

Foundations

SLAB ON GRADE

Slab on grade foundations are built directly on the soil below the slab. Slabs built on expansive soils may need more attention than those built on other types of soils. Expansive soils shrink from loss of moisture and swell upon the introduction of water. If the shrinking and swelling movement of the soil is severe, the movement can cause unacceptable levels of stress in the concrete slab and may eventually cause damage to the foundation resulting in exterior wall damage, interior wall damage, and inoperable doors and windows.

Moisture may originate from rain water, underground water, etc. Dry soil may be the result of a variety of conditions such as overly dry weather conditions or trees that are in close proximity to the slab. Learn about the ground water table in your area to determine if groundwater is a serious concern worthy of close monitoring.

Important Information

- **Trees.** Trees that are planted too close to your foundation can draw moisture away, consequently affecting the moisture content around your home. Avoid planting trees with extensive root systems close to your home. Plant trees no closer to your slab than the height of the tree at maturity. Regular watering of the trees planted near your home will reduce the trees' need to absorb the subsurface moisture that is needed for your foundation.
- **Subterranean Termites.** Do not install landscaping within 16 inches of the foundation. Only install irrigation outside of that plant line, in an effort to reduce the risk of termites.
- **Proper Drainage.** Avoid irrigation or roof-edge splash that will wet the weep screed or base of siding. It is vital to maintain the drainage away from the house.
- **Soil and Wood Chips.** Soil, wood chips, and other debris can add to the risk of deterioration, fungus growth, and insect infestation. Do not stack wood against the side of the house or use wood chips around the perimeter of the foundation.

Recommended Maintenance Tasks	Frequency
Inspect the grade around your home to ensure there is no standing water within five feet of the foundation.	Monthly in dry seasons/Weekly in wet seasons

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Check the gutter and downspout system during a rain to ensure that water is drained sufficiently away from the foundation.	Monthly in dry seasons/Weekly in wet seasons
Examine the drainage flows of flower and landscape beds that are adjacent to the slab. All water should drain freely away from the slab.	Monthly in dry seasons/Weekly in wet seasons
In areas subject to termite infestation, inspect the base of the wall for termite 'tubes' between the grade and the base of the wood framing.	Twice per year

Effects of Deferred Maintenance

Failure to perform recommended maintenance may result in deterioration to your foundation and as well as water intrusion or damage.