

Cracked Pipe

By: Inspector Weeks 613.290.3697

We recently purchased an older home with what looks to be a metal drain pipe that is visible in the basement. There appears to be a crack as well as rust on the pipe. Although it seems dry, should I be concerned? Anne J. Aylmer, Quebec.

Yes, you are right to be concerned and thanks for the pictures. The pipes in the pictures are made of cast iron. Older cast iron pipes tend to be brittle and when put under stress will crack. The crack and the rust have obviously been there for a while and fortunately are on the top side of the pipe. For that reason the actual leakage of water from the pipe is only occasional as most of the time the flow of water is only along the lower half of the pipe. This pipe is more than likely a main sewage drain line. For health and safety reasons, my recommendation would be to replace the pipe right away. You have the option of replacing it with new cast iron pipe or cutting out the damaged area and replacing it with ABS plastic pipe with the correct fittings. With cast iron pipe you will hear less of the flow of the water, but considering it is in a basement ABS pipe would make a fine replacement at a lower cost. Be sure to take a good look at the rest of the exposed pipe for any other cracks or leaks and have them fixed at the same time. This kind of repair is best done by a professional.



Last winter we had a large ice buildup in one area of our roof on the north side. The rest of the roof was relatively ice free considering the winter we had. Our house is a basic two story home with an uncomplicated roof. My question to you is why would this area have ice buildup and not the rest of the roof? Rachel W. Cantley , Quebec.

The simple answer is Heat Loss. As winter approaches yet again our thoughts turn back to insulation and heating. Without doing a visual inspection of the attic myself, I would have to guess that somewhere in your attic, below the area in question, there must be a lack of insulation. There could also be a chase, such as a venting pipe or an exhaust pipe, allowing heat to escape. As the heat rises it can warm up the plywood under the shingles and start a melting cycle. This hot cold cycle will cause the ice damn to form on the roof. So two things need to be done. A) Identify the source of heat loss and correct it and B) ensure good even soffit ventilation especially in that area. This should rectify the problem area.

I welcome your questions please forward them to , Inspector Weeks ,c/o Peter Weeks Home Inspections PWHI@sympatico.ca or by phone at 613.290.3697.

Peter Weeks has been a Chelsea resident for 19 years. As a general contractor since 1988, he has been doing Residential Home Inspections for about four years. He is an Associate Member of OAHI (Ontario Association of Home Inspectors), CAHPI (Canadian Association of Home & Property Inspectors) and a member of the BBB in Good Standing.

Peter Weeks is a fully insured and qualified Home Inspector registered with the Royal LePage Relocation Services Program.

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