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> Downspout Disconnect

Downspout Disconnect



Downspout Disconnect (<http://www.stormwater.allianceforthebay.org/take-action/installations/downspout-disconnect>)

If the gutters and downspouts on your home drain into the ground or across **paved surfaces** (<http://www.stormwater.allianceforthebay.org/glossary-of-terms/impervious>), disconnecting or redirecting them can make a substantial positive impact for **stormwater** (<http://www.stormwater.allianceforthebay.org/glossary-of-terms/stormwater>) management. Disconnecting the downspout from the **storm drain** (<http://www.stormwater.allianceforthebay.org/take-action/habits-to-help/dont-dump-into-drains>) system and redirecting it to the lawn, a garden, or a **rain barrel** (<http://www.stormwater.allianceforthebay.org/take-action/installations/rain-barrels>) can provide a number of environmental benefits:

- **Reduce runoff** (<http://www.stormwater.allianceforthebay.org/glossary-of-terms/stormwater>) volume
Reducing the amount of water that enters a **storm drain** (<http://www.stormwater.allianceforthebay.org/take-action/habits-to-help/dont-dump-into-drains>) prevents high volumes of water from flowing directly into streams and rivers, causing **erosion** (<http://www.stormwater.allianceforthebay.org/glossary-of-terms/erosion>).

- **Keeps pollutants** (<http://www.stormwater.allianceforthebay.org/glossary-of-terms/pollution>) **out of our waters**

When water runs along **impervious**

(<http://www.stormwater.allianceforthebay.org/glossary-of-terms/impervious>) area it picks up **pollutants** (<http://www.stormwater.allianceforthebay.org/glossary-of-terms/pollution>), **trash** (<http://www.stormwater.allianceforthebay.org/glossary-of-terms/pollution>), **oils** (<http://www.stormwater.allianceforthebay.org/glossary-of-terms/pollution>), and **chemicals**

(<http://www.stormwater.allianceforthebay.org/glossary-of-terms/pollution>), and **chemicals**

(<http://www.stormwater.allianceforthebay.org/glossary-of-terms/chemicals>) and

carries them directly into our waterways. Preventing **stormwater**

(<http://www.stormwater.allianceforthebay.org/glossary-of-terms/stormwater>) from running across **paved surfaces** (<http://www.stormwater.allianceforthebay.org/glossary-of-terms/impervious>) reduces the amount of **pollutants**

(<http://www.stormwater.allianceforthebay.org/glossary-of-terms/pollution>) carried

into streams and rivers.

Disconnecting your downspout can also save you money on your water bill if you direct the water into a garden or a **rain barrel** (<http://www.stormwater.allianceforthebay.org/take-action/installations/rain-barrels>) for later use.

How to Disconnect Downspouts

If your gutter system **flows** (<http://www.stormwater.allianceforthebay.org/glossary-of-terms/flow>) directly into the ground, a downspout disconnection is one of the cheapest and easiest **BMPs** (<http://www.stormwater.allianceforthebay.org/glossary-of-terms/best-management-practice>) you can implement at your home.

Things to ensure when performing a downspout disconnect:

- Water will be flowing away from all houses and structures
- Water will empty no less than 6 feet from your home to prevent damage to the foundation
- Water will not be flowing into an area with a steep slope, as water may erode the slope and will not drain properly
- Water will be emptying no less than 6 feet from sidewalks and pavement to prevent reconnection with the **storm drain**



The downspout is cut about 8 inches above the standpipe to allow the elbow to fit and direct water away from the foundation. Image courtesy: Blue Water Baltimore

(<http://www.stormwater.allianceforthebay.org/take-action/habits-to-help/dont-dump-into-drains>)

Tools you will need:

- Hacksaw
- Drill
- Screwdriver
- Pliers
- Tape measure
- Sheet metal screws
- Downspout elbow
- Downspout extension
- Standpipe cap
- Splash block

Performing a downspout disconnection:

1. Measure and cut the existing downspout 9 inches from the standpipe
2. Cap the standpipe so water cannot continue to enter the **storm drain** (<http://www.stormwater.allianceforthebay.org/take-action/habits-to-help/dont-dump-into-drains>) through this entrance
3. Attach the downspout elbow to the downspout using pliers to ensure a tight fit
4. Secure the elbow with sheet metal screws
5. Attach the downspout extension and secure with sheet metal screws
6. Place a splash block at the end of the extension to help direct water and prevent **erosion** (<http://www.stormwater.allianceforthebay.org/glossary-of-terms/erosion>)

For further guidance on performing a downspout disconnection be sure to check out the **additional resources** on this page.



Divert your downspout into the lawn, a garden or a rain barrel
 (<http://www.stormwater.allianceforthebay.org/take-action/installations/rain-barrels>) to
reduce water usage and costs. Image courtesy: Wisconsin Department of Natural
Resources (<https://www.flickr.com/photos/widnr/6590127987/>)
 (<https://www.flickr.com/photos/widnr/6590127987/>)

« Don't Dump into Drains

Green Roofs »

(<http://www.stormwater.allianceforthebay.org/take-action/habits-to-help/dont-dump-into-drains>)

(<http://www.stormwater.allianceforthebay.org/take-action/installations/green-roofs>)

Homeowner Key

DIY Do It Yourself (<http://www.stormwater.allianceforthebay.org/homeowner-key/do-it-yourself>)



Low Maintenance (<http://www.stormwater.allianceforthebay.org/homeowner-key/maintenance-low>)



Under \$100 (<http://www.stormwater.allianceforthebay.org/homeowner-key/costs-under-100>)

Videos

How to Disconnect Downspouts



Resources

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