Analytics Guide for Iowa Gutter Guards

The Bottom Line: Google Analytics does NOT help your Google rankings. It's just a way to see what's happening on your website.

Do You Even Need Analytics?

If You Just Care About "Does the Phone Ring?"

You might not need any website analytics. Here's what actually matters:

1. **Phone calls** → You already know when it rings
2. **Form submissions** → You get an email when someone submits
3. **Google ranking** → Check by searching "gutter guards [your city]"

Analytics is extra insight, not a requirement.

What Google Analytics CAN Tell You

Insight	Example	Useful?
Which cities bring visitors	"50 people from Ankeny visited this month"	Maybe
Which pages people look at	"The Pella page gets more traffic than Des Moines"	Useful
How people found you	"40% from Google, 30% direct, 20% Facebook"	Useful
Phone link clicks	"15 people clicked to call this week"	Useful
Where people leave	"Most people leave after FAQ section"	Maybe

What Google Analytics CANNOT Tell You

- **Did they actually call?** (click ≠ call)
- **Did they book a job?** (you know this from your calendar)
- **Which specific ad made them call?** (need CallRail for this)

Google Analytics vs. Call Tracking

	Google Analytics	Call Tracking (CallRail)
Cost	Free	~$45/month
Tracks	Website behavior	Actual phone calls
Shows	"Someone clicked phone number"	"John called from Google Ad, talked 3 min"
Good for	General website insights	Knowing which marketing generates calls
Setup	Add code to website	Swap phone numbers

My Recommendation

If You're NOT Running Paid Ads

Skip analytics for now. Just focus on:
- Making sure your phone works
- Responding to form submissions quickly
- Checking Google rankings monthly

If You ARE Running Paid Ads (Google Ads, Facebook, etc.)

Get CallRail (~$45/month). It tells you exactly which ads make the phone ring. This is way more valuable than GA4 for a service business.

If You Want Free Basic Tracking

Enable GA4 (instructions in README.md). You'll see:
- How many people visit
- Which pages they look at
- How many click your phone number

Quick Setup (If You Want GA4)

1. Go to analytics.google.com (https://analytics.google.com)
2. Create account → Create property → Web
3. Get your Measurement ID (looks like `G-ABC123XYZ`)
4. In your website files, uncomment the GA4 code and replace `G-XXXXXXXXXX` with your ID

Summary

Question	Answer
Does GA4 help SEO?	**No**
Is GA4 required?	**No**
Will it make phone ring more?	**No**
Is it useful?	**Maybe** – depends on if you'll actually look at reports
What DOES make phones ring?	Good SEO, good reviews, professional website (which you have)

Questions? The tracking code is ready to enable whenever you want. See README.md for instructions.