



Resident's Handbook

Please keep this document in a safe place
for future reference.

1050 Plaza Drive Suite G Kissimmee, FL 34743
Office 407-483-1013 Fax 407-477-5390
www.amsrents.com

Advanced Management Specialists Welcomes You!

We are pleased to have you as our resident(s) and we would like your experience with Advanced Management Specialists to be a pleasant one. Along with your Lease Agreement, this Resident's Handbook is a very important reference tool. It contains helpful information that will make your tenancy a satisfying one. The Resident's handbook is designed to outline our responsibility to you and your responsibilities to us and the home. It is our sincere belief that when you, as our resident, understand our policies and processes, we can better serve your needs.

**Office Hours: Monday - Friday
9:00 am – 5:30 pm**

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Table of Contents

Moving In	1
Move in Inspection.....	1
Locate Breakers and GFIs.....	1
Locate Water Shut off Valves.....	1
General Rules & Regulations	1
Part of Your Lease.....	1
Resident Responsibility	1
The Property.....	1
Rental Payments	1
Returned Checks.....	2
Contact Phone Numbers and Email Addresses	2
Keys and Locks	2
Trash, Garbage and Recycling	2
Condominium/Homeowner Associations	2
Disturbances, Noise and Nuisance	2
Periodic Property Reviews.....	3
Parking/Vehicles.....	3
Emergency Maintenance and Repairs	3
Insurance	3
Pets	3
Smoke Detectors.....	3
Security/Alarm/Video/Television/Satellite Dish.....	4
In And Around the House	4
Circuit Breakers.....	4
Pest Control.....	4
Painting, Wallpaper, etc.....	4
Maintenance, Damage and Repair	4
Put Maintenance Requests in Writing	4
Scheduling Maintenance	4
Who Does What	4
Unauthorized Repairs	5
Heating, Ventilating, Air Conditioning (HVAC)	5
Lawn and Grounds	5
Lawn Irrigation/Sprinkler Systems	5
Light Bulbs.....	6
Plumbing/Septic Systems	6
Walls and Ceilings	6
Vinyl/Ceramic Tile Flooring	6
Hardwood/Laminate Flooring.....	6
Carpet Care.....	6
Stove.....	7
Refrigerator	7
Dishwasher.....	7
Garbage Disposal.....	7
Washer/Dryer Hookup	8
Water Heater (Gas/Electric).....	8

Cleaning and How To	8
Cleaning Standards	8
Counter Tops and Cabinets	8
Kitchen Appliances	9
Fireplaces.....	9
Moving Out	9
Written Notice	9
Move-Out Procedures	9
General.....	9
Kitchen.....	10
Bathrooms.....	10
Garage, Driveway and Utility.....	10
Yard.....	10
Examples of Wear and Tear.....	11
Marketing During the Notice Period	12
The Move-Out Process.....	12
Return of the Security Deposit.....	12
Emergency / Disaster Procedures	12
Make Your Plan Now	12
Two Types of Emergencies	12
Hurricane/Storm Watch/Storm Warning.....	12
What You Do	12
Disaster Procedures	12
Non-Disaster Procedures	13
Quick Fix Tips	13
Cook Top/Oven/Range	13
Dishwasher.....	13
Electrical.....	14
Garage Door Opener.....	14
Garbage Disposal.....	14
Heater.....	15
Plumbing Pipes.....	15
Pool/Spa.....	15
Slow Drains/Stoppages.....	15
Toilets.....	16
Water Heater.....	16

MOVING IN

■ **Move In Inspection**

Prior to each move in, the property will be inspected by an AMS team member. We will be taking video footage and/or digital photographs to document the state of the property at the time of move in.

At your Lease signing you will be given a property Move-In Inspection Report. When you perform your walkthrough inspection, please note any deficiencies, cosmetic or otherwise, that you observe in the property.

Please be aware that your move in inspection report and our video/photograph inspection will be kept on file and will be used as a reference when any claims are filed against your security deposit.

Please take note that you must return your move-in inspection sheet to AMS signed within 5 days of taking possession of the property. Once you turn this inspection sheet in, needed repairs will be made if agreed to by the property owner.

■ **Locate Breakers and GFIs**

When you first move-in, locate the breaker box and note the location of the Ground Fault Interrupt (GFI) breakers or switches, and the breakers for the stove/oven, water heater and air conditioner-heating system.

■ **Locate Water Shut off Valves**

It is generally located in the front yard near the sidewalk or road. Also, locate the water shut off for the hot water heater and the valves for the sinks and toilets. Locating these items now may prevent or minimize damage later.

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

■ **Part of Your Lease**

This Resident Handbook is part of your lease agreement and is legally binding on both parties.

■ **Resident Responsibility**

- Pay rent in a timely manner
- Comply with all building, housing and health codes
- Keep the dwelling clean and sanitary
- Remove garbage from the dwelling in a clean and sanitary manner
- Keep plumbing fixtures clean, sanitary and in repair
- Not destroy, deface, damage, impair or remove any part of the premises or property belonging to the landlord, nor permit any person to do so
- Use and operate in a reasonable manner all electrical, plumbing, sanitary, heating, ventilating, air-conditioning and other facilities and appliances, including elevators
- Conduct himself/herself, and require other persons on the premises with his/her consent to conduct themselves, in a manner that does not unreasonably disturb the tenant's neighbors or constitute a breach of the peace.

■ **The Property**

You have leased a home . . . think of it as your own. During the term of this lease, you are in possession of the house and yard. Your obligations are similar to those of the owner, and you are expected to care for and maintain the premises accordingly.

■ **Rental Payments**

All rents are due and payable, in advance, on the first day of each month. Monthly bills will **not** be sent. Payment should be made in the form of a check or money order made payable to:

**Advanced Management Specialists
1050 Plaza Drive Suite G
Kissimmee, FL 34743**

Credit card payments are accepted and are subject to a 3% convenience fee.

Be sure to **write your address** on your payment to assure proper credit. Be sure to allow enough days mailing time for delivery, payments must be received on or before the close of business by the 3rd day of the month.

You may pay in person, Monday through Friday, 9:00 am to 5:30 pm. For your after-hour convenience there is a mail slot on the bottom of the office door. Any funds paid late must be in certified funds. No personal checks will be accepted. *****Absolutely No Cash Payments Are Accepted*****

Note: All payments received will be applied toward any outstanding balances first, and then any remaining will be applied towards the current rent due.

■ **Returned Checks**

The amount of any NSF check, plus a fee must be paid in either certified funds or a money order within 24 hours of notification, or legal action may be taken without further notice. If the returned check makes your rent payment late, additional fees will also be due. All amounts due must be paid in full at time of notification. If a personal check has been returned for any reason, Advanced Management Specialists reserves the right to insist that all future payments be made by certified funds.

■ **Contact Phone Numbers and E-Mail Addresses**

All residents are required to have telephone accessibility and to provide AMS with their home, cell and work phone numbers. Please be sure to notify AMS when you change any of your contact numbers. Even unlisted numbers must be provided. A contact e-mail address should also be provided.

