

# TECHNICAL BULLETIN

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## Understanding Normal Seasonal Gapping in Engineered Hardwood Flooring

Engineered hardwood flooring is a natural product that reacts to environmental changes, particularly humidity. One common issue caused by moisture imbalance is **normal seasonal gapping**. This bulletin explains what normal seasonal gapping is, what causes it, and how it can be addressed, based on guidance from the **NWFA (National Wood Association)** and our own installation standards.

### WHAT IS SEASONAL GAPPING?

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#### Definition NWFA:

Gaps that appear between individual boards, opening and closing with seasonal humidity changes. Wider boards can experience wider gaps. Gap size is directly related and proportional to the board width.



### CAUSES OF NORMAL SEASONAL GAPS

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#### Seasonal fluctuations:

Most normal gaps are caused by seasonal fluctuations in relative humidity. The floor expands with high humidity and contracts with periods of low humidity. This type of expansion and contraction is considered to be normal and expected with wood floors when exposed to seasonal variations.

#### Dry seasons:

When wood flooring is installed during dry seasons where relative humidity is not maintained, it is normal to leave internal expansion spaces/gaps (washer rows) within the floor to accommodate for seasonal humidity changes.

## RECOMMENDED SOLUTIONS

### Environmental Control:

- Minimize or eliminate seasonal gaps by using HVAC systems to maintain temperature and relative humidity within the manufacturer's requirements.
- If not specified, maintain indoor conditions between 60°–80°F (15.6°–26.7°C) and relative humidity between 30%–50%.
- Use humidifiers during dry seasons and dehumidifiers during humid periods to stabilize conditions.



### If gaps occur:

Seasonal gaps are normal and typically self-correct when humidity returns to recommended levels. No repair is necessary unless permanent damage, such as splitting or delamination, is observed.

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## IN SUMMARY

Normal seasonal gapping is a natural response of wood flooring to environmental changes and does not represent a defect or quality issue. Maintaining proper humidity and temperature is essential for minimizing these effects.

For further assistance or questions, don't hesitate to contact our technical support team.

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