OTTAWA WATERPROOFING PRO

Window Wells

Window wells drained to footing level, leaks at basement windows and replacing a well

4 Expert Answers from Waterproofing IQ

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Table of Contents

1. Window well replacement quote in Westboro: what should it include?
2. What should a quote say about window well drainage in Kanata?
3. Can a window well drain into my sump in Barrhaven?
4. Does Ottawa's Compassionate Grant cover flooding from a leaking window well?

Q1

Window well replacement quote in Westboro: what should it include?

A window well replacement quote for an existing window in Westboro should cover the well itself, the drainage connection, the backfill and the grading around it. Published 2025–26 prices for a window well with drainage run about $1,600 to $3,800 per well; ask what the quote assumes for depth, access and the drain.

Ontario's Building Code (9.14.6.3) requires every window well to be drained to the footing level or another suitable location. A quote that does not address drainage is incomplete. The Code also requires the site to be graded so water does not accumulate at or near the building (9.14.6.1), so ask whether the quote includes regrading the soil around the well after the work is done.

Here is what a complete quote should spell out:

- The well: dimensions and material.
- Drainage: where the drain connects, what it connects to, and how the contractor confirms it reaches the footing level or another suitable location as the Code requires.
- Excavation and backfill: how deep they need to dig, and that the backfill will be graded to direct water away from the foundation after settling, as required by Ontario's Building Code (9.12.3).
- The window itself: whether the quote covers the window or the well only, since replacing a window well at an existing window is a different scope from enlarging or relocating the window opening. Ask the City's Building Code Services before work starts to confirm whether a permit is needed for your specific job.
- Cleanup and surface restoration: what happens to the garden, walkway or sod that gets disturbed.

Ask whether a licensed plumber does or signs off any part of the drainage connection, and ask for the contractor's insurance details in writing.
When you have two written quotes in front of you, put them side by side and check that each one names the same drainage destination, the same well dimensions, and the same scope of excavation and backfill, so you are comparing the same job rather than two different versions of it.

Q2

What should a quote say about window well drainage in Kanata?

A quote for window well drainage should spell out exactly where the water goes once it leaves the well.

Ontario's Building Code (clause 9.14.6.3) requires that every window well be drained to the footing level or another suitable location. The quote should name which of those applies to your house and describe the connection in enough detail that you can confirm it later. The Code also requires (clause 9.14.6.1) that the site be graded so water does not accumulate at or near the building, so if the ground around the well is part of the problem, the quote should address that too.

Here is what a complete window well quote should include:

- the size and material of the well itself, and whether it is a replacement at an existing window or new work
- how the drainage connects, whether to the footing drain, a separate pipe run, or another named location, and where that pipe terminates
- any excavation, and who requests the utility locate before digging starts (Ontario Dig Authority asks for the request at least 5 business days before work begins, under Ontario's Underground Infrastructure Notification System Act, 2012)
- grading or backfill work around the well, and how the contractor will leave the ground sloped away from the foundation after settling

Published 2025-26 Ontario contractor pricing for a window well with drainage runs roughly $1,600 to $3,800 per well. Ask what the quote assumes for depth, access and the drain.
One thing worth confirming before you sign: ask the contractor to point to the specific location where the well drainage discharges and to put that destination in writing in the quote.

Q3

Can a window well drain into my sump in Barrhaven?

Every window well shall be drained to the footing level or another suitable location under Ontario's Building Code (clause 9.14.6.3). Whether "another suitable location" includes your sump pit is a question for the City's Building Code Services before the work starts, because the Code names the footing drain as the reference point and your contractor's proposed routing may or may not satisfy that.

The practical question is where that drainage goes from the sump. A sump pump discharges above grade, and the City advises directing that discharge at least 1.2 m from the foundation. If the window well drains into the sump pit and the pump sends it back toward the house, you have not solved the drainage problem. Ask the contractor to show you on a sketch exactly where the water travels from the well to the pit and from the pit to the discharge point, and confirm the discharge location stays well clear of the foundation.

A few things worth asking before work starts:

- Whether the proposed drain connection counts as an alteration or addition to the plumbing system, which would require a building permit under the City's rules. Replacing a window well at an existing window is not named on either the permit or the exempt list, so ask the City's Building Code Services before the work starts.
- Whether a licensed plumber does or signs off the plumbing part of the connection, since plumber is a compulsory trade in Ontario.
- Where the drain line runs and whether any digging is involved. If anyone digs, Ontario Dig Authority asks for a locate request at least 5 business days before digging starts.

A written quote for this work should name the window well size and drainage route, the connection point to the sump or footing drain, who pulls any required permit, who requests the locate if digging is needed, and who handles the plumbing portion.
Before the work is done, ask the contractor to confirm in writing which permit, if any, they will pull.

Q4

Does Ottawa's Compassionate Grant cover flooding from a leaking window well?

No, the City's Compassionate Grant does not cover flooding from a leaking window well. The City limits the grant to basement flooding caused by sewer surcharging.

The City is explicit about what the grant does not cover: flooding from an appliance failure, a sewer lateral blockage, or overland flooding due to a foundation crack or a leaking window well. A window well that lets water into the basement falls into that last category, so the grant would not apply to it.

The City also notes that the grant is currently under review, so its terms could change. Checking ottawa.ca before making any decisions based on it is worth doing.

If water came in through a window well, the City advises sealing window wells, and Ontario's Building Code requires every window well to be drained to the footing level or another suitable location (9.14.6.3). The City also advises sloping the ground away from the foundation and keeping the area around the foundation clear of snow. Those are preventive steps; a contractor who looks at the well and the surrounding grade can tell you what the actual source of the problem is and what the repair involves.

If a flood has left mould or contaminated material behind, that clean-up work is covered at ottawaabatement.com rather than here.

The request form on this page goes directly to local Ottawa waterproofing contractors listed in the Ottawa Construction Network directory if you want someone to assess the window well and the drainage around it.

Disclaimer: This guide is provided for informational purposes only by Ottawa Waterproofing Pro. It does not constitute professional advice. Always consult qualified contractors and your local building authority (the City of Ottawa) before starting any waterproofing or foundation project. Some of this work needs a City building permit, and a free locate request is required before any digging. Information is current as of November 8, 2026 and may change. Visit **ottawawaterproofingpro.com** for the latest answers.