

## SPRING MOISTURE IS COMING, WILL YOU BE READY?

Good bye Old Man Winter, hello Spring Showers! The question is will your home stay moisture free this spring? Springtime can be one of the most damaging seasons of the year to our buildings and homes from a moisture perspective. With all of the snow that we received this winter, the ground is saturated and still frozen. This will present a problem when spring rain comes our way and also when the ground thaws. So long as the ground is frozen the moisture will collect in low parts of our lawns or may even run straight to that big hole in the ground called a basement.

It is very important that we keep moisture well away from our homes and buildings. Sometimes this task is really easier than one may think and just requires some common sense. One of the most common factors in moisture intruding into our buildings or homes is improper grading. The ground should fall away from the foundation at least 6 inches within the first 10 feet around the perimeter of a home or building. This is a minimum and the more the better. You should also keep in mind that the landscaping around your home can also play an issue. My recommendation is to keep bushes, shrubs, trees, etc. at least one to two feet away from your home.

Another important factor is the gutter system. With all of the snow that we have had, many people experienced ice damming which can be brutal on the gutters of your home. The weight burden from ice damming can cause the gutter to sag or lose its proper slope to the downspout locations. If you experienced ice damming this winter, it may be a good idea to check your gutters to make sure that they are secure and have the proper slope. If you can't achieve this task, call an expert.

The next important item with the guttering system is the downspouts and extensions. With the piles of snow we had, it would not be uncommon that the weight of the snow has caused the extensions to come loose or even be smashed. We want to ensure that moisture will flow freely through the downspouts and the extensions. I also recommend that the downspout extensions are at least four feet in length and in some cases four feet will not be enough. This depends on what kind of slope you have on your lot. You need to evaluate where the moisture is going end up once it leaves the extensions.

Another factor to keep in mind is your window wells. These should be at least two inches above grade and have covers installed on them. Also, pay close attention to cracks and compromises in your sidewalks, driveways, and patios. These all should be sealed with a polyurethane grade sealant like NP1. It is not uncommon that snow shovels, snow blowers, and expansion/contraction of the concrete have created a void in the sealant you did have. If this has occurred, you need to remove the old sealant and replace it with new. Do not just add another layer, you are only applying a bandaid and the sealant will not adhere properly or last as long.

In the unfortunate event that you do experience some seepage or flooding, get it dried out as quickly as possible with the usage of dehumidifiers and fans. Once we start getting more moisture outside, run your dehumidifier to keep your relative humidity at or below 50%, regardless whether or not you suspect moisture is intruding.