



Double Eagle Fence Details Soil Effects on Fence Post Stability

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Double Eagle Fence has published guidance on how seasonal soil movement affects fence post stability, citing federal drought and climate data for North Texas. The guidance is directed at residential and commercial property owners across the Dallas-Fort Worth area heading into the late-summer period.

The National Weather Service Fort Worth office reports that the Climate Prediction Center seasonal outlook continues to favor above-normal temperatures with little indication of beneficial summer rainfall. As of late July 2026, the U.S. Drought Monitor placed approximately 23 percent of Texas under active drought conditions, with an additional 14 percent classified as abnormally dry. The same forecast office notes that El Nino conditions are present and expected to strengthen through the winter of 2026 and 2027, which points toward a wetter cool season following the current dry stretch.

That sequence is the reason the guidance was issued now. A dry late summer followed by a wetter winter produces the widest annual swing in soil moisture, and it is the swing rather than the dryness alone that

moves structures set into the ground.

The soil beneath the region responds sharply to those swings. The Mansfield area sits within the Blackland Prairie, where the U.S. Department of Agriculture maps Houston Black clay, a Vertisol with severe shrink-swell potential. Documentation from the National Cooperative Soil Survey describes soil that cracks open as it dries, then absorbs water rapidly through those same cracks once rain returns.

A fence post occupies the shallow layer where that movement is most pronounced. Unlike a slab, which distributes load across a wide footprint, a post is a narrow vertical element set directly into the active zone. Movement therefore tends to become visible along a fence line earlier than elsewhere on a property, which makes fencing an early indicator of what the ground is doing.

"A post is doing two jobs at once, holding the fence up and holding the line straight," said Lance Dunaway, Owner of Double Eagle Fence. "When clay shrinks away from a footing during a dry stretch and then swells again after rain, the post has to absorb that cycle. Footing depth and the amount of concrete around the post determine how much of it the fence actually feels."

The observable signs vary from property to property. Gates that no longer latch cleanly, panels that have moved out of plumb, and gaps opening beneath a bottom rail are the changes property owners tend to notice first. Those symptoms have several possible causes, including hardware wear, fastener failure and impact damage, and soil movement is one candidate among them rather than the automatic explanation.

Gates draw attention sooner than the rest of a fence because tolerances are tighter. A latch has a narrow margin before it stops engaging, and the posts on either side of an opening carry more load than the line posts between them. A gate that has begun to drag is often the first sign that something at ground level has changed.

Dunaway noted that the timing of an assessment matters as much as the assessment itself. "Late summer is when the ground is at its driest, so it is when movement shows up most clearly," he said. "A fence that looks square in spring can read differently in August, and that difference is information worth acting on."

Conditions on an individual property influence how much movement occurs. Grading and drainage patterns determine where water collects and where it sheds. Irrigation coverage affects how evenly moisture is distributed along a fence line, and mature trees draw moisture from the surrounding soil, leaving one section of a run drier than another. Two fences built to identical specifications on adjacent lots can behave differently for those reasons alone.

Soil conditions also factor into how new fencing is planned. Post depth, footing dimensions and post material

are governed by fence height under municipal construction standards, and the layout of a fence line relative to slope, drainage and existing structures is settled before any post is set.

The guidance applies across fencing types, though not uniformly. Wood privacy fencing presents a solid surface that catches wind and transfers that load to the posts, while chain link allows air to pass through the mesh and places less lateral demand on the same footing. Ornamental and wrought iron carry more weight per panel than either. Pool enclosures depend on the gate and the fence remaining aligned, which makes early identification of movement worthwhile.

Double Eagle Fence is a fence contractor serving Mansfield, Texas and the surrounding Dallas-Fort Worth area. The company installs wood, chain link, ornamental iron, wrought iron and brick fencing, along with privacy, security, pool, farm, pipe and tennis court fencing, and provides custom gates, gate operators, access controls, core drilling and arbors for residential and commercial properties.

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Double Eagle Fence

Double Eagle Fence is a locally owned fence contractor in Mansfield, TX, serving residential and commercial property owners with quality fence installation and custom gate work.

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