

Signs You May Need a Foundation Inspection



Your home's foundation is the first part of a building that is created during construction. And after the building is completed, the foundation continues to be its most important component. The foundation holds the weight of the entire building and is responsible for its structural stability. If the foundation weakens, moves or cracks, the entire structure will be endangered.

But despite of the foundation's importance to a building, it is rarely given attention. It is not one of the structures that attract the owner's attention. This is partly because the foundation is mostly hidden. It is also because owners often assume their home's foundation is so rugged that nothing can go wrong with it. Yet foundation issues are among the most common problems homeowners have to deal with.

There are two reasons for this:

- The conditions of the soil beneath the home's foundation may change after the home is built. This could be because the home is built on expansive clay which may expand or shrink. It could also be due to errors during construction, such as poor soil preparation.

And it could be caused by plumbing leaks, rainwater pooling underneath the building, or even [tree roots intruding into the foundation](#).

- Another reason for the high incidence of a foundation problem is that a failing foundation is not always easy to detect. Often the problem is detected after it becomes serious. Foundation issues are not always easy to spot because the initial signs often mimic less serious problems. And the signs may not occur anywhere near the foundations; sometimes signs show up in window frames and homeowners have no way of connecting it to the foundation.

Although most foundation issues can be successfully solved, early detection can help keep the cost of repairs minimal. The way to do this is to get a foundation inspection. The foundation inspection can help catch the signs of foundation failure early and allow property owners to take prompt action.

What is a home foundation inspection?



It is a procedure for assessing the condition of a building's foundations. The inspection is done by a foundation expert, such as a structural engineer. The goal of the examination is to find out the following:

- Whether the soil beneath the foundation and the foundation itself has moved
- Whether the foundation has been affected by the freeze-thaw cycle or flooding
- Whether there is clear evidence of damage to the foundation

- Whether the damage affects the structural integrity of the house
- Whether the home is still safe for habitation
- Whether the foundation problem can be solved

Basically, a foundation inspection evaluates the health of the home's foundation and the safety of the building. Every house needs a foundation inspection, at least, once a year to prevent problems. And it is recommended that homeowners who are looking to sell their properties do a foundation inspection before listing the home.

But if you suspect that your home has foundation problems, what are the signs you should expect to see? Here are the signs that your home may have foundations problems:

1. Large cracks in various parts of the home



If large cracks are appearing in different parts of the home, it can be a sign that the home's foundation needs attention. The areas of the home include:

- Large cracks in walls (especially cracks in the drywall that form a zigzag pattern)
- Cracks in the foundation (particularly horizontal cracks)
- Tilting or cracking chimneys
- Major cracks along with the ceiling and in the wall seams

2. Problems with the floors

The floor in most homes is not completely even due to slight changes that occur as the house settles. But if the unevenness is pronounced, there may be a foundation issue afoot. Floor issues to look out for include:

- [Sagging, bowing, or dipping floors](#)
- Markedly uneven floors, even if it is localized to one area of the home
- Bouncy floors that feel like a trampoline
- Squeaky floors

3. Door, window, and cabinet problems



A foundation problem causes misalignment in the walls of the home and this can manifest as issues with doors, windows, and cabinets. Problems to expect are:

- Countertops and cabinets that separate from walls, with the gaps getting ever wider
- Doors and windows that are hard to close or open
- Door and window frames pulling away from walls

4. Popping nails and bulging walls

The drywall in a home with foundation issues may become bulgy or uneven in certain places. Additionally, when drywall nails start to pop out all over the home, it could be a sign of foundation problems.

5. Roof and grading problems



Issues with a home's foundations will cause a misalignment in the roof and lead rafters to collapse. This can result in a leaking roof. Additionally, if water consistently pools at the base of the house, it may be setting the stage for future foundation problems.

6. High incidence of foundation problems in the neighborhood

Since foundation failure often results from the nature of the soil in an area, the problem will be more prevalent in certain localities. If homes in your neighborhood have this problem, you should have your home's foundations examined, even if you don't see any of the above signs.

There you have it, signs to look out for if you think your home has foundation problems.