■ **Keys and Locks**

All locks will be re-keyed or replaced with each new residency. Alterations or replacement of locks, installation of bolts, knockers, mirrors or other attachments to the interior or exterior of doors requires the approval of AMS. AMS must have keys to each lock on the house. AMS may gain access and re-key if at any time access is denied, and charge the cost to the Tenant. All keys are to be returned to AMS upon vacating the premises. If mailbox keys are needed, they may be obtained from the local Post Office. A copy of your lease agreement may be needed to provide proof of residence.

■ **Trash, Garbage and Recycling**

All garbage, trash and recyclable materials must be placed in appropriate containers. Advanced Management Specialists does not provide trash receptacles and/or containers. The Resident is required to make arrangements to have garbage and trash picked up weekly. All containers are to be stored out of view from the front of the house. Containers are not to be out of the storage area except on pick up days. Any recycling items collected must be properly contained and discreetly stored. A total of no more than one 50 gallon trash bag of recyclable materials may be kept on the premises at any given time.

■ **Condominium/Homeowner Associations**

Resident is responsible to obtain a copy of the condo or homeowner association, restrictive covenants or declaration and rules, in the event the rental premises are subject to the rules, regulations, covenants and restrictions of a condominium or homeowners association. Resident agrees to abide by all applicable rules and regulations.

Should the lease be subject to the approval of the condo association or homeowners association, the resident agrees to pay any association application fees necessary for such approval.

Should AMS or the property owner receive notification from the COA/HOA of a violation of the rules, regulations, covenants and restrictions, the cause of which are the result of the Resident(s) failure to maintain their rental home properly or any notice of violation, the cause of which is directly attributable to the resident(s), the resident's guest or their invitees, then the resident(s) are responsible for the cost of curing any violation, legal and attorney fees, court cost, any and all fees, fines, penalties, the cost of travel and other incidentals such as photos, film, video tape, etc. and other costs that may be incurred by Advanced Management Specialists or the property owner.

■ **Disturbances, Noise and Nuisance**

All residents and guests are expected to conduct themselves in a way that will not offend or disturb the neighbors or passersby. Any activity that causes extreme or excessive noise, traffic or disturbance of any kind may be cause for eviction. This includes loud, offensive music, vulgar or profane language, gathering in the driveway or front of

the house drinking alcoholic beverages, etc. If music or other sound can be heard outside the perimeter of the premises leased, it is considered too loud.

■ **Periodic Property Reviews**

AMS will conduct periodic reviews of the premises to note its condition. You will be notified of deficiencies, if any, that are a resident responsibility and you will also be instructed to correct the deficiency in a timely manner. Failure to correct deficiencies once you have been notified could be considered a breach of the Lease Agreement and grounds for termination.

■ **Parking/Vehicles**

All vehicles shall be parked in assigned areas (garages, parking lots, driveways, parking pads, etc.) or curbside on public streets where allowed by controlling ordinances. Advanced Management Specialists is not responsible for any fees incurred for a residents parking violations or towing of residents vehicles. Parking on the grass, sidewalks and any other areas not specifically designated for parking is strictly prohibited. All vehicles must be registered, licensed and operable at all times. No vehicle repair (except minor repairs such as changing a tire) is allowed at anytime. No oil/fluid stains are permitted on the garage floor, driveway, walkways or any other area on the property. If your vehicle leaks oil or fluids, place a protective covering or pan under the vehicle to catch the leaks.

■ **Emergency Maintenance and Repairs**

An emergency exists when danger is present or property damage has occurred or is about to occur. **Do not abuse the emergency system with other types of calls.** In many cases, what a resident considers an emergency is not truly an emergency.

To report an emergency, call the office of Advanced Management Specialists at 407-483-1013 and follow the instructions on the voice mail.

Be sure to report the specific emergency and include your telephone number along with your property address in your message. If the emergency involves a fire or similar emergency, please notify the proper authorities at **911 before calling AMS!!**

If there is a major water leak, immediately turn off the water supply to the premises and contact AMS.

If there is a gas (natural, LP, propane, etc.) leak, immediately turn off the gas supply valve and contact the gas company that provides service to your location, and then notify AMS.

■ **Insurance**

It is strongly urged that you obtain a renter's insurance policy. A copy of your declarations page should be given to Advanced Management Specialists the first month you move in. Resident understands that the Home Owner's property insurance does not cover Resident's personal property or protect Resident from loss or liability. Resident is responsible for obtaining, and is strongly urged to obtain, renter's insurance to protect Resident's personal property against loss or damage.

■ **Pets**

No pets, animals, snakes or birds, etc. of any kind are allowed on the premises, regardless of whether such pet or animal is owned by resident, unless you have specific written permission from Advanced Management Specialists in the lease document (a pet addendum), and have paid the required pet fees and deposits.

Should AMS find that a pet is being or has been kept on premises without the required permission, fees, deposits and an executed Pet Addendum, the fee and deposit will immediately be assessed, and in addition, the non-compliance may be considered grounds for termination of the Lease Agreement.

Resident will be charged for spraying for fleas and/or repair of any damage caused by the pet. Resident is responsible for their animal at ALL times. **Having a pet is a privilege and permission to have the pet on the premises may be revoked at any time without terminating your lease agreement.**

■ **Smoke Detectors**

Check to be sure the smoke detectors are operational upon move-in. Notify AMS immediately if you are not able to operate the smoke detectors or if they stop functioning at any time. Please check the battery regularly, and replace the batteries every 6 months. We recommend changing batteries when daylight savings time occurs. Disabling a smoke detector is a violation of your lease and the law. **DO NOT DISABLE THE SMOKE DETECTOR AT ANY TIME.**

■ **Security/Alarm/Video/Television/Satellite Dish**

Please make no additional or auxiliary security/alarm/video/telecommunication or satellite dish installation at the property without prior written permission. Any necessary written authorization must be provided for Management's signature by the resident with specific location of the installation and name of the service provided. The security/alarm code is to be provided to AMS within 48 hours of the activation of the system.

IN AND AROUND THE HOUSE

■ **Circuit Breakers**

Circuit breakers move slightly when tripped. It may appear to be ON when it is has "popped" or "tripped". The Ground Fault Interrupt (GFI) breaker or switch detects even slight voltage changes and cuts the power during fluctuations. They are usually used in locations where a water source may be present, such as bathrooms, kitchens, exterior plugs and garages. If you lose power to a plug near a water source, it is usually the GFI circuit. Most GFIs located at the breaker box are marked with a red or yellow button. Many houses have the GFI at the plug outlet. There may be more than one GFI plug in the house. If these "pop" or "trip", reset them. Refrigerators, freezers and other appliances that require constant power should not be plugged into GFI outlets.

