# Carolina Fence Company Publishes Wet Season Fence Guidance

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CHARLESTON, SC - September 08, 2026 -
Carolina Fence Company has published seasonal fence maintenance guidance for property owners in Charleston and Dorchester counties, issued in response to the NOAA Climate Prediction Center outlook released August 6 that favors above-normal winter precipitation across the southern tier of the United States, including portions of the Southeast.

The guidance addresses what property owners can assess before sustained wet conditions arrive. It covers surface finishes on wood fencing, protective coatings on metal components, gate hardware, and post condition at the soil line. It is available through the company's website.

"A wet winter does not damage a fence the way a hurricane does," said Alex Buckman, Owner of Carolina Fence Company. "It works slowly, and most of what it does happens where nobody is looking. That is why the timing of this outlook matters more than the numbers in it."

The precipitation projection stems from El Niño conditions in the equatorial Pacific. The Climate Prediction Center's ENSO diagnostic discussion issued in July placed the likelihood of El Niño persisting into early 2027 at 97 percent, with an 81 percent chance of the event reaching the very strong category.

The same pattern has suppressed Atlantic tropical activity. NOAA's August 6 update raised the probability of a below-normal hurricane season to 75 percent, with a 5 percent chance of above-normal activity. Vertical wind shear associated with El Niño limits tropical development, while the broader circulation tends to direct winter storm tracks across the southern United States.

For the Lowcountry, that combination shifts the seasonal risk profile rather than reducing it. Episodic wind exposure is replaced by prolonged ground moisture, which acts on a fence through different mechanisms and over a longer period.

Moisture governs decay in wood. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Products Laboratory, publisher of the Wood Handbook, identifies moisture content as the controlling factor in fungal activity, which requires sustained moisture above a threshold level in order to progress.

Surface finishes slow water uptake into the wood. Where stain or sealant has worn thin, cracked or lifted, water enters exposed grain directly rather than running off. Horizontal surfaces and cut ends absorb more readily than vertical faces, which is where finish wear typically appears first.

Below grade, conditions vary from one property to the next. The Natural Resources Conservation Service reports depth to the seasonal high water table and drainage class by mapped soil unit through its Web Soil Survey, and both vary considerably across Charleston and Dorchester counties.

Where the water table sits shallow, the buried portion of a post spends more of the year in saturated ground. Soil texture and installation depth also influence how a post carries load, and the NRCS data indicates those conditions differ measurably across parcels within the same area.

The service publishes soil corrosivity ratings for uncoated steel as well, derived from drainage class, texture, acidity and electrical conductivity. Protective coatings are what separate metal fence components from the surrounding soil, and a defect in a coating becomes an entry point once persistent moisture arrives. Corrosion beginning at a chip spreads beneath the surrounding finish, exposing additional surface area over time.

Gate hardware sits in a separate category. Hinges, latches and fasteners are small components carrying repeated mechanical load, and corrosion at those points affects function before it becomes visible.

"The work that pays off is the work done before the ground gets wet," Buckman said. "Once a season like this is underway, the options narrow considerably."

The guidance directs property owners to examine finishes for wear, inspect posts at the soil line, check gate hardware, and note any section that has begun to lean or that moves independently of the panels it supports.

Carolina Fence Company provides staining, painting and sealing for existing fencing and evaluates site and soil conditions during its initial design and estimate on new installations.

Carolina Fence Company is a family-owned fence contractor with 21 years in business, serving Charleston and Dorchester counties. A member of the American Fence Association, the company installs residential and commercial fencing in wood, vinyl, composite, aluminum, ornamental iron, chain link and split rail, along with

gates, fence maintenance, and tear-out and disposal. The company provides free estimates.

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