

# FOUNDATIONS, GRADING & DRAINAGE

## MAINTENANCE TIPS

It is important to maintain uniform moisture conditions in the soil around your home. If this is not done, one area of your foundation may shift more vertically than other areas. Concentrated water introduced at or around the foundation may cause lifting in expansive soil conditions. If certain areas around your foundation have a high degree of moisture, the foundation will bend but not cause damage. However, the walls and interior drywall will not bend with the movement of the foundation and will show cracks. To prevent and at least minimize these conditions, we recommend the following:

- When your home was completed, the earth around the outside of your foundation was graded so that it slopes away from the house to provide water drainage. The grading away from your home was certified for positive flow. Any changes created by the owners or their agents may cause drainage conditions which will void the warranty in this area.
- Homeowners will sometimes create unequal soil moisture conditions around the foundations by creating water traps. This can be caused by a metal flower bed edging. Whenever you are building planters near the foundation, you should take into consideration the necessity of water draining away from the house.
- In drought conditions, you might experience large cracks in the yard soil because of lack of moisture. However, the soil beneath your foundation is protected from the surface drying effects of the sun's rays and retains its moisture. It is a tendency for your inner foundation to maintain a stable elevation, while your outside walls will drop. In watering plants and shrubs around your home, it is better to water for a short period of time every three to five days rather than watering once a week for an extended period of time.
- Hairline cracks in both drywall and block mortar joints are normal. Cracks larger than a hairline are indications of excessive soil movement and usually indicate a drainage problem. After correcting the lawn drainage problem, allow three to six months before repairing cracks since most cracks will become smaller after the soil moisture equalizes itself from the proper drainage conditions.

## **GRADING AND DRAINAGE NOTICE**

If you are considering any additions or improvements to your home, please be advised of the following:

- Your lot has been designed and graded according to plans and specifications prepared by licensed soils and civil engineers.
- The grading of your lot has been inspected and approved by the governmental entity (city, county, etc.) in which your lot is located.
- In cases where special soil conditions exist, that area of the lot supporting your home has been graded according to a special structural section designed by a certified engineer.
- In some cases, the concrete foundation and floors of your home may have been specially designed by a certified engineer with additional steel reinforcement and other measures as required.

Additionally, your lot has been carefully finish graded to drain properly. This grading is in accordance with and approved by the civil engineer and building inspector. If you should decide to install patios, fences, swimming pools, walks, landscaping or additions to your home property, it is imperative that you:

- Maintain the integrity of the drainage system installed for your lot. Improper drainage or standing water next to your home can cause serious damage to the foundation or structure. The lot grade is a minimum of six to eight inches below the wood sills when the home was completed. Maintain this grade as it will prevent insects and water from entering your home. Failure to maintain this grade or any alteration of it may void your structural warranty.
- Consult a competent engineer to determine if any special measures are required for your work to maintain structural soundness.
- Obtain necessary building permits, as required.