

Cracked Up

I'm getting several calls a week from people with foundation problems. Unfortunately things are starting to move due to the dramatic weather patterns. The soil, until recently, has been void of moisture. Now it is saturated. This can lead to foundation problems, most notably cracks.

If you have this condition, call a foundation repair professional. This condition will not get better with time and should be addressed. A small fissure can grow into a big structural problem within a few months.

If your home is more than 30 years old chances are good your foundation doesn't penetrate the frost line, doesn't have footer drains, and isn't damp proofed. The frost line in this region is 30 inches below grade. If your footers are shallow the house may move with each freeze/thaw cycle. Water can also cause movement as hydrostatic pressure builds up behind the wall. A crack, of course, relieves this pressure allowing water into your house. Cracks, water, movement, must all be addressed.

It is important to be familiar with your foundation. Take a walk around the house and note any problems you see. If you find a crack, take a picture to document the condition. Keep an eye on the crack and compare it to the picture. If the crack is changing call a professional right away. This means you have active movement.

I know it's not much fun to put your hard earned dollars into your foundation. But, like I said before, if you have active foundation issues time is not your friend. At a minimum have the foundation inspected and let the professionals be your guide.