Are You Flooding?
Surface Drainage Problems

Overland Flooding
Poor lot grading is the number one cause of overland drainage problems. Overland drainage problems can often result in foundation problems or basement flooding. Ensuring your lot grading is done properly and completing regular maintenance is your best defence against surface flooding and infiltration flooding. Typical home insurance does not provide coverage for basement flooding related to surface flooding events; therefore, maintaining positive drainage on your lot could prove to be one of the best investments you can make.

Positive Drainage
Positive drainage is having a continuous downward slope on all sides of the parcel directed away from the building. The City recommends a 4% grade away from buildings for the first 1.2 meters, this ensures surface water will shed away from your foundation, reducing the chance of foundation problems.

Surface Drainage Pattern
The drainage pattern is how your lot sheds water. There are two typical types in the City of Grande Prairie: a split-draining lot (Diagram A), and a rear-to-front draining lot (Diagram C).

City of Grande Prairie
Engineering Services
2nd Floor, City Service Centre
9505 - 112 Street
Grande Prairie, Alberta, T8V 6H8

Lot Grading
Monday to Friday 8:30am - 4:30pm
780-538-0300
lotgrading@cityofgp.com

Website
www.cityofgp.com

For More Information
Maintenance - refer to the Lot Grading Maintenance brochure
Drainage Issues - refer to the Surface Drainage Problems booklet

Diagram A — Split Draining Lot
Diagram B — Lot Flooding
Diagram C — Rear to Front Draining Lot
Common Causes of Surface Drainage Problems
- Gradual ground settlement after construction, creating low spots where water will pool; especially noticeable around the foundation and after rain events;
- The re-grading of adjacent properties, which can alter the subdivision drainage pattern;
- The construction of a permanent structure in a drainage easement that restricts flow; or
- Improper location of foundation and roof drainage discharges.

Drainage Easements
An easement, by law, is a right to cross or otherwise use someone else’s land for a specified purpose. Therefore a drainage easement is the agreement between neighbours that the upstream neighbour can use a portion of the downstream neighbours land for surface drainage purposes. These agreements are put into place by the land developer prior to construction of the homes. If there is a drainage easement on your property, it will be registered on title and you will be able to view it on the Interactive Online Maps found on the City of Grande Prairie’s website.

Things to Keep in Mind
1. Lot grading on private property is the responsibility of the property owner.
2. Your lot grading requires regular maintenance to be able to convey surface water effectively.
3. Proper lot grading is your best defense against surface drainage problems.
4. The Lot Grading Bylaw C-1366 requires you to not negatively impact adjacent properties.
5. The City of Grande Prairie does not provide funding to rectify private surface drainage problems.
6. The Lot Grading branch of Engineering Services does not have a mandate to resolve disputes; we offer information and an inspection service to identify violations of the bylaws.
7. When drainage problems arise between private properties, communication with your neighbour will often work better than involving the City’s enforcement.

Ways to Avoid Flooding Yourself and Your Neighbours
- Ensure that you, or whomever is doing the work, is aware of the overall drainage pattern prior to re-grading or landscaping your lot; making sure to not alter the pattern without consultation with The City.
- Keep up with regular lot grading maintenance on your property so your lot grading is working as it was intended. (See Lot Grading Maintenance Brochure)
- Make sure your downspouts and sump pump outlets don’t discharge directly adjacent to your foundation or onto an adjacent property. It is recommended to direct them towards a City right-of-way within your own property line.
- Don’t alter the elevations in a drainage easement, this easement is used to drain multiple properties and altering it will impact more than just your property.
- Don’t construct a permanent structure within a drainage easement. This includes storage sheds, raised flower beds, and any other object that restricts or prevents the passage of surface water.

Diagram D — Settlement Near Foundation
Diagram E — Proper Window Well Installation
Diagram F — Benefit of Downspout Extensions