

March 2007

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How to Waterproof Your Basement

Here are tips and instructions on how to water-proof your basement. Read these tips carefully and follow the instructions closely. Following these procedures outlined will help you end up with a more satisfactory job - with far less waste and effort.

1. Stopping Leaks and Seepage

Bothered with leaks or seepage through your basement floor or walls? If so, both problems can be solved. However, they are not easy. It will take time and effort, and you will have to do the job right. But, it can be done.

There are three basic causes for seepage and cracks in basement walls and floors. First, the original workmanship may have been poor. Second, the house may have settled causing cracks to appear in either the floor or walls. Finally, water pressure from the outside may have built up and be forcing water through the walls.

Leaks or seepage in basement walls or floors are easy to detect. Moisture will often begin to seep through at the area where the floor and walls join or along any cracks that may have appeared in the wall or floor.

2. Repairing Holes and Cracks Before Waterproofing

If there are no holes or cracks in the basement walls, a water-proofing compound can be applied directly to the walls by steps described a little later. However, almost all leaking basements have either cracks or holes in the walls or floors that should be repaired before any type of water-proofing coating is applied. **Continued page 2**



TIP OF THE MONTH

Picture Hanging Know-How

If you're getting ready to hang a picture in your home or office, here's a thing or two you should know. Before you hammer a picture-hook nail into the wall, first heat it with a match; it'll go in easier and won't cause plaster to chip or crack. And before you hang anything, turn it over and put stick-on rubber bumpers on each corner or a bead of silicone caulk. Be sure to let it dry first. You can even roll up masking tape, inside out, and put it on each corner. Then hang it and line it up. It'll help keep your frame straight and level; you won't have to adjust it every time someone slams a door.

MARCH RAFFLE
From now until the end of March, all of our clients will be entered to win a **\$100 Home Depot gift card**. When they call to schedule their inspection, have them mention your name and if they win, YOU will receive a **\$50 gift card to Chili's**.

FEBRUARY'S WINNERS
Joseph and Marichelle Cirunay
of Newington
Michele Joyce with Prudential

ASK DAVE



Dave Muirhead -President
Building Inspections, Inc.

Q. What is Ice-Damming?

A. Ice damming occurs when snow on the roof melts and freezes over unheated areas, such as the overhangs of the roof. Other primary factors which increase the amount of ice damming are: Large amounts of snow on roofs, temperatures around the freezing point, insufficient insulation, inadequate ventilation and low pitched roofs. Water leakage occurs when the snow above the ice dam melts or it rains, but the ice below prevents proper drainage, creating a back-up of water. If enough water collects, it will back under the shingles and leak into the eaves, or worse, into the interior of the house, where the wall meets the ceiling

How to Waterproof Your Basement . . . continued

Hairline cracks can usually be filled with a regular water-proofing mix. However, cracks larger than 1/8" should be cleaned out and patched, before the water-proof mix is applied.

Special epoxy and latex cement formulas can be purchased for mortaring small repair jobs or for brushing on as a water-proof coating. However, if you are doing a large repair job, you will probably want to mix your own mortar for patching holes and cracks before you start applying the water-proofing coat.

If the water is merely seeping through the basement wall, this hydraulic cement can be forced into the crack with an ordinary trowel or putty knife. This will normally correct any small leakage problem. However, if outside pressure is forcing the water through the wall, you will have a tougher repair problem. This type of leak is often extremely difficult to correct.

If water is seeping in under pressure, a dovetail groove must be chipped out for the entire length of the cracked area. This dovetailed groove can be chipped out with a regular chipping chisel and hammer or with a cold chisel.

Holes in a concrete or concrete block wall should be repaired in much the same manner. Chip out the faulty or broken area in dovetail fashion. The dovetail cut provides a holding edge for the new mortar.

When the faulty cement around the edge of the hole has been completely chipped away, fill the hole, with the same mortar mix recommended for the filling of cracks.

Place the mortar in the newly cleaned hole, and smooth out with an ordinary trowel. Be sure mortar is pressed into all parts of the hole. Do not leave air pockets.

3. Packing a Leaking Floor Joint

In many cases the basic leaking problem in a basement is centered near the joint of the floor and the wall. If the leaking is not a serious problem, it can often be corrected by trowling on a double layer of water-proof coating at this floor joint. Use ordinary water-proof coating mixture. Be sure the floor is clean where the mixture is to be applied.

If the seepage of water is heavy, a dovetailed joint should be cut where the floor and walls join. This can be done with a chipping chisel and a hammer. An ordinary cold chisel can also be used. Chip along the entire floor joint area to create a dovetail groove that will retain the waterproof mix.

Take time to chip this groove completely the length of the leaking area. Chipping out the dovetail groove is one of the most important steps in the repair job. After the dovetail groove has been completely chipped away, clean it out thoroughly and get ready to apply the waterproofing and repair mix. An ordinary brush or a tire pump can be used to brush or blow the small pieces of cement out of the chipped area.

The chipped out area is then ready for the insertion of the mortar. The regular mixture of one part cement to two parts fine sand plus water can be used for this repair job. You can also use ready-mix ingredients for the same job. Shove small amounts of the cement mix into the chipped out area and smooth out with an ordinary trowel. Do not apply more cement than you can trowel down in 2 to 3 minutes.

It is a good idea to make a slight incline in the patched area, slanting it from the floor upward toward the wall. This provides extra strength to the patched area and helps drain away any moisture that might accumulate in the future.

JOKE OF THE MONTH

Ever Wondered Why...

If a train station is where a train stops, what is a workstation?
 Why do we sing 'Take me out to the ball game', when we are already there?
 Are part-time bandleaders semi-conductors?
 Can you buy an entire chess set in a pawn shop?
 Do pilots take crash-courses?

THOUGHT OF THE MONTH

The hardest thing in life to learn
 Is which bridge to cross
 And which one to burn

FROM TAMARIA'S KITCHEN . . .

CRAB IMPERIAL

Ingredients

- 2 sticks butter
- 1 cup All-purpose flour
- 2 cups milk
- 1/2 cup celery, finely chopped
- 1/2 cup mushrooms, finely chopped
- 1/2 cup of parsley, finely chopped
- 1/2 cups of green onions, finely chopped
- 1/2 cup of pimentos, finely chopped
- 2 pounds of lump crab meat
- 1/2 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon Tabasco sauce
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- Bread crumbs

Melt butter in skillet over low heat. Add flour and whisk together to make a roux. Cook roux, whisking constantly over low heat until golden brown.

Add milk, whisking constantly, until well blended.

Add celery and mushrooms, parsley, green onions and pimentos. Cook until vegetables are translucent, then carefully fold-in crab meat, being careful not to break it up too much.

Add Worcestershire sauce, hot sauce, salt and pepper, to taste.

Pour mixture into individual baking dishes and top with bread crumbs.

Bake at 350-degrees until bread crumbs are golden brown and mixture is heated through.

SUDOKU

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