NEW BRUNSWICK EXCAVATION

Drainage & Weeping Tile

Digging along foundations, weeping tile replacement and yard drainage

4 Expert Answers from Dig IQ

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Q1

Can downspouts be buried in a drain line in Saint John?

Burying downspouts into a subsurface drain line is one way to move roof water away from a foundation, and the excavation side is digging and trenching. Whether Saint John's building department requires a permit for the drainage work itself is something to confirm directly with the City of Saint John, as we found no specific rule for this scope in the City's published information.

What shapes the cost and the dig

The machine time is the best-published figure for this kind of work. 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. Few New Brunswick prices are published beyond those hourly ranges, so a quote is built from machine hours, trucking and any material. What moves the price on a job like this: trench length, where the water discharges, whether the contractor hits rock, and whether spoil needs to be hauled away.

Before any machine touches the ground, the contractor must determine the location of underground utilities under WorkSafeNB's General Regulation 91-191. That means two separate locate requests: one through Info-Excavation (Click Before You Dig), submitted at least three working days ahead, and a separate request to NB Power, submitted at least five business days ahead. NB Power's locate covers only NB Power-owned underground power lines and is valid for 60 days from the date on the locate form. Any private lines, such as wiring run to a garage or shed by a past owner, are yours to find and mark before the machine arrives. Ask the contractor to show you both locate tickets before work starts.

If the trench runs within 30 metres of a watercourse or wetland, a Watercourse and Wetland Alteration permit from the province is required before any digging, clearing or machine work begins. That 30 metres is measured horizontally from the top of the bank on the ground, not from a map.

Saint John has a Water and Sewerage Permit Package for new, renewal or repair water, sanitary or storm sewer installations, and lists a Street Excavation permit among its street permits. Whether a buried downspout drain line connecting to a storm system triggers either of those is a question for the City of Saint John directly, and it is worth asking before you book the machine.

A fair quote names the trench length, how rock will be priced if it is encountered, where spoil goes, how backfill will be compacted, and what clean-up is included. Ask the contractor for a WorkSafeNB clearance certificate before signing, and under the Construction Remedies Act you must retain 10% of the contract price as a holdback for 60 days after substantial performance.

Before you commit to a price, ask the contractor exactly where the drain will discharge and whether that outlet point requires any approval from the City of Saint John. The form on this page passes your job to local excavation contractors listed in the New Brunswick Construction Network directory.

Q2

Clogged weeping tile or high water table in Riverview?

What to Sort Out Before You Dig in Riverview

Published price guides read in September 2026 show excavation work of this kind is priced mainly on machine time: a mini excavator with operator runs $65 to $150 per hour, and a standard excavator with operator runs $150 to $250 per hour. Few New Brunswick prices for drainage trenching specifically are published, so machine hours plus trucking and any new material are the best guide to what a quote should be built from.

Before anyone can say whether the problem is failed weeping tile, a high water table, or both, a contractor needs to look at the site. Those are different conditions with different fixes, and the judgment is made on the ground, not from a description. What drives the cost either way includes how deep the existing tile sits, how much of the perimeter needs opening, whether the spoil can stay on site or needs trucking, whether rock is encountered, and what the replacement material costs. Crushed stone runs $40 to $75 per cubic metre, with delivery $75 to $200 per load, and those figures add up quickly on a full-perimeter job.

A few things need to be in place before the machine arrives. Info-Excavation, reached through Click Before You Dig, needs a request at least three working days ahead; that locate is valid until the end date written on the request. NB Power runs its own separate underground locate service and asks for at least five business days notice; it is valid for 60 days from the date on the locate form and covers only NB Power-owned lines. Any private lines, such as wiring run to a garage or shed, are yours to find and mark. Ask the contractor to show both locate tickets before work starts. If the trench will be 1.2 m (about 4 ft) or deeper and workers need to enter it, WorkSafeNB's General Regulation 91-191 requires the walls to be shored, sloped or benched, or cut in solid rock, and any shoring must be engineer-certified. Stay back from the edge of any open trench.

For permits, Plan 360 (the Southeast Regional Service Commission) issues building permits for Riverview, and a permit may be required to tap into water and sewer mains. Check with Plan 360 before work starts to confirm what your specific job requires. If the drainage work is within 30 metres of a watercourse or wetland, measured horizontally from the top of the bank, a Watercourse and Wetland Alteration permit from the province is required before any digging, clearing or machine work begins. That permit typically goes to the landowner, and the

application fee is $25 for a single alteration.

When you get quotes, ask each contractor how rock is priced if it is encountered, where the spoil goes and who pays for trucking, what replacement material is included, and whether the price covers backfill and surface restoration. Ask for a WorkSafeNB clearance certificate to confirm the contractor is registered and in good standing. Under the Construction Remedies Act, you must retain a holdback of 10% of the contract price for 60 days after substantial performance.

