



## Gardening with water runoff

Keeping water away from the home can be as challenging as growing a beautiful garden. But if you are creative and resourceful, you can do both easily like one of our neighbors in Oak Park.

This homeowner, who lives near Beye Elementary School, has a cistern buried in her backyard that collects about 1/4 of the home's roof runoff water. The water is collected from the downspouts via underground drain tile which gently delivers the rain water to the cistern. The family then accesses the water when needed via a spigot in the backyard.

Additionally, a drain pipe collects water from the other side of the roof. It runs underground the entire length of the property to the back by the alley, where it keeps the ground of a wet garden moist. These wet soil conditions are ideal for high water crops, like corn, beans, and tomatoes. This drainage method keeps water away from the house while creating a bounty of garden vegetation.

Lastly, two rain barrels are connected to a remaining downspout to collect the rest of the roof's runoff water. This water is used to hydrate plants on drier days. Rain barrels are available from the Oak Park Water Reclamation District at no cost, provided you are removing your downspout from the sewer system and connecting it to the rain barrel.

## The difference between water backup, flood and seepage

Heavy rains can trigger a **water backup**. A sewer backs up into your home and through a sump well, basement toilet, washtub or floor drain. Sump pump failures usually occur from power outages or motor failure.

A **flood** is an excess of water or mud on land that is normally dry, causing water to come in through a door or window well. Floods can happen when bodies of water overflow or when a large volume of rain falls within a short time.

**Seepage** is water that comes through cracks in the foundation and cannot be insured. There are professionals that can help to waterproof your foundation.

A standard homeowner's insurance policy (unless endorsed) does not include coverage for these events. If you are concerned about your coverage, call us so we can discuss it.



Reaping the beautiful benefits of keeping water away from the home in the garden.

## The Water Issue

- Creative Water Use for the Garden
- Spring Weather Home Protection
- Dan Browne Honored
- Is It Flood, Backup or Seepage?
- Referrals
- Trivia

# Thank you!

.....to everyone who has referred their friends and family to Forest Agency:

Robert & Carol Restivo  
Laura & Richard Talaske  
David & Cathy Walz  
Riordan Electric, Inc.  
Bruce & Leslie Hodes  
Allen & Georga Parchem  
Emmet Welch  
Robert Searfoss  
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David & Yael Shiner  
James R. Reed  
Gary and Laverne Collins  
Jeremy & Kimberly Flom  
Greg Morrissey



## Tell a Friend about Forest Agency!

If you're happy with our service, **consider referring a friend or neighbor to Forest Agency.**

We will send you a gift card for every referral, and enter you in our quarterly drawing (this quarter we gave away a GoPro video camera!)

## Forest Agency President Dan Browne Honored

Forest Agency President Dan Browne was honored as a Paul Harris Fellow at a recent meeting of the Rotary Club of Oak Park-River Forest. The Paul Harris Fellow recognition acknowledges individuals who contribute, or who have contributions made in their name of \$1000 to The Rotary Foundation of Rotary International. The award is named for Paul P. Harris (1868-1947), the Chicago attorney who is best known for founding the service organization in 1905.

For more information about Rotary please visit [www.oprfrotary.org](http://www.oprfrotary.org)



Dan Browne receiving his Paul Harris Award.

## Protect your Home from Extreme Spring Weather

Most of us remember the devastating flooding of the Des Plaines river a few years ago. The water back up that resulted from severe spring storms affected many people in west suburban cook county. Follow these tips to keep water away from your home and to prevent home water damage.

### Protect Your Exterior:

Does your house have window wells or basement-level doors? Both of these are access points for snowmelt or heavy rains to leak into your house. To keep water from pooling near these low lying access points, make sure water runoff from the roof is deposited far away from the home. Your gutters should extend at least six feet from the foundation at a minimum. That way excess water remains far away from low-lying access points.



Lightning strikes a suburban home during a storm.



**A waterlogged home after a severe weather storm.**

Speaking of your gutters, make sure to have them cleaned annually so that they are clear of debris. Debris causes backup! You will need to be extra vigilant during peak snowmelt: Create swales or make temporary grade adjustments so melting snow doesn't pool against the foundation.

### **Protect your Interior:**

Time to turn your attention toward the home's interior. If you have a sump pump, test it annually to make sure that it is working; if it has a battery backup, make sure the battery is functioning. If your basement has an interior floor drain, clear the drain. Finally, if you believe that flooding is imminent, buy or rent a portable pump to mitigate damage.

### **Protect Your Valuables:**

**DO NOT STORE YOUR VALUABLES ON THE FLOOR!** Elevate them on pallets or shelves to keep them out of harm's way. Consider storing soft items in airtight bins.

Put a plan in place in case you need to get invasive water out of your home. Many fire departments have a pump out policy. Check with your local pumping station if they will respond in the event that your home is flooded (or check our partners page at [www.forestagency.com](http://www.forestagency.com) for a vendor who will contract out such work).

Thanks to Chubb Insurance Company for contributing to this article.

**Don't forget to check our blog at [forestagency.com](http://forestagency.com), our Facebook page, and next month's newsletter for follow-up tips on seeing your project through.**

## ***Simplify your Life!***

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Dan Browne, CIC, AAI Cathy Hall, CIC, AAI

### **NOT-SO-TRIVIAL PURSUIT**

**This month's question:**  
**Barry Bonds' broke Hank Aaron's all-time home run record when he hit home run number what?**

Email your guesses to [trivia@forestagency.com](mailto:trivia@forestagency.com)

Last month's question:  
What was the very first year Memorial Day was observed?  
**Answer: May 30, 1868!**

Congratulations to Chicago resident Joyce Tengberg for being the first person with the correct answer.



David Klans



Linda Carrera



Melissa Keshen



Nichole Hoppe



Mike Frontzak



Diane Villagomez



Bobbie Box



Maria Lopez



Cristine Saucedo



Cecilia Saavedra



Tim Jorgensen



William Demitro

## Birthdays and Anniversaries

Happy Birthday to David Klans and Cecilia Saavedra! Also, Congratulations to Nichole Hoppe, who is celebrating her 2-year anniversary with Forest Agency!

## Contact Us

Give us a call for more information about our services and products.

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