



## Janet Sozio

My house has a field stone foundation and cement for the garage as that has been added later. The cement support for the garage has shifted and cracked over the years due to settling but also due to the amount of water flowing under my property. The house is shifting as well and since the great rainstorms we had 4-5 years ago, I can't open one of my windows in my sun porch as there has been more shifting.

I have sump pumps in the basement and there is a cement trench in the floor with a drainage pipe that empties out into the garage. There are drains at the bottom of my driveway to handle the run off from the street. They drain into my yard. Sometimes they get overwhelmed and water backs up into my garage and if severe enough continues to back up into the basement. Water also seeps up from the ground through cracks in the basement floor or cascades down the side of the basement wall. Seepage and cascades happen when the ground can't absorb the water fast enough due to heavy rainfall or "fast" rainfall. Mold forms quickly as well.

To remedy, I spent \$6500 on a "Basement Technologies" system. I knew I'd be going through sump pumps like candy so I 'went for it' and forked over the cash. While this has done wonders to keep my basement dry, it is not a perfect system and can't prevent water from seeping or cascading down the walls, it just serves to redirect it out of the basement so I don't have puddles and mold. I also pay \$250/year to keep the fancy system in my basement serviced and free of issues.

There are low points of my yard where all the water runs off from the street. It also can't drain as fast as other portions. If there are not active puddles, there is a lot of "squelch/squish" going on! It can take a day or so for all of it to absorb. I even get puddles along the stone wall in front of my house.

Also, I have had a few stonewall "blow outs" and "bleeds" where water has caused either the stones to shift or the dirt/crushed stone, etc in between to be flushed out.

Because of the amount of fill they need to truck in, I am very concerned that even despite their calculations (which are at the VERY MINIMUM of the continuum they need to be at...for example if a guideline says between 2'-4', they are at 2) that I am being put in a "valley" situation. I do not trust the retaining wall to hold (they are introducing water behind the wall by installing a "strip drain" at the top of the walls) and there is no information about how surface water from the properties will be conveyed. I called my home insurance company and shared the information with them. Given the propensity to take on even more water since my yard will no longer be draining "downhill" but instead collecting water in a valley, I will need to purchase further insurance to protect my property, specifically my workshop which has electrical, a wood burning stove, and an alarm connection to my septic. This will cost me approximately \$3000 more per year. For reference, the workshop on my property is at 245' and the top of the retaining wall that runs perpendicular to my property is 255' at its highest point. The lowest point of the wall is 250'. The extra \$3000 per year will create a financial hardship but since it is unclear where that water will go if the wall fails so I feel obligated to protect my property and my investment.