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# Maintaining Home Stormwater Systems

**Gutters, downspouts and landscapes that are not properly maintained can damage your home. Watch for these signs of possible structural damage.**

- Moisture or standing water in or near your house encourages mold growth.
- Pooling water can leak into basements and cause erosion around foundations, concrete slabs and crawl spaces.
- Improperly directed water can damage neighboring property and structures.
- Spillover from clogged gutters and downspouts can rot siding, shingles and eaves, and can erode the ground below.

**Collect and direct stormwater runoff away from the foundation. Slow stormwater down to minimize soil erosion.**

**Simple maintenance of your system can avoid many of these problems.**

## **Gutters**

- Clean debris out twice a year and more often if you have trees.
- Make sure gutters are tilted to direct water to downspouts.
- Standing water can rust gutters and spill over.
- Caulk leaks and holes.
- Make sure roof flashing directs water into the gutter.
- Look for low spots or sagging areas along the gutter line and repair with spikes or place new hangers as needed.

## **Downspouts**

- Check and clear elbows or bends in downspouts to prevent clogging.
- Each elbow or section of the downspout should funnel into the one below it.
- All parts should be securely fastened together.

***If the downspouts are disconnected at the surface:***

- Make sure water drains at least two feet away from crawl spaces, porch steps, garages or walkways and six feet from a basement, retaining wall or oil tank.



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- Water should drain at least five feet from the property line.
- The extension, splash block and ground should all drain water away from structures.
- Always use a splash block to absorb the energy of falling water and prevent erosion.

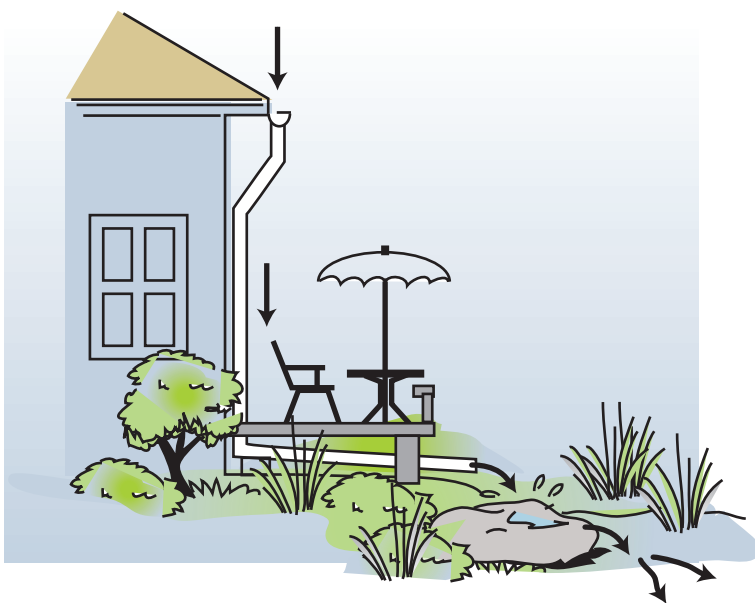
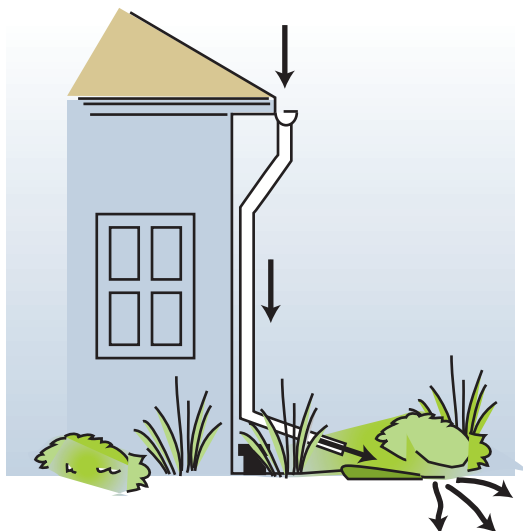
*If the downspouts are connected to an underground pipe (usually a combined sewer pipe, storm line or drywell.)*

- Inspect standpipes regularly for clogs.
- Check to ensure standpipes aren't loose below the surface or cracked.

### Landscaping

- The ground should slope away from structures.

Use a hose to test your work. Flush water through the system and see where it ends up.



- Don't build up soil, bark dust, or woodpiles against the foundation or siding.
- Don't over-water. Use vegetation that requires less water and absorbs runoff.
- Don't drain water directly onto bare dirt.
- Avoid draining water onto impermeable plastic weed block.
- Driveways and patios should be free of cracks and sloped away from foundations. You may need to seal the seam between the foundation and pavement.

For more information, call 503-823-5858 or visit [www.portlandonline.com/oni/index.cfm?c=28992](http://www.portlandonline.com/oni/index.cfm?c=28992).