

## Rain to stream: how homeowners can help keep our water clean

# Downspout Disconnect Program - How to disconnect a spout

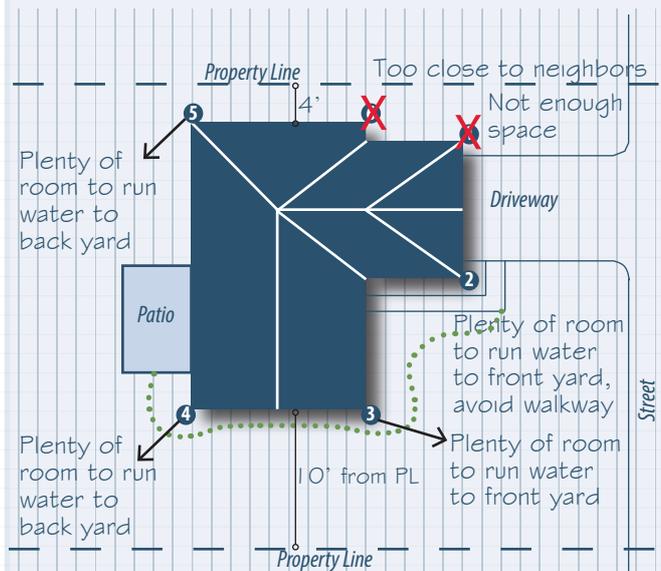
## Ready to disconnect your downspouts?

### Remember these key tips:

- ❑ If your downspouts already connect to an infiltration trench or drywell, you are all set! No need to disconnect.
- ❑ If the downspouts connect to a pipe that leads to the street, stormdrain or a sewer line, we highly recommend you disconnect your downspouts.
- ❑ The **soils on your property must be able to adequately soak water into the ground**. Your local jurisdiction can help you determine soil infiltration rates if needed.
- ❑ The area where your downspout will discharge should **not have a slope greater than 10%** (1' drop for every 10' run).
- ❑ There needs to be enough space to drain to - assume **10% area for the square footage you are draining per downspout** (i.e. 600 square feet of roof needs at least 60 square feet of yard).
- ❑ **Downspout extensions must be directed:**
  - at least 6 feet from the house or structure foundation;
  - at least 10 feet from a retaining wall;
  - at least 5 feet from the property line;
  - away from your neighbor's property;
  - at least 3 feet from a public sidewalk;
  - away from septic tank, drainfield or well; and,
  - away from areas where people walk or play.

## Step 1

Make a sketch of your property:



- Locate each downspout.
- Decide what type of disconnect feature will be used for each suitable downspout.
- Calculate the square footage of roof that drains to each spout. Multiply by 0.1 and make sure there is enough square footage to drain to. Example: 300 sf of roof needs 30 sf of yard.
- Make sure the ground slopes away from the structures and property lines.

## Materials you'll need

**Tools** - Measuring tape, pencil/marker, hacksaw, drill, screwdriver or driver bit, needle-nose pliers or crimpers

**Materials** - Cap or plug for standpipe with hose clamp, metal sheet screws, downspout elbows, downspout straps, downspout extensions, dispersion feature (splash blocks, planters, etc.)

Funding for this project made available by the Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board in coordination with Clark County through the Clark County Clean Water Restoration Fund

A partnership project with:



# Let the water soak in - how to disconnect your downspout:

Measure 9" from standpipe



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**Step 2** Put on safety gear, including heavy duty work gloves and eye protection.

**Step 3** Measure and mark the downspout about 9" above the standpipe. You may need to cut the downspout higher depending on the length of your extension.

Cut downspout



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Cap standpipe



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**Step 4** Cut the existing downspout with a hacksaw at the mark and at the top of the standpipe. Remove the cut piece.

**Step 5** Plug or cap the standpipe using an in-pipe test plug or an over-the-pipe cap secured by a hose clamp. Do NOT use concrete to seal your standpipe.

Elbow over downspout



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**Step 6** Attach the elbow. Be sure to attach the elbow OVER the downspout. Do NOT insert the elbow up inside the downspout or it will leak. If the elbow does not fit over the downspout, use crimpers or needle-nose pliers to crimp the end of the cut downspout so it slides INSIDE the elbow. Secure with two metal screws.

Extension over elbow



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**Step 7** Measure and cut the downspout extension to the desired length. Attach the extension to the elbow by slipping the extension OVER the end of the elbow. Do NOT install the elbow over the extension or it will leak. The length of the extension will depend on site conditions and where you want the downspout to drain.

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Splash Block



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**Step 8** Secure the pieces with sheet metal screws at each joint where the downspout, elbow, and extension connect. It helps to pre-drill holes for the screws.

**Step 9** Use a splash block or dispersion features at the end of the extension to help slow the flow and prevent soil erosion.

**Step 10** Maintenance - Check gutters and downspouts routinely to prevent clogs. Make sure connections are secure and not leaking.

*Each property is unique and should consider applicability of modifications to their property as part of this program. The homeowner agrees to hold Clark County and the Clark Conservation District harmless from any and all claims, loss or damage to personal property, liabilities and costs, as a result of participation in this program. Each participant applying to the program will be required to sign a project agreement form to be eligible for reimbursement.*

Contact Clark County Clean  
Water Division with questions:  
(360) 397-6118 x4345

Want to learn more about how to protect our creeks, streams and rivers?

Clark County Clean Water Division: [www.clark.wa.gov/cleanwater](http://www.clark.wa.gov/cleanwater)

Clark Conservation District: [www.clarkcd.org/best-management-practices](http://www.clarkcd.org/best-management-practices)



For other formats, contact the Clark County ADA Office: Voice (360) 397-2322; Relay 711 or (800) 833-6388; Fax (360) 397-6165; E-mail [ADA@clark.wa.gov](mailto:ADA@clark.wa.gov).