

Water Damage Prevention Tips

Not all water damage and flooding are caused by a natural disaster. Flooding frequently occurs when bodies of water overflow or tides rise due to heavy rainfall or thawing snow. Flash floods can strike anywhere without warning when a large volume of rain falls within a short time. Just a single inch of water can cause costly damage to your home.

Erie Insurance recommends the following tips to help prevent water damage to your home:

Around your property

- Extend downspouts far enough away from the foundation to prevent water from entering through basement walls.
- Grade the property around your home to drain water away from it.
- If you have water seepage problems, take corrective measures now.
- Keep gutters clean of leaves and other debris and maintain your roof to keep water from seeping into your home.

In the basement

- Never store valuables or perishables in the basement
- Do not store items on or near basement drains
- Check storm drain lines to make sure they're clear of debris, roots, etc.
- Make sure your sump pump and/or dehumidifier are in working order.
- Use shelving to store items several inches above the potential water level.

Flood alarms

Flood alarms are battery-powered devices that can be placed wherever there is a risk of flooding. When the unit detects water, it sounds an alarm to warn of a potential flood. More expensive models can initiate a phone call to the number of your choice. Prices vary. For example, a basic model is available from Kitco Corporation at www.floodbusteronline.com.

Cleaning up after a flood

- Wash and disinfect all areas that have been flooded. This includes walls, floors, closets, shelves, as well as heating and air-conditioning systems.
- Properly dry or remove soaked carpets, padding and upholstery within 24-48 hours after a flood to prevent mold growth.
- Anything that can't be properly dried should be discarded.

Contact an Erie Insurance Agent for more information about how you can protect your home from water damage and flooding.