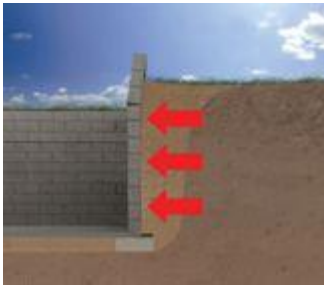


March's Preferred Realtor Network Topic: How Your Foundation is Affected by Weather

Why does a Season Affect a Foundation?



Each year, your foundation undergoes tremendous strain as the elements do their worst on it. So, when is this strain the heaviest? What are the forces that lead to a cracked basement or a need for a foundation repair? When is the best time to get a problem fixed?

We've compiled a short, handy explanation of Foundation Seasons. Let's check it out!

Mid-December to March: The Freeze



We're currently coming out of the Freeze season, which is usually from first blizzard to first melt. The soil is frozen, or mostly frozen, and dramatic shifts are less likely.

This is like a hibernation season for your foundation and surrounding soil.

Right now, your foundation is about as stable as it's going to get because the soil is not experiencing influxes of water. This is the best time of year to mark the size of your cracks in the basement and mark them for future tracking.

This is the best time of year to have repair work done on your foundation because the soil is at rest and the damage is the slightest--you'll save money in crack repair and cosmetic finishing. Plus, you've saved your home from the upheaval of the other seasons.

April to Early June: Spring Melt



Life begins in the Spring Melt season, where frozen ground is introduced to melting snow and all sorts of soil problems begin. Houses settle, basements flood, garages heave.

This time of year, you will notice that cracks in the foundation are weeping, or that new cracks have appeared.

Many people start researching the cost of foundation repair and the methodology of crack repair at this point. This is a good time of year to check your crack size and scope weekly.

It's a good time of year to have foundation work done if you believe the foundation is still moving. You'll save money by have the repairs done before the summer rains start.

June to August: Wet Season



Life really picks up in Wet Season, it's the time when rain comes often and people start to notice basement flooding, damp crawlspaces, and heaving clay soils.

It often coincides with real estate transactions because lots of clients choose to move in the summer (I agree, moving in the snow is awful).

Cracks will grow rapidly, or they may fluctuate depending on the weather outside. You'll notice that walls may be bowing inward during this season.

This season is one of re-hydration of soils and is known for increased heaving. It's a time when damage occurs more quickly and the cost of repairs can be higher due to the need for more cosmetic repairs.

August to mid-December: Piering Season



Piering Season is crazy. It's the time of year when the rain stops, temperatures spike, and the soil goes into super dehydration mode. Homes drop by inches, basements crack overnight, the whole world cries out for moisture.

Colorado feels like an Alpine Desert, complete with dissected (shriveled) soil.

It's also the most dramatic time for shifting soils. You will see cracks open wide and stay that way. You'll notice bowed walls are shifting back into position with new damage. Corners of foundations tend to really drop at this time of year. It's an excellent time of year to have a foundation repaired because your foundation is truly at it's worse. There is a risk in waiting this long to address a foundation concern, though--it may cost more because the damage is much worse than it was in the Spring.

Concerned about the Cost of Foundation Repair?

If you're concerned about a potential foundation problem, or believe that foundation issues are increasing over time, then I would recommend having a Systems Design Specialist come out for a free estimate. Our Design Specialists will evaluate the structure, give you a scope of work, some tips to help minimize foundation movement, and a price. It's nice to have piece of mind, especially when it's a home's stability at stake.

Sincerely,



Cassi Sherman Henes

Author, *Foundation Technology*

Peak Basement Systems and Peak Structural

Questions or comments? E-mail us at cassi@peakpeakbasementsystems.com or call us at 877-760-7070.

