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October's Preferred Realtor and Home Inspector Network Topic: 3 Exterior Signals of Foundation Movement

Ever wish you had a crystal ball or a magic wand?



I don't know about you, but there are times I wish I had a crystal ball to predict the future, or a magic wand to wave and cause the ground to be transparent. It would make determining the extent of a foundation problem so much easier! Well, I can't hand out magic wands, or crystal balls, but I can give you a handy checklist to predict if a home is experiencing foundation problems, so you can proactively deal with the situation.

STAIR STEP CRACKING



Stair step cracking is often a telltale sign of foundation settlement and is very common in brick and concrete block walls. As your home continues to settle further, vertical cracks me whiten, indicating that the wall is rotating outward.



Standard Movement Type:
This is usually vertical movement.



Usual Repair Method:
Push Piers or Helical Piers

CHIMNEYS



One of the more scary and dramatic signs of settlement is a chimney separating away from the rest of the home. Sometimes chimneys are built on the foundation that is not connected to the rest of the home, making it even more at risk for settlement.



Standard Movement Type:
This is usually vertical movement.



Usual Repair Method:
Helical Piers

CLUES FROM DOORS AND WINDOWS



Whenever an opening is cut or created in a wall, such as a door or window, it becomes the weakest point of the wall. Because of this, doors and windows often display the first signs of settlement. Three common observations include: doors and windows out of square, cracks extending from the corners of doors or windows, and the separation of the door or window from the frame or exterior finish.



**Standard Movement Type:
Vertical or horizontal**



**Usual Repair Method:
Foundation Piers or Wall Anchors**

Have you noticed newer caulking around outside doors and windows? This is a common home owner fix to the damages caused by foundation settlement.

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