



# CASE STUDY | EXTERIOR MOISTURE & STRUCTURE

WHEN A COSMETIC CONCERN  
REVEALS A STRUCTURAL PROBLEM

## THE CLIENT

A new Lowcountry resident purchased a home that was approximately 12 years old. During a routine HMOTL audit, what appeared to be a cosmetic concern was noticed along the quarter-round trim on an exterior wall.

## WHAT WE FOUND

Mildew was visible along the trim, and the wood flooring beneath it felt soft. While this could have been dismissed as minor moisture or condensation, the condition of the surrounding materials suggested a deeper problem.

## MISCONCEPTION

*"It is only mildew. Clean it, repaint it, and move on."*

## THE INVESTIGATION

With more than 20 years of experience recognizing moisture-related warning signs, HMOTL brought in a trusted engineer. The Investigation revealed a significant structural issue: the exterior veranda had been pitched toward the house, not away from it.

Repeated water collection at the home allowed moisture to penetrate the structure over time. As the veranda was dismantled, additional deficiencies were uncovered, including pockets of air beneath the concrete and extensive wood rot beneath the sliding-door framing.

## THE RESOLUTION

HMOTL coordinated the reconstruction process, helping move the project from hidden damage to proper structural repair, improved drainage, and a well-documented outdoor upgrade.

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

### DON'T DISMISS COSMETIC CLUES

Mildew, staining, and soft materials can be early warnings of hidden deterioration. Sometimes a small visible symptom is not the problem - it is the warning sign of the problem.

### EXPERIENCE CHANGES

#### THE OUTCOME

Knowing when to investigate further can be the difference between a manageable repair and major long-term damage.

### WATER MUST MOVE AWAY FROM THE HOME

An incorrectly angled drainage pitch can slowly compromise framing, finishes, and structural components.

### OVERSIGHT REDUCES COSTLY DELAYS

HMOTL helps homeowners move quickly from discovery to the right professionals and the right materials