

Efflorescence on Basement Walls: Quick Guide

What the white stains mean and how to keep them from coming back

What you are looking at

1 It is mineral salt, not mould

Harmless deposit left when water passes through the wall and evaporates.

2 It marks an active water path

The deposit shows where moisture is reaching the inside face of the wall.

3 Common in older Toronto foundations

Porous stone and block walls give moisture decades to find a way in.

Salt or mould?

1 Mist test

Salt dissolves when wetted; mould smears and does not dissolve.

2 Texture and colour

Salt is gritty and white-grey; mould is fuzzy and often black, green, or grey.

3 Surface

Salt on bare masonry; mould on drywall, wood, and paper.

What to do

1 Brush off light deposits dry first

Avoid water at the start, which can pull more salt to the surface.

2 Never paint over an active wall

Coatings blister and fail until the moisture is controlled.

3 Fix the water, not just the salt

Grade soil away, extend downspouts, and restore waterproofing where needed.

Worried about water in your basement in Toronto and the GTA? We can help.

icyreno.ca/contact-us/ | (647) 454-6600 | Free in-home assessment