



# Downspout Redirection

**Redirecting your downspout** to gravel, to a vegetated area such as a rain garden, or to a cistern or rain barrel helps reduce the volume of runoff and the amount of pollutants that are washed into the storm drain.

When downspouts are pointed towards paved areas (like a driveway or street), or are connected with underground pipes directly to the storm sewer system, water isn't able to soak into the ground. Water moves very quickly from the roof to local streams causing erosion and destroying sensitive stream habitat. Water flowing over paved areas also washes sediment and other pollutants into the storm drain and local streams.

It is best to direct your downspouts to a vegetated area such as a rain garden or conservation landscape or to an underground gravel storage area like an infiltration trench. These features slow runoff down and help it soak into the ground. Another alternative is to direct the water from downspouts to a cistern or rain barrel for irrigation or washing uses later.

**Prior to disconnecting** your downspout, consider:

- Where you are directing the water. Direct the downspout extension away from the building's foundation and adjacent properties, into a landscaped area. The extension should end at least 3 feet away from the basement foundation, and directed towards a slope that is downward and away from your foundation.
- Ice could form during cold weather. Do not direct runoff to areas that are frequent pathways.
- The completed project should be a permanent solution which is beneficial to your grass, flowers, shrubbery and trees.
- Firmly anchored splashblocks should be installed if the downspout drainage is traveling over landscape or dirt.

**Information about** downspout redirection can be found on the StormwaterWise Landscapes website at [www.arlingtonva.us/stormwaterwise](http://www.arlingtonva.us/stormwaterwise)



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A disconnected downspout can be directed to a gravel or vegetated area to capture the water. It is important to direct the downspout away from the house to ensure that water does not pool next to your foundation.