

Homeowner Tips in Mine Subsidence Areas

As you have likely discovered by receiving a Mine Subsidence Protection Program brochure, coal mines underly some local neighborhoods.

This is alarming news to some people, but here are two recommendations of things a person can do to protect your home:

Enroll in the MSPP if you are eligible; if you have misplaced your brochure you can call 1-800-446-4637, Marsh, USA, the company that handles the MSPP

Improve water drainage control around your home. This requires improving water drainage around your home.

The overall aim is to prevent water from pooling near or entering the ground near your house foundation.

Gutters and downspouts: These are important to the well being of your house no matter where you live, the gutters and downspouts should always be kept clean, and the downspouts should have an extension to carry water at least 3 feet and preferably 5 feet away from your house foundation.

Slope soil away from foundation: The first 5 feet away from your house foundation should have a noticeable slope away from the house. This can be accomplished by adding soil against the foundation to create that slope.

No vegetation that requires watering within 5 feet of foundation: The purpose for this is again to keep water away from your house foundation. If you have plants growing in this zone, do not over-water them. The best protection for this zone is to create the positive grade away from the house, then cover the soil with geofabric or weed barrier to help prevent infiltration, and cover with rock or mulch or bark.

Overall site grading: The overall grade should not conduct neighboring runoff near your house. If that is the case now, you may wish to create a shallow grass covered channel to drain water running onto your lot past your house and out to the street or storm sewer.

There are several things to be aware of surrounding your house. Once a month, or so, check all of your utilities: look at your gas meter; electrical service; telephone and cable service. Look for any sign of pulling or movement. It is not necessary to identify what moved, just if there is movement, contact the utility and the MSPP personnel. If you ever smell natural gas, do not touch anything electrical, leave the house, and call the gas company from the neighbor's house. Even your cell phone may set off the gas, so, do not touch the light switch, stereo, garage door opener or anything electrical. In Colorado Springs, Colorado Springs Utilities is available at 719-448-4800.

Keep track of any cracks in the foundation, the drywall or plaster, and notice how doors fit, and if any become hard to close. If you notice any of these things occurring in your house, keep a written record of what happens and when. These recommendations will help, but can not guarantee to prevent damage.



Abandoned Mines

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