

Practical Measures to Avoid Basement Flooding

Basement flooding problems are best diagnosed by working your way down from the eaves troughs and downspouts, to the lot and foundation drainage, and then to the plumbing system — both inside your home and beyond its connection to the municipal sewer system.

Eaves troughs and Downspouts

Water pours off your eaves troughs into downspouts. If the downspouts are dumping the water right beside your foundation, it drains directly to the weeping tile and can easily overload your home's drainage. Make sure downspouts extend at least 4-6 feet from your basement wall. Also, be sure the water does not drain toward your neighbor's basement walls. It should drain away from your house toward the street, rear yard, or back lane.

If your downspouts are connected to your home's sewer system, or weeping tile, disconnect them.

Clean debris from eaves troughs regularly. If they overflow even when clean, replace them with larger size eaves troughs and downspouts.

Lot Grading (slope the ground away from your house or from the foundation)

If the land around your home slopes in toward the foundation, rainwater heads right for the weeping tile around the basement and can overload your foundation drainage system. The land around many homes settles over time, and then slopes in toward the foundation. If your lot slopes inward, you'll want to fill in and grade the lot so that, for at least 4-6 feet out from around the foundation, the land slopes away from your house.

Build up the ground around your house so that water drains away from your basement walls. Also, examine sidewalks, patios, decks and driveways. These can settle over time and cause water to drain back towards your basement walls.

Extend downspouts so that water flows away from your house and does not collect next to the basement walls and windows.

Proper drainage helps to:

- Reduce the amount of water flowing to your home's sewer system and to the main sewer system, and lessen the risk of sewer backup
- Reduce water seepage into your home through basement windows and cracks in your basement walls.
- Keep the moisture content of the soil around and under your house stable to reduce the chances of cracking and shifting. If water collects next to your basement, it can make its way to the footings that support the basement walls. The increased moisture may cause the footings to heave or settle
- Extend the life of your sump pump by reducing the amount of work it has to do.

Be sure that any drainage improvements you make do not cause water to flow onto your neighbor's property. Sometimes animals Dig Holes near the house...these need to be filled in and have grade sloping AWAY from the house.