the faucet, remove and rinse the washers and screens, remove any debris, replace them in their original order, on the faucet mouth. These should be cleaned every three or four months.

Leaking faucets generally can be fixed by replacing the faucet's washers. If you have a washer-less fixture (some DBU homes do), you may still have to replace the control cartridge from time to time, although this occurs with much less frequency than washer replacement.

ROOFS

Your roof will give you years of service if it is properly maintained. Flashing seals are placed where the roof abuts walls, chimneys, and valleys or where two roof slopes meet. Should a leak occur, contact your customer care representative. A qualified roofer should inspect your roof at least every two years. If you have to walk on your roof for any reason, be careful not to damage the surface or the flashing.

SCREENS AND SUN SCREENS

The window and door screens in your DBU home are constructed of high quality nylon. They never need painting or other preservatives. A gentle washing and hosing, about once a year, are all that is needed for maintenance. Should it be needed, a replacement nylon screen is available from hardware and home improvement stores.

STUCCO

Hairline cracks on the exterior of your home are a normal characteristic of the product. These can be caulked but DBU recommends they be left alone. The paint touch-up on these repairs highlights the cracks, leaving a striped effect on the home. Inexpensive repair kits for stucco are available and usually are effective.

TERMITES

Termites are easier to bar from a new house than to exterminate from an old one. Therefore, DBU takes precautions against them while each home is under construction. The termite warranty on your new home is renewable. Refer to the warranty supplied by the exterminator for detailed information.

To make your own inspection in the spring of each year, look for possible remains of winged insects, search the sides of your footing walls for the earthen tubes that termites build to reach the wood above the foundation, and use the blade of a jack knife to test wood for soundness. If you suspect the presence of termites, consult a professional exterminator.

In Lake Havasu City, we **guarantee** that you have termites on your property! In the Mohave Desert, you can expect as many as 45 termite colonies per acre with an average of 50,000 to 80,000 insects per colony.

Do termites invade new houses? **YES!** And, sooner or later, you will have termites in your home. If not inspected and treated periodically, you will have damage.

What about the warranty? The standard federal HUD termite soil treatment guarantee is for five years. That covers re-treatment. The warranty period for damages is only one year. Moreover, if you do anything to break the chemical protective barrier, those guarantees become null and void.

How does one break the chemical protective barrier? That's easily done. For example, if you do any landscaping and disturb the surface soil at or around the foundation, you will likely penetrate the barrier. If you punch a hole in the ground or plant a cactus near the house, you will penetrate the barrier. If you have an evaporative cooler, the wet spot if next to the foundation, will in time, dilute the chemical barrier. A heavy "gully washer" wind driven rain typical of the desert, will dilute the chemical barrier on the side of the house getting the brunt of the water.

What's the solution? Simple...have a reputable pest control firm check your house periodically. In Lake Havasu, pest control spraying on a regular basis should be done anyway. It is affordable.

Whom do we recommend? The firm that did the initial termite treatments as the house was being built. Call DBU for the phone number.

As the homeowner, you do have responsibility for normal maintenance such changing the batteries in your smoke alarms. Pest control and termite inspections should also be a priority in a desert area such as Lake Havasu.

TOILETS

Never flush hair, grease, lint, diapers, rubbish, etc., down the toilet drain. Such waste stops up the toilet and sanitary sewer lines.

A variety of commercial cleaners are made especially for the toilet. Use them according to the manufacturer's direction, but **DO NOT** mix them or use them with household bleach or any cleaning product. And never use them in anything but the toilet.

If the water chamber appears to leak, it may only be condensation forming on the outside of the tank and dripping to the floor. If water leaks into the bowl through the overflow pipe, try bending the rod holding the float so that the float will be closer to the bottom of the tank. Flush the toilet, and if it still leaks, the inlet valve washer probably needs to be replaced.

If the water trickles into the bowl but is not coming through the overflow pipe, it is coming through the flush ball valve. The rods between the ball valve and the flushing handle may need aligning, so that the ball will drop straight down after the handle has been pushed. A worn ball valve or dirt or rust on the ball or the ball seat will let water leak through into the bowl. If the ball or seat is dirty or rusty, they should be cleaned; if the ball is worn, unscrew it and replace it with a new one.

WALLS AND CEILINGS

Your DBU home has two types of walls, bearing and non-bearing. Non-bearing walls may be altered without fear of structural damage. Alteration of bearing walls should be avoided. Most exterior and some interior walls are bearing walls.