■ **Pest Control**

Please report any pest problem within your first 5 days of possession. If not reported in writing, it is agreed that the premises have no infestation of any kind. Any future infestation of any kind, less termites, is considered a resident responsibility. Resident is responsible for reporting any suspected or known insect infestation. AMS assumes no responsibility for the control of roaches, mice, rats, ants, fleas or other pests. Resident will be charged for any damage caused by uncontrolled pests, including but not limited to ants building nests in the HVAC system and damaging the system.

■ **Painting, Wallpaper, Etc.**

If you want to change the house décor in any way, please put your proposal in writing and submit it to AMS along with a sample of the paint/wallpaper or drawing of the proposed work (e.g., adding a fence). If approved, you will receive a written confirmation. All work tasks must be done in a professional manner, and must be inspected and approved by AMS after completion. Any reimbursements agreed to, if any, will occur after inspection and approval of AMS.

MAINTENANCE, DAMAGE AND REPAIR

■ **Put Maintenance Requests in Writing**

Maintenance Request Forms are included with your Move-In Package. Put all routine maintenance/repair requests in writing using this form. Be specific about the problem. Write clearly and legibly. If you are not contacted by a repair person within 48 hours (not including weekends or holidays) after reporting a problem, please notify AMS so the call can be reassigned. You may fax or e-mail your requests to your property manager.

■ **Scheduling Maintenance**

If you have contacted AMS for maintenance and/or repair, you are responsible for scheduling any necessary service calls with vendors once the vendor has contacted you. Resident is responsible for granting the vendor access to the premises. AMS does not provide keys to vendors. Be polite to the vendors. The vendors are there to solve your maintenance problems. They did not cause the problem and they are not obligated to remain on the premises if you are verbally or physically abusive or threatening in any way, even if the repair is not complete.

■ **Who Does What**

All "breakdowns," system failures and structural defects must be reported to AMS immediately. If an urgent repair is needed (i.e., hot water heater leaking) **Resident is responsible for stopping further damage from occurring**, if possible. If there is a leak, stop the water source immediately. If the problem is electrical, turn off the breaker serving that appliance or area until the repairman arrives. AMS will arrange with vendors to make necessary repairs within a reasonable time. **Resident will not be reimbursed for any unauthorized repairs made.**

■ Unauthorized Repairs

AMS must authorize ALL repairs and/or maintenance that the resident wishes to do. Please do not make any repairs or authorize any maintenance without written permission from AMS. Rent cannot be withheld because of needed repairs nor can the cost of needed repairs be deducted from the rent without authorization from AMS.

■ Heating, Ventilating, Air Conditioning (HVAC) Systems

- A property's air conditioning system can only lower the inside temperature from that of the outside air temperature by about 10 to 15 degrees. Keep that in mind on hot days do not set the thermostat below 74 degrees.
- Report any unusual noises or smells coming from the air conditioner and any moisture in or around the A/C closet immediately.
- It is imperative that Air Conditioning filters be changed on a regular basis. We recommend that the filter(s) be **changed monthly**. Tenant will be held liable for any damages that are a result of the air filter(s) not being maintained during the tenancy. Filter(s) may be located inside the Air Handler or inside the return air vent. If you are unsure of your Air Conditioning filter's size or location, inquire with your property manager.
- The A/C return vents should be kept clear of obstruction, such as furniture and clothing. Keep the "condensation drain line" clean and clear of obstructions (if neglected, this can cause mold and drywall damage).
- Whenever the lawn is cut, dirt, dust and grass clippings are thrown into the air and can be sucked into the outside air-condensing unit if it is running. This will clog the unit and reduce its efficiency overtime. It is recommended that the air conditioner be off whenever the grass is being cut or trimmed nearby the outside air-condensing unit.
- Beware of wires and pipes behind or around outside air condensing unit. Be careful not to damage the A/C control wires whenever trimming grass nearby the unit and make sure the water condensation pipe stays above the ground level and keep it free of dirt and debris.

NOTE: An HVAC system failure **does not** constitute an emergency. Every effort will be made to get a service technician scheduled as soon as possible. However, if the problem occurs on the weekend or on a holiday, it may not be possible to have the unit serviced until the next regular business day.

■ Lawn and Grounds

- Resident is expected to care for the lawn and grounds, keeping them in as good a condition as when you took possession of premises. This care includes regularly cutting the grass; watering and fertilizing the lawn; trimming shrubs; edging all driveways, walkways and curbs; treating fire ant mounds; treating for lawn pests; treating for chinch bugs in St. Augustine grass; cleaning the roof and gutters of leaves, debris, and pine needles and preventing vines from growing onto the house.
- Keep shrub and tree growth away from the roof, eaves, and sides of the house. Be sure to inform our office immediately if any tree branches touch or begin to grow in close proximity to the roof.
- Resident is required to report any condition which can cause damage, permanent or temporary, to the grounds.
- Flowering trees must be pruned at the proper time of the year for their species and all flower/shrub beds must be kept free of weeds, grass, etc. Keep hedges and bushes trimmed at least one foot from the roof and all structures.
- Resident must maintain mulch cover.
- **For more information on lawn care and a fertilization schedule go to www.scotts.com**

■ Lawn Irrigation/Sprinkler Systems

- Any problems or repairs needed to the irrigation/sprinkler system must be reported in writing to AMS within 5 days of taking possession of premises. If no notice is received, AMS will assume that the irrigation/sprinkler system is in good working order and any needed repairs/maintenance will become the responsibility of the resident. It is the responsibility of the resident to keep the irrigation/sprinkler system in good working order, including resetting the electric timer if necessary and replacing broken sprinkler heads.
- It is the responsibility of resident to comply with water restrictions for your area.

**NOTE: Odd numbered houses water on Wednesday and Saturday.
Even numbered houses water on Thursday and Sunday.
No watering between 10:00am and 4:00pm**

■ Light Bulbs

All burned out light bulbs are to be replaced during the resident's occupancy (including floodlights). Upon move-out, all lights must be equipped with the proper number and kind of bulb. For decorative bulbs, all bulbs must match.

■ Plumbing/Septic Systems

- Resident is responsible for keeping all sink, tub/shower, lavatory and toilet drain lines open. Do not allow anyone to throw anything into the plumbing system or to use it for any purpose other than for which it is designed. Sanitary products, diapers, diaper wipes, condoms, cotton swabs (Q-tips), coffee grounds, cooking fats or oils are not to be flushed down any toilet or otherwise deposited into the house sewer.
- If your property is on a **septic tank** sewer system, in addition to the items listed above, do not flush wet-strength paper towels, facial tissues, cigarette butts, and other non-decomposable materials into the property sewer. These materials will not de-compose and will fill the septic tank and plug the system. Regular septic tank maintenance is critical to avoid blockage, backing up of waste into the property and responsibility for costly repairs. Resident **must** purchase an appropriate enzyme product and flush into a functioning toilet, as directed on product.
- Clogged plumbing due to day-to-day waste removal is a tenant responsibility unless it occurs within the first 30 days of the lease and is not a result of the current tenant's use or abuse and it is determined that the clog is due to pre-existing conditions.
- Resident will be responsible for any damage or stoppage unless it was caused by mechanical failure of the plumbing system.
- Toilet flush handles, flappers and chains are a tenant maintenance responsibility unless they fail within the first 30 days of the lease. Do not use Clorox tablets or any other tablets in the toilet tank, these do warp the flappers.
- Be careful to ensure that toys or hard objects are not flushed in the toilet as they can become lodged inside the toilet. In some cases the toilet may need to be replaced and the cost to repair or replace the toilet is a tenant responsibility.
- Leaky faucets and/or plumbing pipes should be reported immediately. They are considered normal wear and tear and are a landlord responsibility to maintain unless it is observed that they are caused by tenant misuse. In the event that a plumbing leak goes unreported and causes excessive damage to the property, the tenant will be held liable for the additional damage.

