

Carolina Homeowner's Crawl Space Action Plan

Free Checklist — Diagnose, Assess, Fix, and Hire the Right Contractor

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STEP 1 — WARNING SIGNS

■ Musty smell inside home

Worst in summer — crawl space source

■ Cold or uneven floors in winter

Floor temp varies room to room

■ Sticking doors and windows

Wood expanding from moisture

■ Higher energy bills than expected

HVAC overworking against humidity

■ Allergy or asthma worsening

Mold spores entering via stack effect

■ Visible condensation on ducts/pipes

RH above 60% confirmed

■ Soft or spongy floors

Stage 3 — structural damage likely

■ Visible mold at access opening

Stage 2 minimum — act now

WHAT STAGE ARE YOU AT?

■ Stage 1 — High humidity only

RH above 60% — \$3,000–\$6,000 fix

■ Stage 2 — Surface mold visible

Joists affected — \$5,000–\$10,000

■ Stage 3 — Wood soft/spongy

Structural damage — \$8,000–\$18,000

■ Stage 4 — Floor sagging/failed

Emergency — \$15,000–\$40,000+

STEP 2 — BEFORE ANY QUOTE

■ Check NC licence at nclbhc.org

Search by company name — takes 2 mins

■ Check SC licence at contractors.sc.gov

Required for all SC projects over \$5,000

■ Check flood zone at floodsmart.gov

Coastal NC/SC only — do this first

■ Get minimum 3 quotes

Compare scope not just price

■ Ask: will you pull the permit?

NC requires permit statewide — do not waive

■ Ask for moisture meter readings

Above 19% = structural work needed first

■ Ask for vapour barrier mil thickness

20-mil minimum for NC/SC conditions

■ Ask for wall insulation R-value

R-10 minimum in most NC/SC zones

■ Ask for mechanical drying method

Dehumidifier 15 pt/day min or conditioned air

QUESTIONS TO ASK EVERY CONTRACTOR

■ Will you pull the building permit?

■ What mil vapour barrier are you using?

■ What R-value wall insulation?

■ What mechanical drying system?

■ Do you offer a written warranty?

■ Can I see 3 local references?

STEP 3 — CORRECT FIX SEQUENCE

■ 1. Structural assessment first

Moisture meter readings on all joists

■ 2. Repair structural damage

Before ANY encapsulation work

■ 3. Fix active water entry/drainage

French drain + sump if needed

■ 4. Mold remediation if present

Before sealing — not after

■ 5. Install vapour barrier

20-mil, lapped 12 inches, taped

■ 6. Seal all foundation vents

Permanently — not seasonally

■ 7. Insulate walls R-10 minimum

Rigid foam or spray foam

■ 8. Install dehumidifier

15 pt/day minimum capacity

■ 9. Pull permit and pass inspection

NC required — SC check locally

■ 10. Inspect Feb + Sept annually

Service dehumidifier yearly

2026 PRICING BY CITY

■ Greenville SC: \$4,200–\$5,500

Best value in the Carolinas

■ Charlotte/Greensboro NC: \$4,500–\$8K

Deep contractor pool

■ Raleigh/Durham NC: \$5,000–\$12K

Triangle premium market

■ Wilmington NC: \$5,500–\$9,500

Coastal — specialist required

■ Asheville/Cary NC: \$5,500–\$13.5K

Highest costs in NC

■ Charleston SC: \$6,000–\$22K

Most complex SC market

■ PERMIT: NC requires a permit for ALL vented-to-closed conversions. Never waive it for a discount.

■ TERMITE GAP: NC code requires 3-inch minimum gap at top of liner — liner must NOT reach sill plate.

■ COASTAL: Check [floodsmart.gov](https://www.floodsmart.gov) before sealing vents on any coastal NC or SC property — flood zone rules apply.

This checklist is provided free by CarolinaHomeProblemReport.com — research-backed crawl space guides for NC and SC homeowners. Full guides, city pricing, and contractor verification: carolinahomeproblemreport.com/crawl-space/ | We are not licensed contractors. Always verify contractor licences before hiring: NC — nclbgc.org | SC — contractors.sc.gov