S+H Construction Updates Guidance on Basement Waterproofing and Renovation

November 20, 2026

BELMONT, MA - November 20, 2026 -
S+H Construction, a high-end residential builder and general contractor serving Greater Boston and beyond, has updated its guidance on basement waterproofing and renovation. For homeowners considering basement waterproofing in Boston, the resource explains what needs to be addressed before turning a damp lower level into a finished living space. The starting point is the foundation, since its condition can affect both the scope of work and the renovation plans.

Many New England homes have fieldstone, brick, or concrete foundations, and keeping water out of those basements can be difficult. Moisture can seep through openings or porous masonry, leaving the space damp or musty. That makes even basic storage a challenge, especially when homeowners have plans to use the basement as a family room, office, or other living space.

The first step is understanding how water is getting in. A damp wall or musty smell may be the most obvious sign, but the right solution depends on what's causing the problem. The foundation material, the extent of water intrusion, and how the space will be used all help determine what work makes sense. Covering up damp areas without addressing the source can lead to more repairs down the road.

Exterior waterproofing is one option, but reaching the outside of a foundation isn't always straightforward in established residential neighborhoods. Excavation may mean removing patios or walkways and disturbing gardens or mature plantings. When those features sit close to the house, the waterproofing work can end up affecting much more than the basement itself.

To address water coming through foundation walls, S+H Construction developed an interior-based basement waterproofing method that doesn't require digging around the outside of the home. The process uses crystalline technology that reacts to moisture, forming crystals within tiny passages in mortar and concrete to help stop water from moving through the masonry. Because the work takes place from inside, existing patios, gardens, and mature plantings can remain undisturbed.

That can be especially useful in older Greater Boston homes, where exterior excavation may be difficult or disruptive. But not every wet basement has the same underlying problem. Water seeping through foundation walls needs a different assessment than a plumbing leak or drainage issue, and the right approach depends on what's causing the moisture.

Some basements need masonry or structural work as well. Loose stones or bricks may need to be secured, and foundation walls may require reinforcement. S+H can also provide optional wall coatings for a more finished appearance, but those coatings serve a different purpose than the waterproofing treatment or any necessary structural repairs.

For homeowners planning to use the basement as living space, the order of the work matters. Once framing, drywall, and flooring are installed, getting back to the foundation can mean opening up newly finished areas. Addressing water intrusion and any necessary repairs first helps avoid that kind of disruption later.

Getting the basement dry is only part of making it usable, though. Ceiling height, ventilation, access, and applicable building requirements can affect what the space can accommodate. Depending on the plans, a finished basement may also need electrical, heating, plumbing, or lighting updates. The intended use should be clear early, since it affects the construction work that follows.

S+H Construction works with architects, designers, engineers, and trade partners to plan basement renovations around the conditions found on site. Homeowners can involve S+H before hiring an architect or after plans are underway. The design team develops the plans, while S+H coordinates construction so any necessary waterproofing and foundation repairs are accounted for before finishing work begins.

About S+H Construction

S+H Construction is a licensed and insured residential construction company based in Belmont, Massachusetts. Founded in 1979, S+H Construction serves Greater Boston through renovations, additions, custom homes, historic restorations, kitchen and bathroom remodeling, basement waterproofing, landscaping, and smaller residential projects through the Small Works + Home Management division.

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