

Protecting Basement from Water Infiltration

by Inspector Weeks 613.290.3697

The spring Real Estate market has been very busy. With spring comes rain (and sun) and with the crazy weather predicted for the next few months it is important to be prepared.

Recent Inspections have had a common theme. The importance of protecting your basement from water infiltration. I am constantly stressing the need to do everything possible to keep water from getting into the basement. Although in the most severe cases the only remedy is to excavate and install a proper drainage system, there are things that can be done to reduce the problem.

The first thing would be to make sure the ground around your basement has good drainage and that it is sloped away from the building. You wouldn't believe the number of homes I inspect that have the ground graded towards the house. A nice gradual slope angled down and away from the building is very important. The next thing on the list would be Eavestroughing. The amount of water that comes off an average roof is significant. All this water has to be controlled. The eavestroughs and downspouts have got to be free flowing, meaning clear of winter and spring debris. At ground level the downspout extensions need to be at least 6 to 8 feet long and directed away from the house. Some of those gizmos that are supposed to uncoil and recoil by themselves are just that, Gizmos ! Even the plastic deflectors; as shown in the picture, are mediocre at best. Stick with what works, proper extensions. Get That water away from the house !!! Lastly, check that your window wells are clean. Winter and spring leaves and dirt can plug up the flow and that can force the water up and under the edge of the basement window. Make sure the frame is properly caulked. Window well covers also work well.

Should you; however, feel doomed and know that regardless of what you do you will get water in your basement, be prepared. Now is the time to check the sump pump and make certain it is ready, willing and able. Make sure it is NOT plugged into a GFCI plug. This is a common issue I see on country inspections. A ground fault plug when tripped will not allow your electric sump pump to work. A GFCI plug will trip with the slightest imbalance in current

flow, possibly caused by moisture, and if the sump pump is working away and it tripsno more pump action !!

Be sure your pump is plugged into a normal plug at least 5 or 6 feet off the ground.

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

Peter Weeks has been a Chelsea resident for 18 years. As a general contractor since 1988, he has been doing **Residential Home Inspections** for about three 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 and BNI. **He is a Qualified and Fully Insured Inspector.** You may Visit his Website at www.PWHOMEINSPECTIONS.COM.