■ Walls and Ceilings

Please keep the walls of the home clean and unmarred. You are welcome to hang pictures on the walls as long as the walls are clean and unmarred when you move out. Do not paint or wallpaper without prior written approval of AMS. All walls, baseboards and trim must be washed and ceilings must be dusted and free of cobwebs before vacating premises.

■ Vinyl/Ceramic Tile Flooring

With normal household use, vinyl floors may be washed with a solution of warm water and soap. Do not use gasoline, benzene, naphtha, turpentine or any agents containing these solvents. Do not apply varnish, lacquer or shellac to the floor. Do not apply any type of wax to ceramic tile floors. Resident will be responsible for damage to the flooring such as broken tiles, torn vinyl or improper cleaning procedures.

■ Hardwood/Laminate Flooring

Dust mop, sweep or vacuum floors regularly. Do not wet-mop wood floors. Standing water can dull the finish and discolor and damage the wood. Do not let any water drip, pour or accumulate on floors. Clean liquid spills with a dry cloth and sticky spills with a slightly dampened cloth. Do not use soaps, detergents or oil soaps on your wood floors. When mopping is needed, use an approved wood/laminate floor cleaner applied lightly with a cloth or mop and then buff dry. Resident shall not shellac or refinish floors without management's prior written approval. Use fabric-faced guides under the furniture legs to prevent scratches. Do not drag or slide furniture across the floor. Resident will be responsible for damage to the flooring.

■ Carpet Care

Please remember that normal wear and tear is expected in your property, this includes carpeted areas.

Excessive wear and tear will happen if carpets are not cleaned properly on a regular basis. We recommend the following as a guide to caring for your carpets.

- Routine carpet care requires a thorough vacuuming at least once a week to remove the soil from the carpet and to keep the pile erect. Heavy traffic areas require more frequent vacuuming.
- Before moving in, the carpets are professionally cleaned and you must have them professionally cleaned upon vacating. A receipt is required at the time the keys are returned.
- Have carpets shampooed at least once a year.
- You can reduce soil build up in carpeting by:
 - Remove shoes when entering the home.
 - Avoid walking on carpet in bare feet as body oils will be transferred to the carpet, which makes it harder to remove soil by way of vacuuming.
- We recommend that inexpensive throw rugs be used in “high traffic” areas to reduce excessive damage to carpets.

■ Stove

- Do not use oven cleaner on self-cleaning or continuous cleaning ovens. Oven should be cleaned at minimum every 6 months.
- For solid surface stoves, use only cleaners approved for those surfaces. **DO NOT USE ABRASIVE CLEANSERS.** Resident will be charged for damage to an appliance caused by improper use or cleaning, or by lack of maintenance.
- Stove burner drip pans are a tenant responsibility to maintain. The drip pans should be new or in excellent condition at the beginning of your lease and should be in the same condition at the end of your lease. If drip pans are in poor condition at move out, the replacement will be held from your security deposit.
- Coil stove burners are relatively inexpensive and simple to replace. They eventually fail due to day-to-day use, and similar to light bulbs, are a tenant responsibility to replace unless they fail within the first 30 days of the lease.
- Range should be pulled away from the wall and cleaned behind every 6 months. Take this opportunity to clean any food or grease that may have accumulated on the floor, sides of the range, walls and cabinets.
- The Grease Filter, located in the vent hood or built in microwave, is a tenant responsibility to maintain. The Grease Filter should be in good clean condition at the beginning of the lease. It can be removed and hand washed in warm soapy water or it can be placed in the dishwasher on a regular basis as needed to maintain it. **If you're cooking habits involve excess oil or grease we highly recommend washing the filter on a monthly basis to minimize the possibility of a grease fire.**

■ Refrigerator

From time to time, it is a good idea to remove the front grill and vacuum the coil area and clean the drip pan. Dirty refrigerator coils will cause your refrigerator to work harder to stay cool and thus increase your electric bill. Also, you will want to move the refrigerator periodically to clean underneath and behind the refrigerator, but be careful not to damage the flooring when you move the appliance.

■ Dishwasher

- The dishwasher should be used at least once a week. Seals may dry and the motor may be damaged by long periods of inactivity.
- Clean the door and check the bottom of the dishwasher after each use for items that may fall from the racks. Look for debris that may collect at the bottom near the filter and remove immediately as it can cause damage to the internal components of the pump and drain system. Check the perimeter of the door for food items falling from the counter.
- Only use dishwasher detergent, never laundry detergent or other soap.
- Always rinse the dishes before washing them in the dishwasher and keep the strainer at the bottom of the machine clean and free of debris.
- Water should not flow out of the air gap and into the sink during the drain cycle. If this does happen, the air gap may be clogged.
- Report any water coming from under the dishwasher or around the door immediately.

■ Garbage Disposals

- Garbage disposal is to grind and dispose of soft foods only. Do not allow utensils, hard foods or non-organic debris to enter the garbage disposal. (No eggshells, coffee grounds or rice should go into the garbage disposal)

- If the disposal makes a humming noise, but does not function, there is debris lodged inside. **Turn the switch off and turn off the electrical breaker**, Remove debris is possible. Verify that the object jamming it isn't something that shouldn't be placed in the disposal, such as a bottle cap or kitchen utensil.
- There is usually a reset button on the bottom or the side of the disposal (this is usually a small red or yellow button). Almost all disposal jams are from what is put into the disposal.
- Tenant shall be responsible for repair or replacement of garbage disposal if it is determined that the cause for failure was due to tenant abuse or neglect.
- Report any leaks coming from the garbage disposal immediately.

■ **Washer/Dryer Hookups**

- Check all hoses and washers to prevent or correct leaks. When installing a washing machine, use **“burst resistant stainless steel braided”** washing machine hoses only.
- If you are going to be absent from the property for an extended period of time, turn off the hot and cold water supply valves.
- Check the walls and floor by the washing machine monthly for evidence of leaks.
- Keep dryer vent and lint trap clear of lint or other build up as this can cause a fire.

■ **Water Heaters (Gas/Electric)**

- If you have an **electric water heater** that is not functioning, you may want to first check to see if the reset button or the breaker may have tripped before making a maintenance/repair request.
- If you have a **gas water heater**, the pilot light may have gone out. Check manufacturer's instructions or contact the gas company.