Start with Plan 360 to find out exactly which permits apply to your job, because that answer shapes what the contractor can do and when they can cover the work back up.

Q3

Why does my Moncton basement leak only in spring?

We found no public source that explains why a particular Moncton basement leaks only in spring, so the cause has to be judged on site by a contractor who can see the lot. The pattern, leaking in spring but not in summer or fall, is worth telling any contractor you call.

What to have checked

Ask whether the ground around the house slopes toward the foundation rather than away from it, and whether the weeping tile beside the footing is still carrying water away. Weeping tile can be crushed, silted up or disconnected, and the only way to know is to have it looked at.

The excavation fix, if one is needed, is to expose the exterior of the foundation wall, clean and waterproof it, replace or add weeping tile, and regrade the surface so water sheds away. That is a dig job. Depending on depth, wall length and what the contractor finds, machine time runs $150 to $250 per hour for a standard excavator with operator, or $65 to $150 per hour for a mini excavator, and the total cost builds from those hours plus trucking and backfill material.

Moncton permits and locates.

Before any machine touches the ground, the contractor is required under WorkSafeNB's General Regulation 91-191 to determine the location of underground utilities before beginning the excavation. That means two separate locate requests: one through Info-Excavation (Click Before You Dig), submitted at least three working days ahead, and a separate request to NB Power at least five business days ahead. NB Power's locate covers only NB Power-owned underground power lines and is valid for 60 days from the date on the locate form. Any private lines, such as

wiring run to a garage or shed, are the owner's to find and mark before the machine arrives. Ask the contractor to show you both locate tickets before work starts.

If the job involves digging out the foundation in Moncton, check with the City of Moncton building department on whether a building and development permit is needed for the scope of work you are doing. If the work is within 30 metres of a watercourse or wetland, a provincial Watercourse and Wetland Alteration permit is required before any digging, clearing or machine work begins.

What to ask before hiring.

Ask the contractor how they price rock if they hit it (hydraulic breaking runs $200 to $300 per hour), where the spoil goes and whether trucking is included, what waterproofing product they use on the wall, and how the backfill will be staged around the footing inspection if a permit applies. Ask for a WorkSafeNB clearance certificate, and hold back 10% of the contract price as required under the Construction Remedies Act until 60 days after substantial performance.

The request form on this site sends your job details to local excavation contractors listed in the New Brunswick Construction Network directory, and those contractors can reply with quotes.

Q4

Spring runoff floods my Sussex yard, what drainage fixes work?

Drainage Fixes for a Flooded Sussex Yard

For spring runoff flooding, the excavation side of the fix usually involves one or more of these approaches: regrading the lot to direct water away from the house, cutting drainage swales, installing weeping tile or a French drain, or a combination. Published price guides from September 2026 show few New Brunswick-specific figures, but machine time runs $65 to $150 per hour for a mini-excavator with operator, or $150 to $250 per hour for a standard machine, and those hourly rates are the most reliable starting point for estimating a drainage job.

What moves the cost is the scope of the problem. A shallow swale regraded by a mini-excavator for an afternoon is a very different job from a full perimeter weeping tile system with a sump outlet, which involves more machine hours, pipe and gravel, and possibly haul-away of spoil. Ask any contractor where the water will be sent, whether the soil drains once the grade is corrected, and how rock will be handled if it turns up, since hydraulic breaking runs $200 to $300 per hour and changes the budget quickly.

Before any machine touches the ground, two separate locate requests are needed. Info-Excavation, reached through Click Before You Dig, requires three working days' notice, and its locate is valid until the end date written on the request. NB Power runs its own separate underground locate service, which must be requested at least five business days before digging and is valid for 60 days from the date on the locate form; it covers only NB Power-owned lines. Private lines, including any wire run to a shed, pool or outbuilding, are yours to find and mark before the contractor arrives. If you are unsure whether municipal water or sewer lines are captured by Info-Excavation, ask the Town of Sussex directly.

If any part of your yard sits within 30 metres of a watercourse or wetland, measured horizontally from the top of the bank, you need a Watercourse and Wetland Alteration permit from the province before any grading, clearing or machine work begins in that zone. The fee is $25 for a single alteration. That permit does not replace any local requirement, so check with the Town of Sussex about whether a development or building permit is needed for grading or drainage work on your lot. We found no Sussex rule specific to excavation, so the town is the right place to ask.

When you get quotes, look for a breakdown that covers machine hours, trucking and spoil disposal, pipe and gravel supply, and how rock will be priced if it shows up. Ask for a WorkSafeNB clearance certificate before work starts, and hold back 10% of the contract price for 60 days after substantial performance, as the Construction Remedies Act sets out.

Start with the Town of Sussex to confirm what permits apply to your lot, then contact the province if your yard is near water, because those two answers will shape exactly what a contractor can do and when.

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.