

Leaking Basement

Basement leaks can be caused by a number of factors including poor drainage, wall cracks, poor weeping tile placement, unsealed holes in the concrete, etc.

Diagnosing the problem correctly is essential to making an effective repair.

The leak into my basement was in the room in the basement that is the furthest forward towards the street. The water meter is in this room and the leak took place along the wall at the very front of the house.

It is clear that a former owner tried to stop the leak from the inside; assuming the problem to be foundation cracks and that this approach didn't work since the leak continued each spring.

In the case of the former owner of this house, the problem was misdiagnosed at the outset.

These houses are built on pilings and the land around them has sunk markedly over the past 18 years. You might have noticed that your driveway is no longer level with the garage floor – indeed many homes in Cardinal Glen have added ramps at the garage to correct this.

You might not have noticed significant erosion of soil under the landing and front step of your house.

When the contractors were building these houses, they jettisoned garbage around the house fronts – garbage that was later buried when the landscaping was completed. Since the fill wasn't properly packed, it settled over time and left (in my case) a large hole under the front step and landing. Since the front step and landing are attached to the house foundation, they didn't sink when the soil compacted over time.

The result was a large hole which collected rainwater runoff, which froze in the winter, and which thawed rather quickly in the spring and in doing so, seeped through the basement wall thereby creating the aforementioned leak every spring.

The solution was simply to fill in the hole under the landing and steps bringing the soil up to grade. I used stone dust as the fill since I was having the driveway repaved at the same time and I ordered extra stone dust for this purpose.

So the solution for this problem is to ensure that there are no holes adjacent to your foundation. If there are holes, fill them in with a raised edge near the concrete wall so that water runs away from the foundation. Be sure to compact the fill as much as possible and keep an eye on it over time, topping it up as required.