CLEANING AND HOW TO

Advanced Management Specialists works hard to deliver to you a clean, well maintained and comfortable home with all the mechanical equipment operating properly. Proper cleaning and maintenance will keep the home and its equipment usable for you. A properly maintained home is a team effort involving the property owner who keeps structural and mechanical maintenance up-to-date; the Property Manager who keeps a record of necessary maintenance and places responsible people in the property; and the resident who keeps the property clean, performs cosmetic maintenance and promptly reports any structural or mechanical failure to AMS.

■ **Cleaning Standards**

- Keep windows and storm doors clean, inside and outside; interior cleaning at least once a month, exterior cleaning every six months. Wash between windows and screens quarterly.
- Clean dust, dirt and debris from the upper and lower sliding glass door tracks monthly.
- Clean stove, drip pans, under drip pans, oven racks and drawer, broiler pan, hood, filter and vent bi-weekly.
- Mop vinyl floors bi-weekly.
- Dust baseboards, windows sills, window grids, tops of windows, ceiling fans, doors, ceilings and corners of the room monthly.
- Clean AC/Heat air return grate and change filter each month. (A good rule is when you pay your light bill, change your filter)
- Clean and sweep out fireplace. Clean fireplace grate, screen and glass.
- Replace burned-out light bulbs as needed, clean lighting fixtures as needed.
- Blinds, if provided, should be cleaned or washed semi-annually.
- Bathrooms should be cleaned weekly. This includes toilet bowls and base, sink, mirror, floor, bathtub and shower (including walls). Wipe out medicine cabinet, drawers and cabinets.
- Caulk tub as necessary.
- Sweep out garage as needed.

■ **Counter Tops and Cabinets**

Always use cutting boards and hot pads when chopping, cutting or placing hot items on counter tops. Do not use abrasive cleaners on counter tops as they will scratch. All cabinets must be vacuumed out and the drawer/door fronts cleaned before vacating.

■ Kitchen Appliances

Each kitchen appliance must be cleaned regularly, particularly, the stove hood, the filter in the stove hood, the oven, under the burners on the stove and the drip pans. Please do not put aluminum foil on the drip pans, this can be a fire hazard. Upon moving out, all drip pans must be clean. Please clean under the refrigerator, washer, and dryer regularly. Not cleaning all these items regularly can cause excessive wear and tear, for which Resident will be responsible.

■ Fireplaces

If there is a fireplace in your home, do not burn pine or any other "sappy" wood. This causes a buildup of residue in the chimney and increases the possibility of fire. The fireplace is not a place to burn cardboard, Holiday wrappings, pine needles, etc.

When using the fireplace in your residence:

- Open the flue before starting the fire and keep it open until the ashes are cool enough to touch.
- Close the fireplace screen or door when the fireplace is in use to keep sparks from flying out.
- Do not put anything, including paper and kindling, closer than three (3) feet to the fireplace while it is in use.
- Never leave a fire unattended.
- Burn only dry, seasoned hardwood. Do not use green wood, treated lumber or painted wood.
- Never use combustible liquids such as kerosene, turpentine, lighter fluid or gasoline to start or accelerate the fire.
- Do not stuff scrap paper, gift wrapping paper or old Christmas trees into the fireplace.
- Do not use excessive amounts of paper or wood to create a roaring fire.
- Do not dispose of burnt logs or ashes until they cool completely. Dispose of cooled ashes in a metal container. Usually, you can re-burn logs. If you must dispose of a log, wait until it is completely cool, then douse it with water and place it outside away from combustible materials.
- Notify AMS of any problems with the fireplace, such as smoke backing into the room or the flue not working.

MOVING OUT

■ Written Notice

Before notice to vacate is accepted by AMS, it MUST be put in writing and signed by all tenants. The notice must include the date you plan on vacating the premises. This notice must not be less than 60 days before termination.

■ Move Out Procedures

Upon moving out at the end of your lease, it shall be the resident's responsibility for the following:

■ General:

- All rent and late fees should be paid in full or a satisfactory settlement made with Advanced Management for any balance due.
- Inform us of your forwarding address and file a change of address with the post office.
- All carpets should be professionally cleaned using an acceptable company. (Copy of receipt required)
****Pet odors are a special problem and require expertise. Should you have this kind of problem, please contact management for additional instructions.
- Clean all windows, inside and outside.
- Clean all windowsills and tracks.
- All walls must be clean and free of fingerprints, nail holes and any damages should be properly repaired.
- Wipe down baseboards.
- Wash all glass light fixtures, dust chandeliers and ceiling fans.
- Clean all switch and plug plates; replace any broken ones.
- Replace all burned out light bulbs.
- Check all screens, make sure they are free of holes and the frames are not bent.
- Replace A/C furnace filter. Clean cold air returns and vents.
- Remove any dust buildup from ceilings and around air vents.
- Mini blinds must be cleaned and free from all dust and dirt.
- Fireplace must be cleaned out of all ashes and debris if applicable.
- All doors and windows should be properly locked or fastened.

- All personal property, including furniture, motor vehicles and all other items not on the property when you moved in should be removed from the home and surrounding property. Anything left behind shall be regarded as abandoned and may be destroyed, hauled away or otherwise disposed of at **YOUR** expense.

■ **Kitchen:**

- Cabinets should be free of dirt and any accumulated grease both interior and exterior. (Make sure to check and clean top of cabinets)
- Hard floors should be cleaned and freshly mopped.
- Refrigerator should be thoroughly cleaned. Ice should be emptied from freezer and icemaker should be in the off position. Pull refrigerator out from wall & clean behind it and floor underneath, vacuum coils.
- Unplug the refrigerator and leave the doors in the open position to avoid mildew.
- Dishwasher should be emptied and clean and the gasket around the door should be clean and free of build up.
- Range & oven should be clean including racks. **Replace drip pans**, for free standing ranges, pull from wall & clean behind, sides and floor underneath.
- Vent hood should be free of grease and dirt and grease filter should be removed and washed with soap and hot water or in dishwasher.

■ **Bathrooms:**

- Floor should be clean and freshly mopped.
- Cabinets, drawers and linen closet should be thoroughly cleaned both interior and exterior.
- Sink and mirror should be cleaned.
- Toilet should be cleaned and base should be clean and free of any build up.
- Shower, bath tile and fixtures should be free of soap residue and mildew; floor of shower and bath should be clean.

■ **Garage, Driveway and Utility:**

- Sweep Garage and remove all debris.
- Dust and cobwebs should be removed from walls and ceiling.
- Oil/grease stains and/or any other stains should be cleaned and or pressure washed as needed.
- Washer and Dryer (if provided) should be clean and free of dust and detergents.
- Dryer lint trap should be emptied and clean.
- Floor around, under and behind Washer and Dryer should be clean and freshly mopped.
- Remove any personal belongings that may have been stored in the attic.
- Sweep patio or balcony area, remove cobwebs.

