NEW BRUNSWICK EXCAVATION

Backfill, Fill & Haul-Away

Backfill, gravel, fill, compaction and trucking soil and rock off site

4 Expert Answers from Dig IQ

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Q1

Why is my backfill settling next to the foundation in Riverview?

We found no New Brunswick source that explains why backfill settles against a particular foundation, so the cause has to be judged on site by a contractor or engineer.

What to ask about

Ask what material was used against the wall, how it was placed and compacted, and whether water is collecting against the foundation. Those are questions for the contractor who did the work and for whoever you bring in to look at it.

The Riverview context.

In Riverview, building and development permits come through Plan 360, the Southeast Regional Service Commission. Under Regulation 2021-2 of the Building Code Administration Act, a footing and foundation inspection is required before any backfilling begins on a new foundation. If that inspection was skipped or backfilling started before the inspector signed off, that is worth raising with Plan 360 directly. Ask them how to confirm whether the inspection record is on file for your address.

If the settling trench is within 30 metres of a watercourse or wetland, any remedial digging or grading in that zone requires a Watercourse and Wetland Alteration permit from the province before work starts. The 30 metres is measured horizontally from the top of the bank on the ground, not from a map.

Before any contractor opens the ground to re-compact or replace the backfill, two separate locate requests are needed: one through Info-Excavation (Click Before You Dig, with three working days notice) and a separate one directly to NB Power, requested at least five business days ahead. NB Power's locate covers only NB Power-owned underground lines and is valid for 60 days from the date on the locate form. Any private lines, such as wiring to a garage or outdoor fixture, are the owner's to find and mark before the machine moves.

What to ask and what a fair quote covers.

A written quote for remedial backfill work should spell out how the contractor plans to compact the fill (lift thickness and equipment), what material will be used to replace what comes out, where the spoil goes and who pays trucking, and whether any drainage work is included. Ask for a WorkSafeNB clearance certificate before signing, confirming the contractor is registered and in good standing. Under the Construction Remedies Act, you must retain 10% of the contract price as a holdback for 60 days after the certificate of substantial performance is signed.

Comparing bids is easier if each one names the same things: how rock (if encountered) is priced, what trucking distance and disposal cost are assumed, what backfill material is specified, and what clean-up and grading are

included at the end.

Q2

Haul away quote per load or per hour in Fredericton?

Haul-away pricing in Fredericton comes in two forms, and few published New Brunswick figures exist for either. Machine time is the best-sourced number: a mini excavator with operator runs $65 to $150 per hour, and a standard excavator with operator runs $150 to $250 per hour, based on published price guides read in September 2026. Trucking may be priced per load or folded into the hourly rate, and the contractor's quote should spell out which.

We found no published per-load haul-away rate for Fredericton or New Brunswick generally. What moves the total is the number of loads, the distance to the disposal site, whether the spoil is clean fill or mixed material, and whether the truck is the contractor's own or a subcontracted hauler. Ask for a separate line on trucking before you agree to a lump sum.

What a fair Fredericton quote should cover

- Machine hours, broken out by machine size
- Trucking: per load or per hour, and who pays if the disposal site charges a tipping fee
- Whether the spoil leaves the site or is stockpiled for backfill
- Rock: hydraulic breaking runs $200 to $300 per hour and should be a separate line, not buried in the base rate
- Backfill material if you need imported granular, crushed stone runs $40 to $75 per cubic metre and Granular A $35 to $55 per cubic metre, plus $75 to $200 per delivery load

On the permit and locate side: before any machine touches the ground, request a locate through Info-Excavation (Click Before You Dig) at least three working days ahead, and make a separate request directly to NB Power at least five business days ahead. NB Power's locate covers only NB Power-owned underground lines and is valid for 60 days from the date on the locate form. Private lines, including anything a past owner ran to a garage, shed or outbuilding, are yours to find and mark; NB Power says those are the owner's to have checked.
If the dig is within 30 metres of a watercourse or wetland, the province requires a Watercourse and Wetland Alteration permit before work starts. That 30 metres is measured horizontally from the top of the bank on the ground, not from a map. The City of Fredericton's Engineering Division reviews lot grading at the building permit stage, so check with the City on whether your scope triggers a permit before the machine arrives.

Ask for a WorkSafeNB clearance certificate before signing, and hold back 10% of the contract price under the Construction Remedies Act until 60 days after substantial performance.

One question settles a lot here: who marks the private lines on your property, and what happens if the bucket hits something that was not on any locate.

Q3

Backfilling an old in-ground pool in Riverview, what material?

