

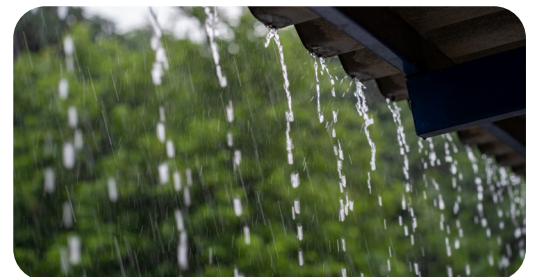


# A Homeowner's Guide to Stopping Water Damage Before It Starts

Living in coastal areas like Carmel and Monterey means dealing with salty air, and, during the rainy seasons, humidity and heavy rains – all factors that can lead to water damage in your home. Whether you're building a new house or taking care of the one you have, following these tips can help keep your home dry and safe.

## Regular Home Maintenance

- ✓ **Check your roof regularly:** Look for missing or damaged shingles and clear away any debris to avoid leaks.
- ✓ **Keep gutters and downspouts clean:** Make sure they're free of leaves and directing water away from your foundation.
- ✓ **Seal windows and doors:** Fill in any gaps with weatherstripping or caulking to stop moisture from getting in.
- ✓ **Check for plumbing leaks:** Inspect under sinks, around toilets, and behind appliances for any signs of leaks.
- ✓ **Monitor indoor humidity levels:** Use a dehumidifier or ensure good ventilation, especially in bathrooms, kitchens, and basements.
- ✓ **Watch for condensation:** If you notice excessive moisture on windows or walls, it could indicate poor ventilation or hidden leaks.



## Exterior & Drainage Protection

- ✓ **Grade landscaping away from your home:** Sloped soil helps direct rainwater away from your foundation.
- ✓ **Consider installing French drains:** These underground pipes help steer water away from your home.
- ✓ **Check your foundation:** Repair any small cracks before they increase in size.
- ✓ **Maintain exterior paint and siding:** Peeling or cracked paint can allow moisture to seep in.
- ✓ **Inspect sprinkler systems:** Make sure they aren't spraying directly against your home's walls or foundation.



## Inside the Home: Moisture Control

- ✓ **Use exhaust fans:** Run fans in bathrooms and kitchens to vent out steam and moisture.
- ✓ **Fix any musty odors:** A lingering musty smell could indicate hidden mold or trapped moisture.
- ✓ **Look for signs of water damage:** Keep an eye out for warped wood or peeling paint.
- ✓ **Choose mold-resistant materials:** If you're remodeling, use materials that resist mold in areas prone to moisture.

## After Heavy Rains or Storms

- ✓ **Inspect your home for leaks:** Check the attic, ceilings, and walls for new stains or damp spots.
- ✓ **Check basement and crawl spaces:** Watch for standing water or excessive dampness.
- ✓ **Ensure sump pumps are working:** If you have one, test it regularly to prevent flooding.
- ✓ **Keep drains and downspouts clear:** Regular cleaning prevents clogs and backups.

## Building or Remodeling? Plan for Moisture Protection.

If you're building a new home or remodeling, moisture control should be a key part of your plan. At Lewis Builders, we use smart design strategies like waterproof barriers, proper drainage, and ventilation systems to protect your home from the start. Taking these preventative steps now can save you from costly repairs down the road and help ensure your home is built to withstand Monterey County's climate.

But what if your home is already showing signs of water intrusion? We're also well-versed in making repairs to existing homes. In the past, clients have come to us for water damage restoration, and in the process, discovered additional improvements they wanted made. A small fix often leads to a better, stronger, and more beautiful space overall.

If you're planning a new build, remodel, or need expert repairs, we're here to help. Let's make sure your home is designed to last for generations.

