Lakefront and High Water Table Basement Checklist

What to watch for around Lake Couchiching and Lake Simcoe homes

What a high water table looks like day to day

1. **A sump pump that runs on dry days**

   Groundwater rather than rainfall is the usual driver when a pump cycles with no storm in sight.

2. **A sump pit that never fully drains**

   Standing water at the bottom of the pit between cycles points to steady groundwater inflow.

3. **A musty smell that lingers**

   Especially one that a dehumidifier does not fully clear, which suggests moisture is coming from the structure, not just the air.

4. **Chalky white crust low on the wall**

   Efflorescence forms as moisture wicks through concrete and evaporates at the surface.

Seasonal patterns worth tracking

1. **Check conditions each spring**

   Lake levels and groundwater near the shoreline both tend to run higher earlier in the year.

2. **Compare notes year over year**

   A basement journal, even a simple photo and date log, makes seasonal patterns much easier to spot.

3. **Watch after extended wet stretches**

   Several rainy weeks in a row raise groundwater even where a single storm would not.

Questions to bring to an assessment

1. **What is actually raising the water level here**

   Ask whether it looks like groundwater, surface drainage, or a combination of both.

2. **Is the current sump pump matched to the site**

   Ask how its capacity compares to what your property typically sees, not just a general rule of thumb.

3. **What would a combined system involve here**

   Ask what exterior and interior components would be included, and why each one is recommended for your specific lot.

Track the pattern through a season, then bring it to an assessment.

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