



Article published on March 28th 2012 | [Home Improvement](#)

Water is often called a home's greatest enemy despite the fact that it's necessary for daily living. The determining factor, of course, is the location of the water in the house. No one likes, or wants, it in the basement but so many homeowners face wet basement problems regardless of whether their homes are newer or older. The problems can run deep, too. It's not only the visible water that requires a remedy but also the damage caused by the source and path of the water.

Being aware of the warning signs is a good first step in resolving your wet basement problem. It is best to fix a basement water problem immediately. The longer you let it sit the more expensive it will be to repair. If you've been seeing these signs or asking these questions about water damage in your home, contact a professional basement waterproofing specialist.

What is that funny odor? A musty odor results during the decaying process associated with mold, mildew, and dry rot. It is an indication of dampness even if no visible signs of wetness are evident.

Why is rust forming on basement appliances and metal furniture? Dampness is usually the culprit of rust on metal appliances and fuse boxes.

What are these dark spots on the walls? When wet or damp, block and concrete walls will turn a dark gray color.

Why is mold and mildew a constant problem? These fungi grow in damp, dark environments such as basements, and cause discoloration on surfaces.

Why are painted surfaces peeling? Dampness can cause paint to discolor, peel, flake and chip off of the walls.

What is the chalky substance on the brick wall? Found on masonry, including brick and concrete, this white chalky matter is the result of mineral deposits drying on walls. It is referred to as efflorescence and, in some cases, can cause expansion that disrupts the surface.

Signs of cracked walls and floors? Foundation failure caused by dampness can result in horizontal cracks on walls and step cracks in corners.

Why is the paneling warping? Basement moisture can cause wood paneling and other wood structural members to bow out of shape.

What is dry rot? This is a brownish-black fungus appearing on walls and wood surfaces causing the decay of the wood.

Besides remedying these often hazardous situations, repairing a wet basement leads to additional benefits for homeowners. Studies show that permanently dry basements protect your investment and increase property value; a wet basement is one of the first signs to turn off potential buyers. A dry basement also provides a more attractive and comfortable home for you and your family. The health benefits are substantial as well since a dry basement decreases the chances of respiratory problems associated with mold and mildew. It increases usable living space that can be transformed into a workshop, playroom, home office, fitness room, hobby center or safe storage area. Economically, finishing a basement for livable space compares much more favorably to adding on an entirely new room.

Article Source:

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[Sylvia Lambert](#) - About Author:

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Article Keywords:

Basement Waterproofing, Crawl Space Repair, Mold Problems, Sump Pumps

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