



9 TIPS FOR MAINTAINING YOUR FOUNDATION

- 1** Concrete slabs can develop hairline cracks over time. When cracks are minor they can be cleaned out then filled with epoxy glue or similar materials made specifically for concrete crack repair.
- 2** Proper and consistent moisture levels are critical to maintaining a strong foundation. During dry periods it will be necessary to ensure the foundation is moist in order to avoid problems caused by shrinking soil. A good way to help the ground around your foundation is by installing rock beds 18" – 24" away from your foundation. These beds allow rain and sprinkler water to penetrate deep into the soil. Be careful not to overwater your soil, a good rule of thumb to follow is, water your lawn enough to keep your plants and landscaping healthy.

Beware, you may hear that purchasing a foundation watering system is a good idea, however, in our experience, watering your foundation exclusively can actually do more harm than good. Because we cannot predict future rainfall, adding extra moisture to your foundation can backfire in the event of a storm or prolonged period of rain, causing the soil underneath your home to expand more than normal. We've repaired many homes with foundation watering systems, which have experienced soil upheaval due to increased expansion caused by overwatering.
- 3** Gutters and downspouts are another critical factor in maintaining a solid foundation. Properly sized and installed gutters and downspouts direct water away from your home preventing heaving of the foundation which is caused by excess moisture. Downspouts should discharge water approximately 5 feet from the foundation built on sandy soil and 10 feet from foundations built on expansive soils.
- 4** In ground drains can be installed to assist in drainage of low areas. The drains should drain into areas of lower elevation or into a gravel filled catch basin.
- 5** Proper grade, with ground sloping away from your foundation is a must for a healthy house. Slope should be about 3 to 5 percent within 10-feet of the foundation.
- 6** After a rainstorm look for water puddling near your foundation. If there are puddles you need to find a way to direct the water away from the house. Solutions vary. You may need to install a french drain, cut a swale, or improve the grade around your foundation. Contact a professional to help you with the best solution for your problem.
- 7** If the grade around your foundation can't be corrected install a moisture barrier near your foundation as part of a program for minimizing moisture migration under the foundation. Effective moisture barriers are at least 5 feet deep.
- 8** In areas where the grade is extreme and erosion is possible install erosion control systems to assure the stability of slopes and foundation. Erosion control can include the use of grass or other ground covers, concrete pavers, rocks, landscape timbers, concrete, liners, etc.
- 9** The entire plumbing system, including sewer lines and sprinkler systems, should be checked periodically for leaks. Repair leaks as soon as you find them.