

# Understanding the Causes of Uneven Foundations

LAPLACE, LA, UNITED STATES, May 8, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Foundation issues represent one of the most significant structural concerns for residential and commercial properties. Uneven foundations, in particular, create challenges that affect building stability, safety, and long-term value. Identifying the causes behind foundation movement is essential for early intervention and appropriate repair strategies.



[Travis Hartley](#), Project Manager at [Cable Lock Foundation Repair](#) in

Louisiana, explained the importance of understanding underlying causes when diagnosing foundation concerns.

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*Travis Hartley*

"Foundation problems are almost always symptoms of deeper issues related to soil conditions, moisture fluctuations, or construction practices. Correct identification of the cause is the first step toward implementing an effective and lasting solution," said Hartley.

One of the most common causes of uneven foundations is soil movement. Expansive clay soils, which are prevalent across much of Louisiana and the Gulf Coast region, swell

when wet and shrink when dry. These repeated cycles of expansion and contraction create shifting pressures under the foundation, leading to uneven settlement, cracks, and structural misalignment over time.

Poor drainage around a structure can also cause foundation movement. When water pools near a foundation or seeps into the soil, it increases the soil's volume, exerting upward pressure. In

contrast, dry periods can cause the soil to contract and pull away from the foundation. Both excessive moisture and drought conditions place stress on foundations, often resulting in uneven support.

Tree roots and vegetation growth near foundations introduce another risk factor. Trees draw significant amounts of moisture from the soil, especially during dry periods. As roots absorb water, they cause localized drying and soil shrinkage, leading to differential settlement. Large, mature trees planted too close to buildings can create substantial foundation stresses over time.



Construction practices also influence foundation performance. Inadequate site preparation, such as building on poorly compacted fill material or failing to properly account for soil composition, can lead to uneven settlement. Foundations that lack sufficient reinforcement or are not designed to accommodate expected soil movement face greater risks of becoming uneven.

Plumbing leaks beneath a slab foundation create localized soil saturation, weakening the soil's ability to support the structure. Over time, areas around leaks experience more rapid settlement compared to drier areas, causing the foundation to tilt, crack, or sink unevenly. Hidden leaks from sewer or water supply lines are common contributors to unexpected foundation issues.

Seismic activity, though less frequent in Louisiana compared to other regions, can also cause minor to moderate shifts in foundation structures. Even small tremors can exacerbate preexisting vulnerabilities, particularly in older buildings without modern reinforcement systems.

Temperature fluctuations contribute indirectly to foundation movement as well. Heat causes soil to dry and contract, while cooler temperatures, especially following rain, promote soil expansion. Although Louisiana's climate is generally warm and humid, seasonal shifts still impact soil behavior and foundation conditions.

Signs of uneven foundation settlement often include visible cracks in walls, floors, or ceilings; doors and windows that stick or do not close properly; sloped floors; and separation between walls and the ceiling or floor. Early detection of these symptoms can help minimize repair costs and limit additional damage to structural elements.

Foundation inspections typically involve evaluating surface damage, measuring elevation changes across the structure, and sometimes using soil testing or ground-penetrating radar to assess subsurface conditions. Understanding the specific combination of factors causing foundation problems enables repair plans to address root causes, not just surface symptoms.

Common repair methods for uneven foundations include installing steel or concrete piers, underpinning systems, and soil stabilization techniques. These solutions are designed to restore structural alignment, prevent future settlement, and provide long-term stability to the affected areas. Selecting the right method depends on the severity of the movement, the type of foundation, and the underlying soil conditions.

Drainage improvements, such as regrading landscapes, installing French drains, or repairing gutter systems, play a major role in preventing future foundation movement. Proper moisture management around the structure remains a critical part of any long-term foundation maintenance plan.

Monitoring foundation conditions over time is recommended, even after repairs are completed. Structures located on expansive soils or areas with known moisture variability benefit from periodic inspections to catch minor shifts before they develop into major concerns.

Awareness of environmental factors unique to the Gulf South, including high rainfall, clay-heavy soils, and seasonal temperature shifts, helps property owners and contractors plan better for long-term foundation performance. Early action based on visible warning signs and a strong understanding of local soil behavior leads to better outcomes and protects property investments.

Cable Lock Foundation Repair continues to assist homeowners, businesses, and property managers across Louisiana by providing thorough evaluations and tailored solutions for foundation problems caused by soil movement, moisture imbalance, and construction challenges. Proper diagnosis and strategic repairs help maintain structural safety, improve property value, and extend the service life of buildings throughout the region.

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