



Foundation Questions When Buying a Home in Polk County

polktx.com/real-estate/rural/foundations/



GENERAL INFORMATION, NOT ADVICE

General information, not legal, engineering, tax or real estate advice. PolkTX is not a real estate brokerage and its publisher is not a licensed agent. Confirm requirements with the office that handles them.

What it is and why it matters when buying

Homes in Polk County sit on several kinds of foundations. Many older and lake-area houses are pier-and-beam, raised on piers with a crawlspace below. Others sit on a concrete slab. Manufactured homes rest on piers or blocks and pads.

A buyer mainly needs the history. Has the foundation been leveled or repaired, who did it, and does a warranty pass to the next owner? A home inspector licensed by TREC looks at the whole house. A licensed professional engineer can write a report on the structure itself.

Additions raise a separate question. Outside city limits, Polk County requires a development permit before anyone builds or adds onto a structure. Inside city limits, the city handles it.

What to check before you buy

- Ask for records of past leveling or foundation repair, and whether any warranty transfers to a new owner.
- Note doors that stick, cracks in brick or drywall and floors that slope. Ask the seller about each one.
- On a pier-and-beam home, confirm there is a way into the crawlspace.
- On a manufactured home, ask what supports it and whether the skirting can be opened.
- Ask whether additions, porches and enclosed rooms were permitted: by City Hall inside city limits, by the county outside.
- If something concerns you, the license lookups below list home inspectors and engineers.

Questions to ask the seller or listing agent

- Has the foundation ever been leveled or repaired? When, and by whom?
- Is there a warranty on that work, and can it be transferred to me?
- Has an engineer ever written a report on the foundation?
- Were additions or enclosed porches permitted?
- Does water collect under or around the house after rain?

Who handles it in Polk County

Polk County Permit Department

Septic (OSSF) permits, development permits, 911 addresses and floodplain questions outside city limits. For floodplain, ask for the Floodplain Administrator.

PHONE (936) 327-6820 ext. 1
EMAIL permits@co.polk.tx.us
ADDRESS 602 E. Church St., Suite 141,
Livingston, TX 77351
HOURS Monday–Friday, 8 a.m.–4 p.m.
WEB polktx.gov (polktx.gov/325/Permits)

Source: Polk County Permits page

Inside city limits

Inside Livingston, Corrigan, Onalaska or Goodrich, the city handles building and development permits instead of the county.

LIVINGSTON CITY HALL (936) 327-4311

CORRIGAN CITY HALL (936) 398-4126

ONALASKA CITY HALL (936) 646-5000

GOODRICH CITY HALL (936) 365-2228

Source: each city's website and the Polk County Permits page

Look it up yourself

Official sources only.

Polk County Permits page (polktx.gov/325/Permits)
Development, septic and 911 permits, fees and the floodplain contact.

How to find a licensed professional

PolkTX does not recommend or list contractors. To check that someone holds a current Texas license, use the state's own search:

TREC license holder search (trec.texas.gov/license-search)
Home inspectors. Search under Inspectors.

Texas Board of Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors: engineer search (pels.texas.gov/roster/pesearch.html)
Professional engineers. Search by name or license number.

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Sources for this page:

- Polk County Permit Department (Polk County Permits page) (polktx.gov/325/Permits)
- TREC license holder search (trec.texas.gov/license-search)
- Texas Board of Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors: engineer search (pels.texas.gov/roster/pesearch.html)

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