

WATER WISE HOME

A vibrant rainbow arches across a blue sky filled with white clouds. A bright beam of light from the rainbow's center points down towards a modern, two-story house with large windows and a flat roof. The house is situated on a green hill, and a few small figures of people are visible near its entrance. The overall scene is bright and hopeful.

CAMERON J. FIGGINS

THE JOURNAL

The power of a single drop of water.

I had a family who got really sick and didn't know what was wrong. The wife was suffering from respiratory problems and the husband wasn't. The doctors told her she had mold in her system and I was called in to diagnose and find the source of this mold. A small drop of water behind the fridge had slowly rotted out the wall behind it, the combination of moisture and heat led to a mold growth. The intake for the air conditioner was located on the other side of that rotting wall - whenever the a/c kicked on - mold, toxic to the wife and not her husband, was spread in the air all over the home.

One drop of water not only caused a significant amount of building damage, it caused a severe health condition. I pulled out all of the rotted and moldy building materials and replaced the floor under the fridge with tile to prevent this from happening again in the future. If this family only knew what to look for and how easy it was to maintain their home - they would've saved themselves a significant amount of heartache. Its experiences like this that lead me to create the Water Wise Journal.

Below you can see the Grand Canyon. This naturally occurring phenomena is a great example of how a small body of water can break down even the strongest of stones over time.



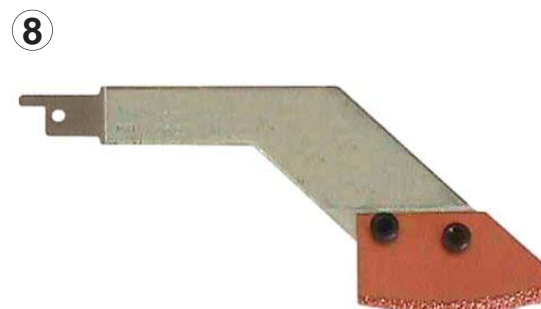
⑥ When a water problem presents itself in the home, a wet/dry vacuum or shop vacuum will be necessary to pick up any extra standing water, puddles, or ponding. Make sure you remove the filter when you're using this on water.



⑦ While I use my five-in-one painters tool mostly for caulking products, this tool will come in handy in more cases than I can list.



⑧ When you need to remove damaged grout, a grout grabber tool will help to completely clean out the joint before you re-grout it.



⑨ Gloves and a painter's mask are absolutely necessary when dealing with mold.

⑩ Use household scrub brushes and rags to clean up mold or water damage mess.

⑪ A flashlight is something of a necessity for any home, and also helps you look into your walls when you suspect leaks, intrusions, or mold.



CHAPTER 2.

Red – High Exposure Areas –

Be on alert – Check these areas now and often.



How does water get into and damage your home?

Through joints and intrusions to your building envelope.

What is a joint?

A Joint is the area where two unlike materials meet. They must always be sealed and perfectly aligned for waterproof protection. Joints exist in and on all parts of the home. Inspect every place where two materials meet. If any one of these joints are taken for granted, at some time or another you will have to pay someone to fix it. They can be as delicate as they can be numerous. So, you want to keep checking on them, to make sure their sealing and waterproofing has not failed. Grab your Water Wise Home Journal and make a comprehensive list of all the joints in your home you are able to detect. You need to know exactly where your trouble spots are, so you can make sure they're properly protected and maintained. Check any and all sealing, caulking, and/or waterproofing around all joints every six months, and re-check for replacement or repairs six months after that.

Exterior Joints and Water Intrusions

Exterior joints are where water intrusions are most common. To create and maintain a completely protected home, each aesthetic detail on the outside of your home has to be sealed and perfectly aligned. Whenever something is added to the exterior of a home (unless it is a simple coat of paint), it is going to add a joint of some kind. Learn how to get up close and personal with yours and know how to find them to help you to repair or prevent a water intrusion more quickly.



Above you can see an example of an exterior window joint. It is important to check window joints in order to insure that water is not making its way indoors through any weaknesses in the joints.

Below you can see joints between different components in a buildings envelope. This is a good example of a joint that needs to be sealed so that water does not make its way through the joints and cause damage.