■ **Yard:**

- Yard should be freshly mowed, trimmed and free of debris.
- Shrubs and bushes should be trimmed and neat.
- Flowerbeds and planter areas should be free of weeds and debris.
- Sprinkler system (if applicable) should be activated and set for automatic watering at least 2 days per week.

****Please remember that keys & garage door opener remotes must be turned in no later than 12:00 noon on the day after the lease ends to avoid being charged any additional rent. If this falls on a weekend you will need to make arrangements to return keys during our normal business hours.**

Landlords are permitted to deduct from security deposits for damage or excessive filth, but not for ordinary wear and tear. Typically, landlords may charge tenants for any cleaning or repairs necessary to restore the rental unit to its condition at the beginning of the tenancy.

Here are “examples” of wear and tear versus damage or excessive filth.

Ordinary Wear and Tear: Landlord's Responsibility	Damage or Excessive Filth: Tenant's Responsibility
Curtains faded by the sun	Cigarette burns in curtains or carpets
Water-stained linoleum by shower	Broken tiles in bathroom
Minor marks on or nicks in wall	Large marks, crayon or marker on or holes in wall
Dents in the wall where a door handle bumped it	Door off its hinges
Moderate dirt or spotting on carpet	Rips in carpet, urine stains from pets, Juice or drink stains
A few small tack or nail holes in wall	Lots of picture holes or gouges in walls that require patching as well as repainting
A rug worn thin by normal use	Stains in rug caused by a leaking fish tank
Worn gaskets on refrigerator doors	Broken refrigerator shelf
Faded paint on bedroom wall	Water damage on wall from hanging plants
Dark patches of ingrained soil on hardwood floors that have lost their finish and have been worn down to bare wood	Water stains on wood floors and windowsills caused by windows being left open during rainstorms
Warped cabinet doors that won't close	Sticky cabinets and interiors
Stains on old porcelain fixtures that have lost their protective coating	Grime-coated bathtub and toilet
Moderately dirty mini-blinds	Missing mini-blinds
Bathroom mirror beginning to "de-silver" (black spots)	Mirrors caked with lipstick and makeup
Clothes dryer that delivers cold air because the thermostat has given out	Dryer that won't turn at all because it's been over-loaded
Toilet flushes inadequately because mineral deposits have clogged the jets	Toilet won't flush properly because it's stopped up with a diaper

■ **Marketing During the Notice Period**

After you have given notice that you intend to move, the property may be listed for rent. The most probable showing hours are between 9:00am and 6:00pm. AMS will make an effort to accommodate your schedule, however, the property must be available and in good condition during the market time. Illness and children's birthday parties are acceptable reasons for rescheduling a showing. Inconvenience, out of town guests, and no one home are not acceptable reasons to reschedule. You will be called prior to showing. If there is no answer or no answering system, we will call your work number to give notice of a showing. Extra effort on your part is expected in keeping the house and yard neat and clean during marketing. Animals should be out of the way and litter boxes should be clean and odor free. The better a home shows, the more likely it will rent quickly. The faster a new resident is found, the less you will be bothered by showings. A home that shows well benefits everyone!

■ **Return of the Security Deposit**

A resident may not dictate that the security deposit be used for any rent due. If cleaning and repairs are necessary, we will notify you of a claim against your security deposit via certified mail within 30 days of vacating. If there is no claim against the security deposit it will be returned within 15 days of vacating via certified mail. To avoid the inconvenience of the claim process, you should thoroughly clean your residence before you vacate it.

EMERGENCY/DISASTER PROCEDURES

■ **Make Your Plan Now**

The key to safely and properly handling any emergency/disaster is pre-planning and staying calm during and after the event. Being prepared is every individual's responsibility. Don't rely only on the authorities. Take charge and plan now so you can be better prepared to take action when the time comes. Advanced planning allows for fewer mistakes and greater safety for you, your family, and the home you are caring for. It is easy to forget even little things in the anxiety which often comes with an emergency. To avoid unnecessary stress, get ready now.

■ **Two Types of Emergencies**

The first type is a Non-Disaster Emergency, one that is specific to the property you rent (i.e. a tree falls on this house, or the hot water heater bursts).

The second type of emergency is an area wide Disaster (i.e., a hurricane or tornado).

■ **Hurricane/Storm Watch/Storm Warning**

Living in Florida, the chances of experiencing a hurricane or heavy storm are quite high. It is important to know and follow proper procedures to safeguard yourself and the property you live in and minimize potential risk and damage.

A Hurricane/Storm **Watch** is when hurricane and/or storm conditions **are possible** in the specified area of the watch, usually within 36 hours.

*A Hurricane/Storm **Warning** is when hurricane conditions **are expected** in the specified area of the warning, usually within 24 hours.*

■ **What You Do**

Everything an Owner would do to protect the property, the resident is expected to do. The first priority is to stop additional damage. We have many thunder and lightning storms, power outages and high winds. An emergency could happen at any time. Be prepared. Because we get advance warning for a hurricane, many people choose to leave town. If you leave, you still must secure the property prior to leaving.

DISASTER PROCEDURES

Have an emergency preparedness plan, a checklist and a storm kit. Stay tuned to the local news media and follow all recommended precautions and instructions. During the storm or before leaving, please be sure to:

- Turn off main breaker to house.
- Turn off main gas line to house. (Call Power Company for instructions)
- Turn off main water supply to house.
- Take all recommended precautions by the local news media and storm bulletin publications. Do not put tape on the windows!
- Secure your pets, inside. If it is not safe for you outside, it is not safe for your pets either! If you are leaving the property, do not leave your pets behind.

- Secure all outside items. Bring in swings sets, play houses, small planters, anything that could turn into a flying object during high winds.
- Secure house against damage. Follow all recommendations by the local news and the emergency preparedness teams for your area.
- Make sure AMS has a key for your house (have you changed locks lately?)

A RESIDENT IS RESPONSIBLE FOR SECURING THE HOME AGAINST POSSIBLE DAMAGE. EVERYTHING A HOMEOWNER SHOULD DO, RESIDENT IS EXPECTED TO DO.

NON-DISASTER PROCEDURES

(I.e., Kitchen Fire, Water Pipe Burst, Hot Water Heater Burst, Tree Falls on House)

Upon first occurrence or discovery of problem, secure from further damage immediately. Following is a summary of what to expect. Please post this note in a visible place. If any of these actions do not occur, notify the office immediately. Keeping everyone on schedule is a cooperative effort, and you are part of the team.

Resident Responsibility:

Take steps to prevent additional damage immediately.

- Turn off the source of water or electricity or gas, as the situation demands.
- Notify AMS, if it is after hours, use emergency line.
- Make claim on resident's insurance.
- Notify AMS of resident's insurance coverage.
- Provide emergency (police, fire, etc.) report to AMS within 5 days of the incident.
- Provide access for insurance, repair people, etc. to assess and repair damage.
- Notify AMS of delays, "no show" appointments, problems with repairs.

A Resident is responsible for any loss to the Owner due to resident negligence. If the damage was caused by a current resident or a guest, please be aware all charges not covered by insurance will be billed to you.

