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Certified Home Inspections of Northern Indiana LLC

Flash Flood Warnings: What Homeowners can do to Protect their Investment

Basement flooding is something every homeowner dreads. Most water entry can be prevented by following a few simple preventative maintenance tips. Here are some simple guidelines to follow that homeowners can take care of themselves, saving them from havoc later during heavy rains.

Tip #1 GRADING - Grading around a home should be at least level and at most have a positive slope from the foundation into the yard area to help direct water away from the foundation. A negative slope can allow water to stand in areas even when a fair amount of precipitation occurs. Stone can be a great source to apply around the perimeter of the foundation to evenly spread out the distribution of water.

Most Common Reasons for Water Infiltrating a Home's Foundation

- Poor Grading
- Short Downspouts
- Clogged Gutters
- Cracks in Foundation

Tip #2 DOWNSPOUT EXTENSIONS - Extensions on downspouts carry water from the gutters and distributes it away from the home's foundation. These extensions should be at

least 2-5 feet out depending on the grade and available space to distribute water run off. Downspout connections should be fastened and sealed to ward off any leaks. Water is guaranteed to puddle against a home's foundation if downspout extensions are missing and eventually cause water to infiltrate the basement or crawlspace.



Keeping gutters free and clear of debris at all times is key to a home's drainage system working properly.

Tip #3 GUTTERS - Gutters need to be clear of debris at all times, especially at the downspout connection. This will allow the gutters to drain efficiently. Installing screens or guards on top of gutters along with properly securing gutter to home's fascia also keeps water draining from the rooftop into the gutter properly. Gutters that are clogged or not fastened to the home properly will cause water to saturate areas around the foundation.

Tip #4 CRACKS IN FOUNDATION - A thorough inspection of the home's foundation for cracks is essential. There are many

types of cracks. Hairline cracks are most likely not the culprit. It would be rare that water would penetrate through a hairline crack because of its small size, but it can happen. Cracks that do need to be sealed are 1/16th of an inch or larger. If you can put the tip of a pencil in the crack, it should be sealed. Filling cracks with a polyurethane based sealant can help prevent water infiltration. However, this sealant has not been proven to be 100 percent effective for the life of the repair. There are professional companies that use other sealing techniques and guarantee their work. All cracks may not be found because of finished basement areas and that landscaping, terrain, and a home's exterior siding may also limit the view of the foundation making it impossible to find all cracks. Therefore, further investigation by a professional may be necessary.

Tip #5 WINDOWS - If basement windows are present and considered below the outside grade, it is recommended that window wells have plastic dome-type covers to help direct water away and windows should be as water tight as possible.

Homeowners also need to take into consideration the type of soil, water table around the home and any other special circumstances. Homeowners with a perimeter drain tile(s) should regularly test the sump pump(s) to ensure the system is working as designed. But for the majority of homes, the

heavier the rain, the more crucial it is to regularly monitor grading, gutters, downspouts, and cracks in order to prevent basement and crawlspace flooding.



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Certified Home Inspections is a locally owned, multi-inspector firm serving the Michiana area. Our home inspectors are licensed in the state of Indiana and regularly attend continuing education courses. We do this as part of our commitment to provide the most thorough home inspection possible. Our office staff is there to support our clients and realtors with administrative needs such as scheduling and issuing reports. It is our pleasure to help make the home buying and selling experience go as smooth as possible. We look forward to serv-

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Meet Our Inspection Team and Office Staff

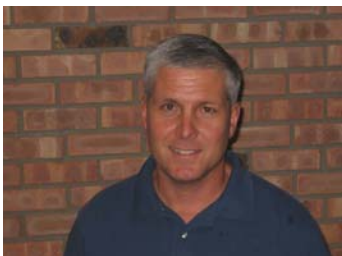
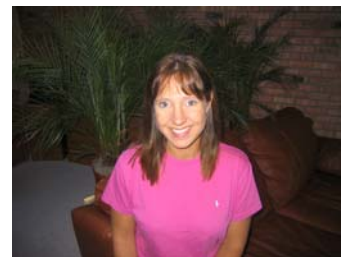


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Will Miller joined the company this summer as a Licensed Home Inspector. Will has a strong construction background and specializes in inspections for new construction and builder's warranty inspections. Will enjoys golf, remodeling, and church activities. He is happily married to Jennifer Miller of Home Gallery Realty and they are expecting their first baby in the spring.



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Rachel VanWilligan is our Office Assistant. You will enjoy speaking to Rachel when calling to schedule inspections or if you have any questions. Staff office hours are from 10am to 2pm Monday through Friday. Rachel is a graduate of Bethel College, teaches piano, enjoys cooking, and is happily married.

Dawn Hatfield is now spending more time with the children. She remains as Office Manager and will be focusing on Marketing and Education for the company. Dawn enjoys seeing many of you at meetings for the Women's Council of Realtors.



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John Hatfield remains the Lead Inspector at Certified Home Inspections. John has been inspecting for more than six years and enjoys working with clients. When not inspecting John is either doing education presentations for the industry or helping out with "Crowd Control"!

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