

Special points of interest:

- Preparing for flood.
- Water use tips.
- Lawn care.
- Water wise plants

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Flood of the Century.....

...but when flooding occurs 10 years apart it becomes an issue that should be prepared for.

Here are some facts about flooding and steps to take to keep water from entering your home.

Flood proofing Your Home.

If your home has plumbing fixtures or floor drains that are below street level, your basement can flood.

Water can enter your house in three ways:

1. Flooding or rainstorms
2. Sewer backup
3. Groundwater seepage or spring melting.

Regular Maintenance.

Taking these simple steps will help to prevent water from entering your basement and will help to keep moisture forming: Make sure that internal moisture sources such as clothes dryers and bathrooms are vented outside • Use humidifiers and dehumidifiers carefully. Put humidifiers on a higher level than the basement. A dehumidifier in a moist basement may actually draw moisture into the basement. • If your basement is moist, don't open the basement windows in the summer • Make sure that basement drains are clear of roots, grease, etc. Have your drain, also called the sanitary service, cleaned out every year, or every other year, from the house to the street. A slow drain might indicate that more frequent cleanings are needed.

- Clean out gutters and downspouts. Make sure

downspouts extend at least four feet from the outside wall of the house. • Shape soil around foundation to help water drain away from the building. • Check for cracks in the foundation, chimney, and fireplace. If you find cracks, consult an expert.

**Preventive and Corrective Measures.**

Start with simpler and less expensive measures:

- Build up the ground around your foundation so that it slopes away from the house at about one inch per foot, for at least six feet
- Put appliances, furniture and other items up on blocks, or build a flood wall around the appliances
- In window wells, put in about 1/2 inch of coarse gravel sloping away from the house. Make sure that the sides of the window well extend above ground level. Cover the window wells – covers are available at most home improvement stores.
- If the heating ducts are under the basement floor, make sure they are insulated, watertight and sloped properly
- If only three or four inches of water are present, install a float plug in the drain. A float plug is inexpensive and easy to install, and it does not require a permit. If the floor drain pipe backs up, the float rises

and plugs the drain. However, the plug must be removed to drain any water from the basement and it can cause problems if there is more than 4 inches of water in the basement.

- Have a licensed plumber install a backflow valve to keep water from backing up into your basement through the drain. • Install a vapor barrier or retarder on the basement walls. (A building permit may be required).
- Install an interior or exterior drainage system including a sump pump. An exterior drainage system is the most effective, but also the most expensive. This must drain to the surface on the property, and a permit is required. Sump pumps **are not** to be tied into the sanitation sewer system, they **must** drain to the outside of the property.

Heavy Rainfall Situation.

When heavy rainfall occurs for a prolonged period, storm and sanitation sewers become overtaxed. Try to reduce the amount of water that goes into the sewers by not using dishwashers, washing machines, showers, baths, and any other appliance that uses water until the rain stops, only flush the toilet when absolutely necessary. Commence normal use when rain has stopped and surface water has dissipated.

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Water Use Tips

You can save money by using water wisely, especially in the bathroom, where more water is consumed than in all the other rooms combined.

Bathroom.

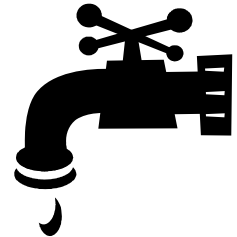
Don't use toilets as waste-paper baskets; Make sure toilet flappers and other parts are not leaking (replace every 2—5 years); replace toilets with low-capacity tanks of 6 or 13 litres; replace your shower-heads with low-flow models; take short showers; don't fill the bath to the top (by using less you can have more baths!); turn off the tap whilst brushing your teeth, use a glass of water to wet your toothbrush, and rinse your razor in a few centimeters of warm water. Running water wastes about 19 litres a minute.

Kitchen.

Wait until you have a full load before you use your dishwasher; Scrape rather than rinse the food off dishes before you put them in the machine; don't wash dishes by hand with running water, use one sink for washing and the other for rinsing; clean fruit or vegetables in a partially filled sink, then rinse them quickly; limit the use of your garbage disposal, which wastes water and increases the amount of sewage that has to be treated. Place food scraps in the garbage or compost them; Keep a jug of drinking water in the fridge, don't run water until it is cold enough to drink, be sure to wash the jug every few days to keep the water safe and fresh.

Utility room.

Wash only full loads of laundry; Make sure your water softener doesn't flush more often than needed; see if water drains from your softener while the softener isn't recycling. If water runs out of the drainage line continuously, have the softener serviced; have your humidifier serviced regularly.



Lawn Care

Grow a healthy lawn with little effort and maintenance. Use these tips to use water wisely.

Water 1 inch over the week, use a rain gauge or frisbee, place it on the lawn while you are watering and watch it fill up.

Be weather wise, if it has already rained 1 inch in the week, don't water (your lawn loves water from the sky more than tap water).

Water your lawn in the morning when it is cool and there is little or no wind.

Aim your sprinkler, don't water the driveway and sidewalk.

Let the lawn grow, when you mow your lawn, leave the

lawn at least 7.5 centimeters (3 inches) long. The longer grass will protect the roots from the sun and will help retain moisture in the soil. Longer roots will develop and the longer grass may even crowd out weeds.

Grasscycling, leave grass clippings on the lawn to increase organic matter in the lawn, discourage weeds and retain moisture.

Let the air in, aerating allows air, water and fertilizer to reach the roots.

Limit lawns, consider replacing your lawns with low maintenance plants and ground covers.

Water saving tools.

Garden hose nozzle.

Sprinkler timer.

Rain Gauge.

Frisbee.

Rain barrel.

Screwdriver (use a long screwdriver as a soil probe to test moisture).

Water meter.

For a comprehensive list of water saving plants go to www.calgary.ca and search 'water wise plants'. Or, ask for a printed copy at the Town Office.

