

Summer 2007

Preventing Basement and Crawlspace Moisture Penetration.

“Two holes are dug, one you call a well, and the other is called a basement. One is full of water and the other is not, how does it know?”

Keeping a dry basement starts with a few simple steps that are proven to prevent moisture penetration from entering through the foundation of the home. If your basement or crawlspace has unfinished walls, look for signs of moisture penetration – visual dampness, evidence of effervescent (white powder), or water stains. Future probability of moisture penetration can never be predicted, but the following will help minimize that possibility.

Moisture in a basement will promote the growth of mold. Insects will enjoy the basic necessities of existence. Wood will rot and decay. Defend moisture penetration by following the recommendations listed below.

Grading:

The soil against the foundation must slope away from the house minimally four feet. Use only regular soil, which will provide a solid imperious surface. Make sure vegetation, gardens and retaining walls do not stop the flow of moisture away from the house. Soil should never cover up any type of wall surfaces, such as brick, siding (wood, aluminium, vinyl), stucco etc. Only damp proofed concrete surfaces are permitted to be in contact with soil.

Walkways: A common problem occurs when soil settles around the foundation, causing walkways to slope towards the house. Walkways must slope away from the house to avoid water accumulation.

Eavestroughs: Make sure they are sloping the correct way (towards downspouts) and are not holding water and are not blocked. An eavestrough that is overflowing will erode the soil, and water will collect and stress the foundation and exterior walls.

Downspouts: Should be discharging water at least 4-6 away from the house. If your eavestroughs are discharging below grade, consider redirecting the water above grade. This will lessen the stress of extra water that the weeping tiles around the foundation will have to handle.

Window wells: Make sure window wells are extending above grade and install clear plastic covers to shed the water off.

Sump pumps: Regularly check to ensure the sump pump is working properly and the water is being discharged away from the house's foundation. Clean out the silt and any obstructions in the pump well. If necessary have a spare sump pump handy and/or have a backup system installed in case there is an interruption in the hydro service. Never have the sump pump discharge water into a septic system.

If any time if you notice any water penetration, address the problem immediately and don't let it become a major concern.

*Courtesy of
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