How to Prevent Pool Deck Damage Due to Expansive Soils

Some of the soils in the north Texas region are very expansive, which means they expand when they get wet. Conversely, they contract when they get dry. This back and forth of expansion and contraction can be very difficult on structures such as house foundations, driveways, sidewalks, patios, and of course—swimming pool decks.

Concerning Swimming Pools

Although swimming pool builders use cushion sand and steel rebar in the construction of pool decks, they still require the pool owner's attention to help prevent raising, settling, and cracking. In addition, the type of movement that sometimes occurs can also damage the expansion joint (deck-o-seal joint) between the deck and the pool, which needs to be checked periodically.

Although it is next to impossible to completely avoid some movement of a pool or pool deck, consistent soil moisture content is the key. Avoiding extremely wet or extremely dry soil conditions can help prevent movement.

How to avoid having soil that is too wet

- Do not allow drainage to fall towards the pool deck.

- Try not to place sprinkler heads up against the pool deck; they can erode the cushion sand under the deck, causing the deck to move.

How to avoid having soil that is too dry

- During extremely dry times, be sure that the yard is watered enough to avoid the separation between the soil and the pool deck. This separation can cause movement.

Remember that consistency is the key – try to avoid too wet or too dry.

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