The interior walls of your home are constructed of gypsum wallboard, sometimes known as drywall or sheetrock. They will last without undue maintenance for the life of your home. In some cases, such as shrinking in framing boards, minor cracks may appear. In Lake Havasu, the extreme of heat and humidity will cause hairline cracks.

No repairs should be attempted until the room is ready to be redecorated. At that time, fill the cracks with spackling compound (available from any paint or hardware store), smooth it out with fine sandpaper, and then redecorate the entire surface. Except in very unusual conditions cracks should not reappear.

Sometimes normal shrinking will cause nail pops. The framing studs and the wallboard shrink away from the nail and leave it sticking out beyond the surface of the wallboard. Popped nails do not alter the strength of the wall, and they should be left alone until time to redecorate. Then they should be reset, re-spackled and repainted with the rest of the wall. Also, unusual abrasions may scuff or indent the surface of gypsum walls. In that event, fill the indentation with two or three applications of spackling available from most hardware stores for such small and minor repairs.

The interior walls and ceiling of your home have been decorated with quality paint products. They should give you long service if properly cared for. However, flat paint is not easily cleaned. On most houses, DBU uses a semi-gloss paint in the kitchen, baths and closets. Gentle cleaning with a mild soap should remove most spots. The best insurance against repainting is to keep your furnace and air-conditioning filters clean, to use the exhaust fans over your range and in the bathrooms, and to quickly vacuum dust as it collects.

WATER HEATER

Water heaters normally collect small quantities of scale and dirty water. This can easily be removed by opening the valve at the bottom of the heater and allowing the tank to drain itself clean. Be sure to turn off the gas or electricity before draining your water heater. A water softener will reduce the frequency of cleaning. Lake Havasu City's well water is very corrosive, and may shorten the life of water heaters and appliances.

All hot water heaters, whether gas or electric, have a control mechanism to govern water temperature. The dial should be set at 150 degrees for an electric heater and on NORMAL for a gas heater. This is especially important for the proper operation of your dishwasher. Too little heat will cause your dishes to not get clean; too much heat will "bake" dirt to the dishes.

Every three or four months you should check the temperature and pressure relief valve on your water heater to be sure the lever works properly. If the thermostat should fail to work, this valve would prevent a

dangerous increase in water temperature and pressure. (See "Appliances" and "Electrical Trouble Shooting.")

WINDOWS

When cleaning, if the outside of the glass is extremely dirty, wipe it with a piece of crumpled newspaper and then wash it with a solution of one tablespoon of household ammonia (or 3 tablespoons of denatured alcohol) to a quart of warm water, or use a commercial glass cleaner containing ammonia. Lightly soiled windows will usually respond to a solution of a cup of vinegar to a gallon of water.

Apply the cleaning solution with a lint-less cloth or sponge and dry the glass with a chamois, lint-less cloth or paper towels. If you have a rubber squeegee, it will speed the drying process. The aluminum frames can be cleaned with a mild detergent solution. To lubricate aluminum windows use a silicone lubricant available in aerosol form at any hardware store.

HELPFUL EQUIPMENT

You will need a few basic tools and supplies for everyday use in keeping your home in tip-top shape. Here is a suggested minimum list:

- * Medium-sized crescent wrench
- * Standard pliers
- * Screwdrivers, small, medium, large, and Phillips head
- * Claw hammer
- * Hand saw
- * Assorted brads, nails and screws
- * Sturdy penknife
- * Plane
- * Sandpaper (medium and fine),
- * Lint free cloths
- * Plunger

Keep a home first-aid kit or its equivalent in a convenient location.

ANNUAL CHECK LIST

- * Check condition of caulking, and exterior paint. Replace or paint as needed.
- * Check for evidence of termites.
- * Check interior paint and redecorate when needed.
- * Check your landscaping (spring and fall); plant annuals (spring); do appropriate pruning on perennial (some in spring, others in summer or fall), rake and compost leaves, mulch perennial that need seasonal protection.
- * Have heating and cooling system cleaned and repaired if necessary (spring and fall).

- * Oil motors or appliances as directed in instruction manuals.
- * Check cords and plugs of all electrical appliances for wear.
- * Check cords and plugs of all electrical appliances for wear. If necessary, repair or replace them.

THANK YOU!

Dr. Bill Ullery
DBU Homes