

Redirect or Disconnect Your Downspout



Did you know that rain can harm the environment?

When rainwater flows off rooftops to driveways, sidewalks and streets, it picks up oils, lawn chemicals, and other pollutants along the way. Storm sewer systems then take the polluted water to nearby lakes and streams, **untreated**. This is called storm water runoff.

Fortunately, there are many things that homeowners can do to help reduce the amount of runoff that reaches local waterways:

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Homeowners can help reduce the amount of rainwater that flows from their roof to nearby waterways by disconnecting or redirecting downspouts from the storm or sanitary sewer system. This is a relatively simple task, however it is important to manage the flow of water appropriately.

- Rainwater directed into yards should discharge the water at least five feet away from a building's foundation to prevent ponding and basement leakage. A gutter extender or splash block is helpful to increase the length of a downspout.
- Consider which way to direct the water. Grassy areas (especially native grasses), rain gardens or other types of landscaped areas are great places to direct the flow of rainwater. These areas enable water to infiltrate in the ground, feeding the roots of plants, and decreasing the amount of water in that flows to storm drains.