

# Adjusting a Jack Post (TelePost)

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Jill writes: HI, my mom lives in a house built in 57'. She has a big crack in the wall above the doorway. How do you adjust the telepost to accommodate the settling of the property. Which way do you turn the post to adjust it, how much etc,

-----Response

I assume that the cracks are right above the central beam where the telepost or jack post is located. On the top of the post you will see a threaded shaft that goes up to a flat plate nailed to the beam. This threaded rod runs through a "nut" which connects it to the top of the telepost.

Take a large wrench and turn that nut. It is really complicated to tell you which way to turn -- but I will try: If you were to be directly under that nut, you should turn it counter clockwise (some people will say "left"). If you are not sure, measure between the nut and the plate above. To raise the telepost you will want to be sure that this distance gets bigger as you turn the nut.

Never raise it more than about 1/4 inch per month, or even slower if you have a very old house with plumbing in the centre. It took a long time to settle, you don't to raise it too fast or you could cause problems like cracked plaster and even pulling plumbing drains apart.

## MONITORING BEAM MOVEMENT

Monitoring movement over time helps to define solutions to structural problems. In an open basement it is usually possible to build your own beam movement indicator. If the beam is open and unobstructed from one end to the other, screw an eye bolt close to the beam near the foundation on either end. If it is a metal beam, screw the eye bolt into the wood on the top of the concrete wall. Now draw a string tight from one eye-bolt to the other, close to but not touching the beam. Now put a mark in the centre of the beam in line with the string. Check that mark every month for a year. If it never moves, any problems you are having above are not being caused by beam movement. However if the mark moves with respect to the string, then a telepost is either raising the centre of the beam, or lowering it.

A retired building inspector in Winnipeg, where they have Gumbo Clay that moves things up and back down significantly every year, taught me a great variation on this. He used a thin steel cable rather than a string. Then he put two nails in the beam about a quarter of an inch above and below the cable in the centre of the beam. Then he put low voltage red and green lights in his kitchen connected to that centre wire and each of the two nails. Whenever the red one lit up, he would go down and screw DOWN the telepost a quarter of an inch. If the green light lit up he would screw UP that telepost. It is easy to adjust a telepost when it doesn't have to move much and that monthly adjustment kept the beam straight with no cracks in the house.

### Keywords:

Measuring, Structure, Post, Telepost, Jack Post, Beam, Settling, House, Cracks, Basement, Maintenance