



Floodproofing Tips

Heavy rainfall can increase the possibility of flood damage to homes, leading to costly repairs. Therefore, it is important to reduce the amount of water getting close to your home and to take preventative measures in case of a flood. Before floodproofing your property, it is essential to walk around and inspect your home and property to identify where the source of water is originating from. Sources of flooding may include depressional areas and creeks/rivers. Locate your parcel using Lake County Maps Online and turn on the National Flood Hazard Layer to help determine if you are in a regulatory floodplain. Other sources of flood damage may include sewer backups, gutter discharges into the house foundation, and overland flow from overwhelmed storm sewer systems in the road.

Here are some residential floodproofing tips to help keep your home safe:

Gutter/Downspout/Drain Maintenance

Simple, cost-free ways to prevent the buildup of water near your home include cleaning your gutters, making sure they are in good condition, and adjusting them properly. Any downspouts should be positioned away from impervious surfaces like driveways and toward a lawn or other vegetated areas to increase infiltration. (Don't direct the downspout towards your neighbor's property). All downspouts should have extensions to discharge at least 10 feet away from the house foundation. Also, make sure all yard drains or storm drains along your street are clear of any debris that may be inhibiting water to flow into the stormwater sewer system.

Landscape Improvements

Make sure the land around your property is not tilting toward your home. If it is, consider purchasing heavy soil or hiring a landscape firm to form a slope, helping you control the direction of runoff. A permit may be required for this work. You can also plant a rain garden where the runoff flows to help absorb the excess water.

Barrier Systems

There are different types of barriers you can place around your house to help protect against overland flooding. You can purchase temporary barriers like sandbags or water-filled reusable barriers, if you receive notice of a possible flood. Levees can also be constructed on the grounds of your property. Otherwise, a more permanent structure such as a floodwall can be built. Permits may be required for some of these projects, so check with your local municipality.

Inspecting Foundation/Repairing Cracks

Take time to thoroughly inspect the foundation of your home and make repairs where necessary.

What to look for when waterproofing your basement:

1. Wall crack repair/sealing
2. Cove seepage
3. Leaking mortar block joints
4. Sump pump issues/impeller; battery back-up; capacity; discharge location/routing (the longer and smaller the discharge hose, the less water can be pumped through it)
5. Leaking windows
6. Window well filling

Interesting Fact:

Most storms approach from the west so the western exposed side of the house should not be overlooked.

Installations

If you have a floor drain, consider temporarily installing a standpipe in the drain to try and keep water from surcharging onto your floor. If there is heavy rainfall, there is also a possibility that the sewer system will back up. So, if your home is connected to the sewer system, to avoid backflow, you may want to invest in a sewer backup valve. Also, because rain and storms go hand in hand, there is a strong possibility that a power outage will occur when your home is most vulnerable to flooding. It's important that, if you have a sump pump, look into battery backup sump pumps or generators for added protection if the power or sump pump fails.

Infrastructure Improvements

Because every home is different, before you begin undergoing any structural improvements to your home, it's recommended you consult with a professional to assess what methods will work for your property. There are dry floodproofing methods like sealant, drainage systems, or shields. Wet floodproofing, allowing flood waters to flow through enclosed spaces in your home, works better for homes with basements or crawlspaces. Then there are always larger projects such as elevating the home or relocation.

Purchase Flood Insurance

Even if you follow all floodproofing measures, your home may still be susceptible to flooding. Consider purchasing a flood insurance policy to help protect you financially, if you are impacted by a flood. Please note—a flood is defined as overland flow and is not covered under a standard home insurance policy. Most home owner insurance policies do cover water damage due to sewer backups, but check your policy to verify coverage.

