

Denver Fence Guys Details Post-Storm Fence Inspection Methods

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Denver Fence Guys has published guidance on inspecting fencing after severe weather, released as Colorado's hail and severe wind season continues through late summer. The company reports that the damage most often missed in the weeks after a storm is structural rather than visible, and that the two frequently occur independently of each other.

Colorado sits within one of the more hail-prone regions of the country. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration maintains records of severe hail events through its Storm Events Database, and the National Weather Service Boulder office documents a severe weather season along the Front Range that extends from spring into early autumn. Wind events accompanying those storms act on fencing differently than hail does, and a single storm frequently produces both kinds of damage on the same property.

The distinction between surface damage and structural damage organizes most of the guidance. Cracked or splintered pickets and damaged rails are surface conditions. They are visible, and they can be replaced without disturbing the rest of a fence run. A post that has shifted in its footing is structural, and the fence above it will frequently appear entirely sound while the section continues to move.

Saturation is what connects storms to post movement. Heavy rainfall softens the soil around a footing, and wind loading against a fence during the same storm applies lateral force at the moment the ground is least able to resist it. The result often does not present immediately. A post disturbed during a July storm may not visibly lean until weeks later, by which point the connection to the weather event is easy to miss.

"The fence that looks the worst after a storm is not always the one that needs the most work," said Barrett Pribyl, Owner of Denver Fence Guys. "Broken boards are obvious and straightforward. A post that moved two degrees is neither."

The company suggests walking the full run rather than assessing a fence from a distance. Applying firm lateral pressure near the top of a post indicates whether the footing is holding. Gaps that have opened unevenly between panels can indicate movement at a specific point rather than general settling across the run. Gates tend to reveal frame problems first, since a gate that suddenly drags or fails to latch usually means something beneath it has shifted.

Solid privacy fencing generally takes more wind load than open picket or ornamental styles, because a continuous panel presents an unbroken surface to moving air rather than allowing it through. Fence height and the exposure of a particular property both contribute, and a run along an open lot line behaves differently than one sheltered by structures or mature vegetation.

Material matters to what a storm leaves behind. Hail impact on wood can remove stain or sealant from the surface, and unprotected wood takes on moisture more readily than treated wood. Vinyl and composite can sustain hairline cracking that is difficult to see immediately and that behaves differently through subsequent freeze and thaw cycles. Metal components including hinges, latches and brackets warrant attention because impact damage to hardware is easy to overlook when panels are the visible concern.

Documentation is worth attending to at the same time. Photographs taken shortly after a storm, along with written notes describing where damage was observed, create a contemporaneous record. Property owners carrying homeowner's insurance should confirm requirements and coverage directly with their insurer or agent, since documentation standards and policy terms vary.

"A photograph taken the week of the storm is worth more than a description given three months later," Pribyl said.

Establishing the cause also shapes the response. Damage confined to panels and rails can be addressed at the component level. Movement originating at the footing generally cannot, because a repair that restores the appearance of a fence without addressing what moved beneath it tends to be temporary. That distinction is what an on-site evaluation is intended to settle, and it frequently determines whether a section can be retained or requires rebuilding.

Timing carries practical weight as well. Damage identified in late summer can be addressed while conditions remain workable, whereas the same damage found after the first hard freeze presents a different set of constraints. Ground conditions affect footing work in particular, and the window for that work narrows as the season advances.

The guidance forms part of a broader effort by the company to address regional conditions affecting fence performance, including expansive clay soils, wind exposure and ultraviolet intensity at elevation. Storm

damage frequently interacts with those conditions rather than occurring in isolation, and a post already sitting in soil that moves seasonally has less margin when a storm arrives.

Denver Fence Guys is a fence contractor founded in 2007, serving residential and commercial properties across the Denver metropolitan area with fence installation, repair and maintenance. The company works with wood, vinyl, composite, ornamental iron, chain link and precast concrete fencing for residential, commercial and homeowner association properties, and provides gate installation and access control systems. Denver Fence Guys is a member of the American Fence Association and backs its installation work with a 10-year workmanship warranty. Each project is assigned a dedicated project manager who oversees planning, scheduling, installation and a final walkthrough.

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