Filling an Old In-Ground Pool in Riverview

We found no New Brunswick rule on what material must go into an old pool, so ask the contractor what fill they propose, how it will be placed and compacted, and what happens to the pool shell, because the shell plan changes both the fill volume and the machine time.

A few things drive the cost on this job. Crushed stone runs roughly $40 to $75 per cubic metre and Granular A runs $35 to $55 per cubic metre, with delivery adding $75 to $200 per load, based on published price guides read in September 2026. The machine time to place and compact the fill is priced separately, with a standard excavator and operator running $150 to $250 per hour and a mini-excavator running $65 to $150 per hour. Haul-away of the pool shell, liner and any demolished concrete is a separate trucking cost that varies with distance to the disposal site. Few New Brunswick-specific prices are published, so machine hours and material volume are the most reliable anchors for comparing quotes.

On the permit side, Plan 360, the Southeast Regional Service Commission, issues building and development permits in Riverview, and a permit may be required to tap into water or sewer mains if any pool plumbing connects there. For the fill work itself, check with Plan 360 on whether a development or building permit applies to your specific job before work starts. If the pool is within 30 metres of a watercourse or wetland, a Watercourse and Wetland Alteration permit from the province is required before any machine work or ground disturbance begins. That 30 metres is measured horizontally from the top of the bank on the ground, not from a map.

Before the excavator arrives, the contractor, as the employer on site, must confirm underground utility locations under WorkSafeNB's General Regulation 91-191. Info-Excavation, reached through Click Before You Dig, requires three working days' notice. NB Power runs its own separate underground locate service and asks for at least five business days' notice; that locate is valid for 60 days from the date on the locate form and covers only NB Power-owned lines. Any private lines, including wiring that was run to the pool for lighting or pumps, are the owner's to find and mark before the machine moves.

Ask the contractor to show both locate tickets before work starts, confirm what is happening to the pool shell and how that affects the quote, and ask your insurer whether the fill work changes your coverage during construction. Under the Construction Remedies Act, you must retain a holdback of 10% of the contract price for 60 days after substantial performance.

The quote should spell out exactly what fill material is included, where the demolished shell is going, and how rock or unexpected debris will be priced if it turns up.

Q4

How many truckloads of dirt come out of a basement dig in Saint John?

How Much Dirt Comes Out of a Basement Dig?

We found no published New Brunswick figure for how many loads a basement dig produces. The count depends on the size of the basement, the depth of the dig, how much the soil loosens once it is dug, and the size of the truck, so ask the contractor for their load estimate and truck size in writing.

A few things move that number in either direction. If the contractor hits rock, hydraulic breaker time runs $200 to $300 per hour, and the broken rock has to go somewhere. If the lot is tight and trucks cannot stage easily, the contractor may need smaller equipment or more passes. If the excavated material can be stockpiled on the lot for later backfill, some loads never leave the property at all, which reduces haul cost.

On the permit side, the City of Saint John issues building permits, and a new foundation dig is part of a building project that needs one. Saint John also has a Street Excavation permit and a Driveway Culvert Permit for work affecting the road allowance, so if trucks are cutting the curb or crossing a culvert to access the site, ask the City whether those apply. Before any machine moves, the contractor, as the employer on site, is responsible under WorkSafeNB's General Regulation 91-191 for locating underground utilities. That means two separate requests: one through Info-Excavation (Click Before You Dig, three working days' notice) and a separate one to NB Power at least five business days ahead. NB Power's locate is valid for 60 days from the date on the locate form and covers only NB Power-owned lines. Private lines, such as a service run to a garage or an old oil line, are yours to find and mark before the machine starts.

When you get a quote, ask the contractor to spell out how many loads they are estimating, what truck size they are pricing, where the spoil is going, and how rock is priced if they hit it. A quote that bundles everything into one number without separating machine time, trucking and disposal gives you no way to check the math if the job runs long. Ask for a WorkSafeNB clearance certificate before work starts, and under the Construction Remedies Act you must retain 10 percent of the contract price as a holdback for 60 days after substantial performance.

The question to settle up front is how extra loads are priced if the volume comes in higher than estimated, and whether that is capped or open-ended. The request form on this site sends your job details to local Saint John area excavation contractors who can reply with their own numbers.

Disclaimer: This guide is provided for informational purposes only by New Brunswick Excavation. It does not constitute professional advice. Always book your locates, check with your municipality or Regional Service Commission, and follow WorkSafeNB rules before starting any excavation project. Information is current as of November 15, 2026 and may change. Visit **newbrunswickexcavation.com** for the latest answers.