QUICK FIX TIPS

-Compliments of Old Republic Home Protection-

■ Cook Top/Oven Range

Gas burner on the cook top is not heating evenly

Clean orifices on burner with a toothpick, toothbrush or pipe cleaner. This will increase gas flow and provide an even flame.

Electric burner won't come on or doesn't heat evenly

Make sure the burner coil is completely plugged in. Electric burners can be purchased for much less than a contractor's service call!

Oven will not heat to desired temperature

Most likely the calibration needs to be adjusted on the thermostat. Many times the manufacturer can assist in re-calibrating over the phone, depending on the type of unit. Note: A 10-20 degree variance is normal per some manufacturers.

Oven will not turn on at all

(If electric) Try resetting the designated circuit breaker in your electrical panel. If that doesn't help, check the dial; it may be on "time bake". The oven will not turn on without a time being programmed into the unit. Either set a time or reset the oven to bake or broil.

Right rear burner becomes warm when oven is on

The vent for the oven is located in the right rear burner area and this area may heat up while the oven is in use or if the unit is self cleaning.

Self-clean feature will not turn on

If you haven't used the self-clean before and are unsure how your unit operates, operating instructions can be obtained from the manufacturer. Check the dials for the self-clean setting. Be sure the door latch is closed.

Oven will not open (locked)

Reset the self-clean dials to the off position and gently open the locking mechanism.

■ Dishwasher

The dishwasher will not drain

The dishwasher does not necessarily have a mechanical malfunction if it does not drain properly. Read on for our simple ways to cure this problem!

1. Inside the dishwasher at the bottom of the unit there is what looks like an upside down cup. This is the float or pressure switch that should move up and down freely. Gently attempt to move it, if any large food particles, glass, plastic, etc. have become lodged under this switch, remove them so the unit can function properly.

2. If the float switch is ok, then there may be a clog in the air gap. This is the hose that runs under the sink from the dishwasher to the silver cap on top of the sink. There may be an obstruction in the line or in the air gap itself. Remove the silver or plastic cap that exposes the air gap. If you see an obstruction (i.e. food particles, etc.), remove them. If no obstruction is visible, the top of the air gap should pop or unscrew. Remove it to find out if you can see any other obstruction. If still no obstruction is visible, invert a plastic cup over the air gap opening (making sure the cup is suctioned tightly to the sink) then advance the dishwasher timer to the drain cycle to start pumping water through the line. If the obstruction is in the line, it should be pressurized out of the air gap opening. Be sure to keep your hand on the cup to prevent the water pressure from pushing it out of place. If the water runs through the air gap, shut off the dishwasher and reassemble the air gap.
3. If the disposal was recently replaced, the installer may have failed to remove the plug on the side of the disposal where the drain hose connects, thus the unit will not drain. This plug normally requires a special tool and can be rather difficult to remove. To prevent damaging the unit, contact the installer directly to remove the plug.

[The dishwasher leaks from the door](#)

Liquid soap suds cause leakage around the door. Switching to powder soap will solve this problem. If you have been using liquid soap, place a cup of vinegar in the dishwasher and run it through a cycle. This will remove the remaining liquid soap from the system. If this does not solve the problem, refer to the above solution. The leakage could be a result of the unit not draining properly.

[Water sprays or drains out of the air gap](#)

This means there is a clog in the line between the air gap and the disposal. The hose under the sink can be removed very easily and the clog can be removed. Be sure to re-attach the hose entirely to prevent any leakage problems.

[The dishwasher is not cleaning the dishes well/soap is not dissolving](#)

Soap properly dissolves if the water temperature is above 140 degrees. Try increasing the temperature on the water heater or run the faucet at the kitchen sink until it comes out hot prior to starting the dishwasher.

■ Electrical

[No power to an outlet](#)

First try resetting your circuit breaker. If that isn't effective, and a bathroom or kitchen outlet is affected, it could be a tripped GFI. The GFI is a "mini" breaker located inside an outlet within 10 feet of water (i.e. a sink). This GFI "button" tends to be red with test/reset noted on it, located directly on the outlet cover. This prevents electrocution by shutting off power immediately if electrical current comes in contact with water.

A GFI is most likely located:

1. In the bathroom
2. In the kitchen
3. In the garage
4. At the circuit breaker panel box

Regardless of where it is located, it is likely that all the kitchen and bathroom circuits are hooked through this outlet. Builders generally install one GFI and then wire other outlets through it. Look in these areas for the GFI and be sure the reset button is depressed.

[No power to an outlet or a specific light switch does not work](#)

Replacing an outlet or switch is actually a very minor repair. With the power turned off to the area, it is not at all dangerous. The parts can be purchased for around \$5 and the local hardware store can walk you through the steps to replace.

■ Garage Door Opener

[The door does not open or close smoothly](#)

Garage door openers have a tension knob on the back of the opener which needs to be adjusted to the weight of the door. In the winter, wooden doors may absorb moisture thus making them heavier. This will result in the door operating with a "jerking" motion. The tension knob is located on the back, side or front exterior of the opener. There are usually indicators that read "higher/lower" or "increase/decrease". Adjust this knob slightly to one direction, test the door, if that doesn't help, turn the knob the other direction, until you are satisfied with the door's function.

[Door reverses in mid-opening or closing](#)

Remove any obstructions in the hinge/spring area. Most units have an automatic reversing feature in the event the door hits an obstruction.

Many units have an "electric eye" or sensor that may become obstructed. If so, remove the obstruction. At times these sensors may become misaligned. If the light on the sensor is blinking, it means the two sensors are not aligned and need to be adjusted to become aligned. Once alignment is made, the lights will stop "blinking" and the "obstruction" will be eliminated.

■ Garbage Disposal

[Disposal does not make any sound when the switch is turned on. The most likely cause is no power to the unit](#)

1. Most disposals have a "Reset" button on the bottom or side of the unit, this acts as a "built in" circuit breaker. Depress this button to reset the unit.
2. If step 1 does not help, try resetting the designated circuit breaker in your electrical panel.

[If the disposal makes any sound at all when turned on, it probably means the unit has power but is jammed](#)

Use an "Allen" wrench to un-jam the unit. This is a five sided tool ("L" shaped) that will fit into the bottom of the disposal (\$2-\$3 at a hardware store). With the unit turned off or unplugged, insert this into the bottom of the disposal. Move it clockwise and counter clockwise to loosen the jammed unit. Sometimes you can reach into the disposal and remove the item if it is large enough. Always Unplug The Garbage Disposal Before Reaching Into The Unit. Once you believe the unit to be clear of the jam, plug the unit back in and turn the disposal on to see if it rotates!

Disposal drains slowly

Pour 1 cup each of baking soda, salt & vinegar. Pour baking soda & salt into drain, immediately followed by vinegar. Let sit for approximately 15-20 minutes. As you wait, boil a pot of water. After the 15-20 minutes, pour the boiling water down the drain to flush the pipes out. Note: Do not use this remedy if you have already used a store-bought remedy in the same drain.

