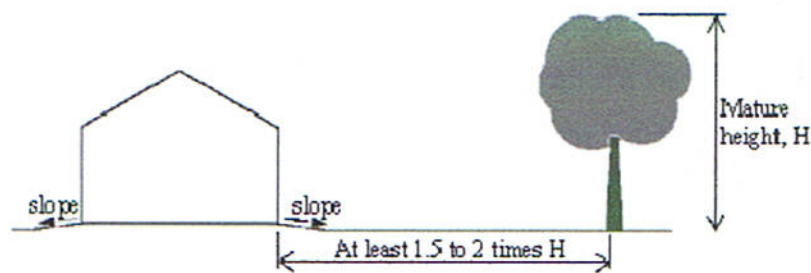


Reactive soils change volume with changes in moisture content, and any factor that makes the change in moisture content more extreme will increase the movement. Some examples of these factors are blocked or broken drains, leaking taps, ground sloping towards the house, trees (particularly native species) too close to the house, and septic tanks too close to the house. The reality is that subsidence damage can occur in a well-maintained house because of poor design and/or construction (that is, through the actions of the designer or builder), or in a well designed and built house due to poor site development or maintenance (that is, through the action or inaction of the owner). However, damage may also occur due to circumstances beyond the control of any party.



Recommended planting distance for reactive sites

SUBSIDENCE DAMAGE

The type, location and pattern of damage may differ from house to house depending on the style of house, materials used in construction and cause of subsidence. Typical damage includes stepped or diagonal cracking in walls, doors and windows that don't operate, damage to cornices and ceilings, and gaps beneath internal walls. Moderate cracking in concrete slabs and driveways occurs naturally as a result of concrete shrinkage and may not necessarily indicate subsidence. If a house is subsiding there will generally be other evidence of movement visible within the house itself (e.g. significant cracking in brickwork and/or plaster walls). For further information about cracking in concrete slabs and driveways contact the Cement and Concrete Association on ph. 07 3831 3288.

BSA'S SUBSIDENCE/SETTLEMENT POLICY

The Subsidence/Settlement Policy is the gazetted policy of the **Queensland Building Services Board** that defines the circumstances under which BSA will direct a contractor to rectify subsidence damage to a house.

BSA has authority under the QBSA Act to direct contractors to rectify defective or incomplete work for which they are responsible. However, the causes of subsidence are complex and damage may occur even when the contractor has completed construction in a good and workmanlike manner. Sometimes the owner or another party may have caused or contributed to the damage.