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healthy
watersheds,
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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.

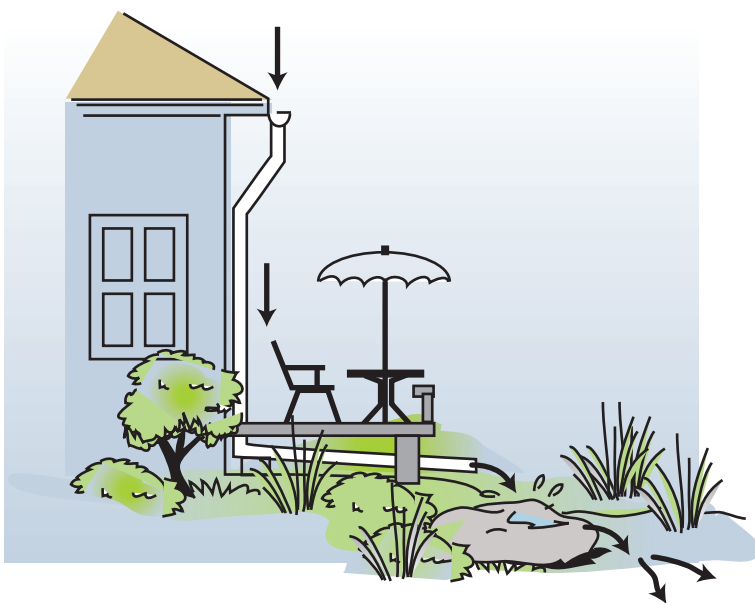
If the downspouts are connected to an underground pipe (usually a combined sewer pipe, storm line or drywell.)

- 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.