Disposal doesn't seem to chop the food well or drain has an odor

Fill an ice cube tray ½ full of vinegar and ½ full of water. Once the cubes are frozen, place them down the disposal 2-3 cubes a week for about a month and this will not only sharpen the blades, but keep your drain clean at the same time! (Lemon peels also work well for odors).

■ **Heater**

Furnace cycles on and off frequently

The furnace filter is an important component for the proper operation of a furnace. If the filter gets clogged, it will not allow the furnace to circulate properly, which can result in these symptoms. The blower door switch will automatically turn the unit off when the door to the filter is opened. You can simply replace the filter to save time and money!

Make sure nothing is closer than 18 inches from all output vents and intake grilles. To ensure adequate airflow NOTHING should be blocking them.

Heater will not turn on

This usually indicates NO electricity is getting to the unit. Most furnaces installed in the last 15 years have a switch located on the inside of the front panel known as the blower door switch. The panel needs to be properly aligned and completely closed to activate this switch. The purpose of the switch is to prevent the furnace from coming on when you change the filter. If that doesn't solve the problem, make sure the thermostat is set to the temperature you desire and is set on automatic. Finally, check the circuit breaker or contact the gas company to check out your unit or relight your pilot light, the gas company will do this for free!

Fan will not shut off

Check that the thermostat is not set on "fan". Some furnaces are equipped with a "summer switch". This is located on the side of the furnace and is used primarily in the summer months to circulate air throughout the home. Turn the switch setting to "OFF" to stop the fan function.

Wall Furnace pilot will not light

Contact the gas company; they will relight your pilot for free!

■ **Plumbing Pipes**

Discolored rusty water is coming out of the faucets

If this is only happening while the hot water is running, refer to the water heater section on how to "flush" the unit. If it is coming from both hot and cold lines, it is most likely corrosion or rust in the pipes and that would require a contractor to correct. Under the Terms of our Plan, we do not provide coverage for chemical build-up or rusted pipes. Pipes must be actually leaking due to normal wear and tear to be covered under the Plan.

Water "hammer" in pipes

To eliminate the hammer is easy! Water hammer is caused by air being trapped in your incoming water line. First, shut the water off to your home at the main shut off valve. Open all the faucets and fixtures, both hot and cold until all the water is drained from the pipes. Then, with all the faucets still "open", turn the water valve back on to the home which will allow all the air to be pushed out of the pipes by incoming water. Then one by one, shut off each faucet and the hammer will be gone! If this does not resolve the problem, it could be related to high water pressure.

■ **Pool/Spa**

Pool pump is not circulating

The pump may have stopped circulating because the water level in the pool/spa is too low. If the water level has dropped below the center of the skimmer, air may get into the system causing it to stop working well. "Re-prime" the pump by raising the water level in your pool/spa, then remove the pump lid and place a few gallons of water in the pump basket. After re-attaching the pump lid, open the valve under the pressure gauge on top of the filter. Turn your equipment on and when water sprays from the open valve, close the valve. The equipment should re-prime itself. You can tell the pump is working when the pressure gauge moves.

Pool/Spa is dirty....the filter is not cleaning

Clean the filter. If the filter is dirty it will cause an increase in pressure and will reduce the ability of the filter to work properly.

Cartridge filters need cleaning approximately every 2 months. D.E. filters need cleaning 2-3 times a year.

There is no power to the equipment. The pool or spa light will not turn on

Re-set the circuit breaker at the sub or main electrical panel. Pool/Spa equipment should be on its' own circuit. There may also be a GFI outlet at the equipment. (See electrical section for clarification about the GFI). Be sure it is in the re-set position. Spas may have a designated re-set button also.

Pool/Spa heater will not come on

Clean the filter. If filters are dirty it restricts water flow into the heater. Most heaters have a pressure switch that will not allow the heater to turn on unless the water flow (pressure) is sufficient.

■ **Slow Drains/Stoppages**

Kitchen sink, bathroom sink, shower or tub drains slowly

If you have multiple stoppages in the home, i.e. toilet, sinks, laundry line, or any combination of these, this would be considered a "main line" stoppage and requires a plumber. Call our service department for assistance!

If you have a "slow drain" in a kitchen sink, bathroom sink, shower or tub, this can be caused by food, hair and/or sludge build up and can be easily remedied. Pour 1 cup each of baking soda, salt & vinegar. Pour baking soda & salt into drain, immediately

followed by vinegar. Let sit for approximately 15-20 minutes. As you wait, boil a pot of water. After the 15-20 minutes, pour the boiling water down the drain to flush the pipes out. Note: Do not use this remedy if you have already used a store-bought remedy in the same drain. This may have to be done 1-3 times to clear the line effectively.

We also recommend liquid drain cleaners (not the crystals). The liquid drain cleaners are not recommended on the kitchen sink if there is a garbage disposal as they have been known to damage the disposals. Make sure to follow the directions for maximum effectiveness.

Toilet won't drain well or at all

With the exception of a mainline stoppage, almost all toilet stoppages can be cleared with a plunger!

■ **Toilets**

Toilet runs constantly. Toilet seems to flush by itself

A leaking flapper most likely causes both symptoms. This is the round "seal" in the bottom of the tank connected to the chain for the handle. When you depress the handle, the flapper pops up to allow the water in the tank to rush into the bowl and cause the toilet to flush.

The flapper is easily removed and replaced. The flapper costs around \$2-\$5 at any hardware store and will likely fix the problem. Be sure to remove the old one and match it up to the new one to assure a proper fit.

Once the flapper is replaced, adjust the toilet ball gently downward to lower the water level in the tank. Remove any toilet bowl cleaners from obstructing the flapper in the tank.

Toilet won't flush, the handle just moves up and down

The chain may have come off the handle arm. Re-connect the chain. Don't forget the water in your toilet tank is fresh!

■ **Water Heater**

Water heater makes a rumbling or clanking noise

Chances are this is related to sediment build up. A "flush" of the water heater may be all that is required.

Follow these steps to flush your water heater:

CAUTION: The water is hot and there is danger of being scalded. Use caution and keep children and pets away from the area when flushing water heater.

- 1.) Attach a garden hose to the drain valve (looks like a hose bib) at the bottom of the heater. Run the garden hose either outside or to the nearest drain.
- 2.) Open the drain valve, which will allow the water to drain through the hose.
- 3.) When the water is running clear - after about 20 minutes - close the drain valve and remove the hose.
- 4.) Turn on a hot water faucet in your home and let it run until all air bubbles are out of the line, then turn it off.

Water heater is not producing enough hot water

If the water heater runs out of hot water too quickly, increase the temperature on the water heater thermostat. If the temperature is set on the highest setting, flush the water heater according to the directions above.

The unit is not producing any hot water

Your pilot light may be out. Follow the instructions on the tank on how to light the pilot, or call your local gas company who will relight it for free!

If the unit is electric, it may have a reset button on the tank itself. Depress the button and if that doesn't help, try the designated circuit breaker in your electrical panel, it may have tripped.