

A BETTER INSPECTOR- BBHI

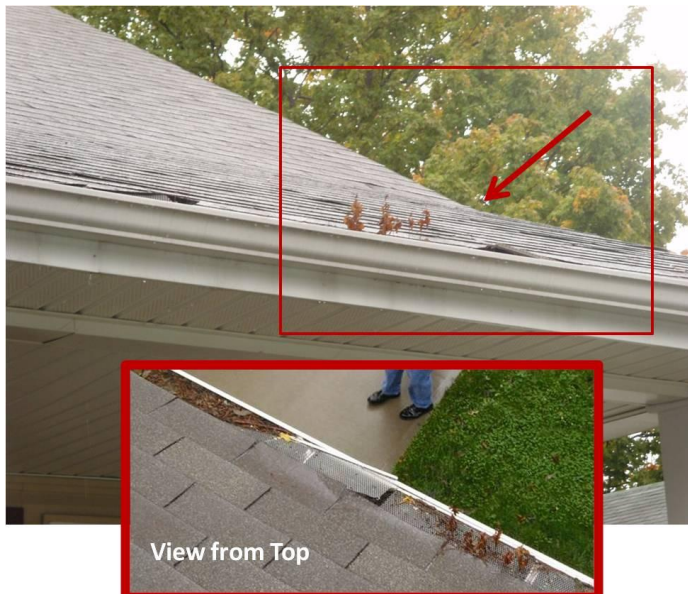
My Mind is in the Gutter! By Steve Wolfe

Spring is here and with it comes the spring rains. Working gutters are critical to the health of your foundation, and now is the time to give them a good going over.

- Are your gutters clean?
- Do they slant down to the downspout?
- Are the supports firmly attached and in good condition?
- Are gutter guards in place or are they loose and collapsed inside the gutter?
- Do downspouts vent the water away from the house, and are they all attached?

Now- what's all this about gutters and your foundation? The answer to that is that gutters are specifically installed to keep water away from the sides of the house. The clay soil that supports most of the houses in this area is expansive--that means it swells up when wet. It also tends to compact around foundations from being loosely backfilled during the building process and will hold water against the foundation. These two conditions cause a lot of damage to homes in this area. The roof of a house will shed the entire amount of rain that falls on it, every time it rains. It's critical to get that excess water away from the foundation. Excess water around a house not only causes leaking basements, but can soften the soil under the foundation and lead to settling and structural issues. It's much better to simply keep the water away, and maintaining a good functional gutter system is the first step.

- Did You Know.... In many sandy areas of the country that have good drainage through the soil gutters are usually not installed on most homes. They're not needed there. (That's sure not the case here!)



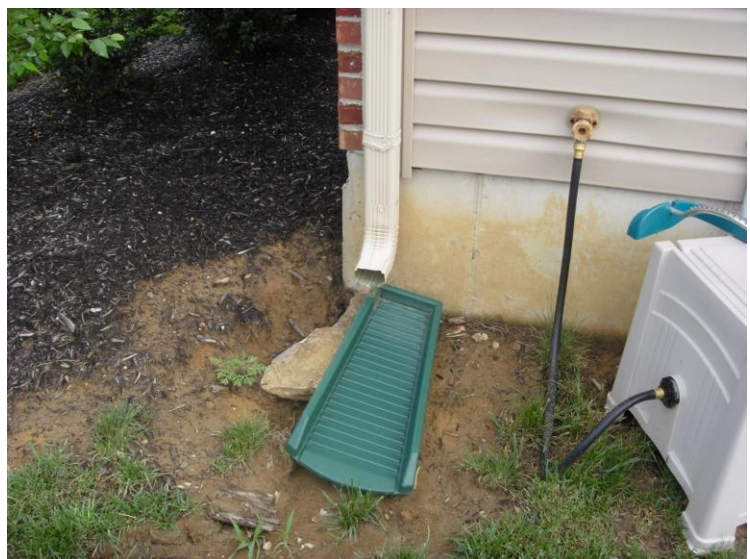
Gutter trees are nature's way of showing you just how much stuff is clogging your gutters.

Missing gutter guards often cause leaves to "dam up" in the gutters



Many new houses have water damage the first year from downspouts not venting away from the house

Water is pooling against this house





The water mark on the wall below the downspout shows where the water is really going

No gutter at all!

