

CHECKING YOUR SUMP PUMP:

Sump pumps are often installed in a crawlspace or basement below the floor to defend your home against a flood or accumulating ground water. A sump pump also removes collected condensation created by your air conditioner and water from areaway drains, preventing moisture from collecting around the foundation of your home or in the floor of your basement. Test your sump pump periodically to ensure it is working correctly to protect your home against water damage.

Step 1

Find the outside pipe that is used to drain the water from the sump pump. Examine the inside of the pipe to ensure no dirt or debris is clogging the drain. Remove any dirt or debris.

Step 2

Locate the sump pump in your basement or mechanical room. Trace the electrical cords from the sump pump to the electrical outlet. Pull the cord(s) from the outlet. Check the outlet and plug(s) for dirt & debris. Remove any dirt & debris. Check the Sump pit where the pump sets for dirt & debris. Remove the dirt & debris. Clean all dirt & debris out of the inlet screen of the pump. Check for free movement of the float.

Step 3

Re-center the pump and float if necessary. Plug the pump electrical cord into the outlet. Pour water into the pit and continue to pour the water as the float causes the pump to operate.

Step 4

Replace the pump if it fails the test.

Step 5

Also consider a battery backup system for your sump pump if the electric consistently fails during storm events or the basement will easily flood if the electric is off for 2 or more hours.

HOW TO CLEAN THE SUMP PUMP DRAIN LINES:

Step 1

Remove the screen at the end of the drain pipe, if your pipe has one, and rinse off any debris that has built up on the screen. The end of the drain pipe will be outside your home, with the pipe draining on a downslope leading away from the house.

Step 2

Check the pipe for any obvious blockages and remove these if necessary. Replace the screen and go back inside the house to unplug the sump pump or turn the power off at the breaker.

Step 3

Remove the water in the sump pit using a wet-dry vacuum. You can also scoop it out using a small container, such as a can, and empty the water into a bucket.

Step 4

Grab the pump by the handle or the pump body, and remove the sump pump unit from the pit. Do not lift the pump by the float switch or power cord.

Step 5

Loosen the clamp that holds the drain pipe in place and remove the drain pipe from the main body of the sump pump.

Step 6

Insert a plumber's snake into the end of the pipe that was connected to the pump, and then try to push the snake through toward the other end.

Step 7

Hold the pipe over a bucket or sink, and spray water down the pipe using a garden hose with a high-pressure nozzle if the plumber's snake doesn't remove blockage.

Step 8

Run the plumber's snake through again to loosen any remaining material inside the pipe.

Step 9

Spray water into the pipe a final time to rinse the remaining debris from the pipe.

Step 10

Attach the drain pipe to the pump and tighten the clamp to secure it in place.

Step 11

Set the pump gently back into the pit and reconnect the power. Turn the pump on and pour water into the pit to make sure the assembly works as it should.

HOW TO UNCLOG A SUMP PUMP:

Step 1

Inspect the outlet on the discharge pipe. Depending on its position in the landscape, it could easily become clogged by debris, dirt, a tennis ball or another object.

Step 2

Remove anything plugging the end of the discharge pipe or hose.

Step 3

Unplug the sump pump and float from the electrical outlet.

4

Remove the sump basin's lid.

5

Inspect the screen or small opening where the water enters the pump. Use a head lamp or flashlight to examine the pump while it is still in the basin. If you cannot clearly see the pump intake, lift the pump out of the pit, setting it in the bucket or on a tarp if the flooring material is sensitive to water.

6

Remove any debris blocking the inlet.

7

Scoop as much debris or silt out of the sump basin as possible. Wipe up any dirt or debris that is clinging to the walls of the sump basin.

8

Place the sump pump back in the basin. Make sure it is level and resting firmly on the ground in the center of the basin

9

Plug the sump pump back in.

10

Pour about 5 gallons of water into the sump basin to test the pump. Observe the float and the triggering of the on/off switch and make sure that the water exits the basin efficiently. Pour another 5 gallons of water into the basin and again monitor the pump's actions. If the system efficiently pumps water out of the sump basin, you have cleared the clog.

11

Replace the sump basin's lid.