



Residential Flood Mitigation Shared Cost Program Downspout Disconnection

The City of Berwyn, Engineering Department, 6700 W. 26th Street, Berwyn, IL 60402

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Disconnecting Your Downspouts

In response to ongoing stormwater management issues and in an effort to follow stormwater management best practices, the City has identified a number of flood mitigation practices to help alleviate residential flooding. One of these practices is residential downspout disconnection. *Gutter downspouts that are directly connected to the City's sewer system increase the volume and rate of storm water runoff entering the sewer's system. Both of these factors can exacerbate flooding conditions.* Therefore, by having downspouts from homes "splash on grade", it allows runoff to be partially absorbed by the ground which decreases the volume of water entering the system and is also conveyed more slowly to the sewer system. This slower conveyance helps prolong the time at which sewers reach their capacity. Many homeowners have connected their downspouts to the sewer system for a variety of reasons, most likely to avoid having water accumulate on their property during rain events. In an effort to help lessen the impact to the sewer system, the City of Berwyn is asking its residents to check their downspout connections, and if they are tied directly to the sewer system via an underground pipe, disconnect them for the collective benefit of the community.

Why Should I Disconnect?

Connected downspouts can exacerbate flooding conditions. Each downspout on your home can deliver many gallons of water per minute to the sewer system. This contributes to the inundation of the sewer system and can lead to basement backups and sewer overflows. By simply disconnecting a downspout, you can make a difference in keeping excess water out of the sewer system and maybe your house or your neighbors.

How Do I Know If My Downspout is Connected?

A quick visual inspection of your downspout will reveal if it "splashes on grade" or has an underground connection.

A direct connection will flow into a buried underground pipe, as in the picture below:



A downspout that "splashes on grade" is seen in the picture here:



Will Disconnecting My Downspout Cause More Flooding on my Property?

A downspout that splashes on grade is designed to allow rain water to sheet drain over the ground, and slowly make its way to the storm sewer system. This may lead to areas of your property being temporarily saturated while the water is absorbed or working its way to the storm sewer system.

What if I Want to Keep My Yard Dry but Want to Disconnect?

Rain Barrels are connected to your downspouts and act as collectors. They can help limit the amount of water released into your yard during rain events. It also provides an additional source of water to be used for watering landscape and other non-drinkable uses.

Do I need a City Permit or a Plumber?

If you are simply returning the downspout to a "splash on grade" condition, you do not need a licensed plumber to do the



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work. To ensure a correct disconnection, we ask that you contact the Engineering Department so an employee can review the work and answer any questions you may have.

How Much Will This Cost?

If you can disconnect the downspout yourself (see directions at the bottom of the page), at a minimal cost for some basic hardware supplies will be all that is necessary. However, if you are unsure of doing this project on your own, you may want to contact a landscaper or handyman to assist you.

Contact the Engineering Department for additional information on downspout disconnection.

Where Should I Direct the Water?

Your downspout must drain toward either the front or rear of your property. Water that is directed to your side yard may flow onto an adjacent property, which may cause adverse effects to your neighbor's property. It is also important to keep downspouts directed away from your window wells, which can cause flooding issues as well.

My Downspout is in the Middle of My Side Yard. What Should I Do?

A side yard downspout is to run to the front or the rear of the property, along the foundation of the home, through an extension downspout. Make sure that downspout extensions end at least three feet away from the basement foundation and water is being directed on ground that slopes away from your building. Again, avoid your window wells or pointing your downspouts toward your neighbor's property. Another solution in this scenario is to place a rain barrel under the downspout to collect the water.

How Do I Disconnect My Downspout?

Supplies needed to disconnect your downspout:

- hacksaw
- tape measure
- hammer
- screw driver
- pliers
- sheet metal screws
- downspout elbow
- downspout extension
- splash block
- rubber cap

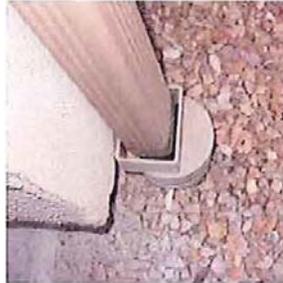




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Step 1

Identify which of your downspouts are connected to the storm sewer system and review the area to determine the best method/location for discharge.



Step 2

Measure 9" from where the downspout enters the sewer connection.



Step 3

Cut the downspout with a hacksaw.



Step 4

Cap the sewer standpipe. This prevents water from going in. In most cases, you should be able to use a simple rubber cap secured by a hose clamp. You can also use a wing-nut test fit if available cap sizes do not fit.



Step 5

Insert the downspout into the elbow (if you put the elbow into the downspout, it will leak). You may need to crimp the end of the downspout with a pair of pliers to get a good fit.



Step 6

Attach a downspout pipe extension to carry water away from the house and foundation. You can use a hacksaw to cut the extension to the desired length. Be sure to insert the elbow into the extension to prevent leaks. Secure the elbow and extension with sheet metal screws. To prevent erosion where the water drains, you can place a splash block at the end of the downspout extension.

