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Seasonal Gapping



It's important to be aware that wood floors are susceptible to seasonal "cracking" or "gapping". Seasonal gapping is common during the winter months. Wood flooring is a natural product and has some water in it at all times. The moisture content within the wood changes as the moisture in the surrounding environment changes. When the moisture in the air fluctuates wood planks can expand or shrink depending on the relative humidity in the air.

During the winter months the relative humidity in our homes drop. We keep windows and doors closed, shutting out the cold temperatures. We turn on our heating systems and this will cause a reduction in moisture content within the air and wood floors. The drop in moisture can be somewhat minimized by having a humidifier attached to the heating system in your home. Wood stoves in particular will substantially reduce the moisture content, and areas near furnaces, heating ducts, and base board heaters will be more dry as well. Winter storms and cold temperatures are also causes for reduction in moisture levels.

As temperatures and changes in humidity come with warmer weather, floors should remedy themselves of cracks and gaps. Wood absorbs the moisture from the air and expands, closing gaps caused by shrinking.

Note: It is not recommended to fill wood throughout the winter. If the wood is filled during the winter it will expand with temperature and moisture changes and will force out the excess fill or boards can warp.

Keep in mind that seasonal gapping and cracking is not a defect or an installation related problem.

If gaps or cracks do not close up contact us and we're happy to check the moisture levels in your home and assess the issues.