

Happy Spring from Howard Lamcke! It’s so nice to see green hills and full reservoirs!!!

The winter storms have come and mostly gone. By this time, we should all be fully aware of the effect of rainwater on our houses and yards. We have certainly seen a few problems on our job sites. There are no more excuses; this needs to be the year to correct the problems, and early on. If it’s a new roof, or gutters or landscaping, now is the time to call and set up to avoid the crazy schedules and pricing of last fall. This letter will focus on setting up sump pumps for drainage.

The pace of construction did not slow down this winter in spite of the weather. However, it looks like some areas have caught up with the work, most notably the various building departments. It is now next day inspection for most cities; and we have had great success obtaining permits over the counter for most small to medium size remodels. This has been a welcome relief from last year. Our subcontractors and suppliers continue to be busy; so as always, it’s best to plan early. This is shaping up to be a great year and we look forward to working with you for all your remodeling needs!

**SUMP PUMPS**

We saw more than our share of flooded basements, subfloors and backyards this year. Setting up temporary drainage outside in a storm is not easy but doable. Digging a drain under a house in 6” of water is just plain impossible. If that is what you experienced this year; make sure this is the summer that you have a drain and sump pump installed. We use sump pumps to lift and remove water from pools and fountains, foundation excavations, flat roofs and others. They are a perfect solution for underfloor water, relatively cheap and reliable. Could even be a DIY project for you, younger people!

Start by identifying the lowest possible section of drainage under the house which would have contained the biggest puddle. Dig a hole large enough to sink a 10 gallon plastic pot from a nursery. The hole must be 12” in diameter larger than the pot, and 6” deeper than the pot. Drill ½” holes 3” on center on the sides and bottom of the pot, and then wrap it in permeable landscape cloth. Place 6” of ¾” crushed rock in the bottom of the hole and then place the wrapped pot in the hole. Fill the sides with crushed rock. The top should be 1” above the surrounding dirt. The landscape cloth will prevent dirt and rocks from entering the pot, and allow water to percolate in.

Place the sump pump in the bottom of the bucket. It needs to be the type with a float that shuts the pump off when the water level is low. Leslie’s Pool Supply or OSH have good quality ones. Attach a heavy duty garden hose to the pump and extend it outside to drain. You can use an extension cord for power. Better yet, install a receptacle under the house on a switch leg inside a closet somewhere. Test the system with a bucket of water. Not into digging under the house? We usually do this work for $2,000-2,500 including parts.