



When Your Basement Floods



Water Pollution Control

Stormwater Management

If It Happens to You

At the first sign of trouble, such as water backing up a basement drain, call: WATER POLLUTION CONTROL AT 740-687-6664.

Check your insurance for flood protection or sewer backup coverage. This coverage usually requires a separate rider to your policy. If you have coverage, notify your agent. If you rent, also notify your landlord or maintenance company.



SAFETY INFORMATION FOR CLEANING UP (from the City of Columbus Sewerage and Drainage)

Electrocution is always a danger in a flooded basement. Wait for the water to recede or shut off the power to the area at the main box.

If the furnace or other electrical systems became wet, have them inspected by a qualified technician. Turning on wet electrical equipment can produce severe shocks, endanger life and damage the equipment.

If you smell gas, do not touch electric fixtures, telephones or switches. Leave immediately leaving doors and windows open to ventilate and call the

Fire Department at 9-1-1 and the Gas Department at 640-687-6670.

Never use gasoline powered pumps, generators or heaters indoors. You risk a build up of carbon monoxide.

Wear boots and gloves and keep children and pets away from the flooded areas. Do not smoke, eat, drink or touch your face in the flooded area. If you receive an open wound, seek medical attention.

Discard any food, medicines, cosmetics and other personal products that came into contact with flood waters. Dishes and reusable containers may be cleaned in a solution of two tablespoons liquid chlorine bleach to one gallon of warm water and then washed in hot soapy water.

Use care when pumping out water to avoid damage to your foundation from hydrostatic pressure.

NEVER MIX BLEACH WITH AMMONIA- THE FUMES PRODUCED TOGETHER ARE TOXIC.

There are two laws of nature that we can't change

Water moves downhill and water seeks its own level. And it is usually one of these two laws that causes water in your basement. The source of this water-groundwater, surface water or sewer backups.



If you have water in your basement take the following steps.

1. Call the Water Pollution Control Department at (740) 687-6664. They will check the sanitary sewers to make sure they are open and flowing. If no problem is found, you may be advised to call a plumbing company to check your house plumbing.
2. Stop using water until the problem is identified. If it is a sewer blockage your water usage will only back up into your basement.
3. Check your downspouts and gutters. They should be free of debris and flowing into the street or yard away from your house.

Groundwater

The water that lies below the surface soaking into the ground and moving with the water table to seek its own level. Groundwater may be a year-round problem or a seasonal problem and may change from low in dry years to high in wet years. Signs of a ground water problem is water coming in through cracks in the wall or floor and a sump pump that runs even in dry weather. The only solution to deal with groundwater is to install foundations drains and often a sump pump. Make sure you have a discharge location for the drain, usually at the street or in a drainage easement.



Surface Water

This water is usually runoff from storms and is a result of water running to the lowest point. Signs of a surface water problem is water coming through cracks or openings, and ponding around the foundation during rain events. The most common causes of surface water problems are clogged gutters, development in the floodplain and poor site grading. The solution for surface water is to grade your yard to slope away from the house toward a drainage swale or the street. Make sure that your gutters are clean and downspouts drain away from the foundation too. Create a swale along your property lines to divert water to an acceptable outlet or if a swale exists, make sure it is not blocked by fences, sheds or landscaping.



Sewer Backup

Sewer backups are the worst of the water in the basement issues. Sewer backups are caused by blocked or overloaded sewer lines either on your property or in the public sewer. This is aggravated in the older parts of town by the fact that the sewers are combined sewers, designed to carry both sanitary sewage and surface water. Signs of a sewer backup is water coming from drains, sinks, or toilets.

If this occurs CALL WATER POLLUTION CONTROL AT 740-687-6664 AND LEAVE A NAME ADDRESS AND TELEPHONE NUMBER.

If the problem is not in the public sewer system, you may be advised to call a plumbing company to check your sewer lateral. You can help prevent sewer backups by following these tips:

1. Make sure your downspouts and foundation drains are not connected to the sanitary sewer system. These should drain separately away from your house to a storm outlet.
2. Prevent sewer blockages. Never pour grease, paint, glue or other thick liquids into your sinks or drains and avoid flushing items not suitable for sanitary sewer disposal, such as paper towels, diapers and wipes, contraceptives, and feminine products.
3. Check for tree root intrusion if you have trees near the sewer line.
4. Check if you are in the floodplain. These areas naturally collect water and will be prone to flooding problems.
5. Install an approved backflow preventor valve on your sewer lateral. This valve will prevent water from backing up into your system.



Basement and Neighborhood Flooding Questionnaire

If you believe your neighborhood has sanitary sewer or storm drainage issues that need addressed, please complete this survey

Problems observed

- Water in Basement
 Street Flooding
 Yard Flooding

What is the frequency?

- Frequent-Any rain event
 Often-Heavy or long rains
 Rare-Only once or twice

How Old is Your Neighborhood?

- Old-Before 1939
 Middle-Between 1940-87
 New-After 1987

Are you in the Flood Hazard Area?

- Yes
 Yes but flood protected
 No

Comments:

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Water Pollution Control

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