

Detroit residents are required by state law to disconnect downspouts leading to the sanitary sewer system. This is a requirement of all Michigan cities. Water from downspouts connected to the sewer system can overload the sewer system and can pollute our rivers and cause basement flooding.

Disconnecting a downspout is usually not very complex. A permit is not required to perform the work. Disconnecting downspouts should cost approximately \$40 for most houses. However, DWSD is partnering with Greening of Detroit to host free workshops to learn how to disconnect and receive free materials. For more information, call the Downspout Disconnection Help Line at 313-285-2259.

### Free Downspout Disconnection Workshops

Want to learn hands on how to disconnect your downspouts? DWSD is partnering with Greening of Detroit in hosting free workshops (including materials). Call the Downspout Disconnection Help Line at 313-285-1251.

You can also check out DWSD's website at [www.dwsd.org](http://www.dwsd.org).



Detroit Water and Sewerage Department

## Downspout Disconnection Program



Information and  
"How to" guide  
for Detroit Residents

# How to Disconnect a Downspout

## Supplies

- work gloves • eye protection • dust mask • hacksaw
- measuring tape • marker • pliers • screwdriver
- downspout elbow and extension

## Supplies needed in Step 4

For **straight** pipe use rubber cap with hose clamp  
For **bell** pipe use concrete, chicken wire, newspaper, bucket

## Step 1

Determine if the pipe where the downspout attaches is a bell shape or straight.



*Straight Pipe*



*Bell Shape Pipe*

## Step 2

Measure approximately 9" from where the downspout enters the storm drain pipe.



## Step 3



Cut the downspout with a hacksaw where you measured and right above where the downspout enters the pipe. Remove that section of downspout.

## Step 4

**Bell Shape Pipe:** Cut about 1 foot by 1 foot amount of chicken wire and form into cup shape. Place into the pipe just below the bell. Add crumpled newspaper on top of the mesh (this will help ensure the concrete doesn't leak down into the sewer). Mix the concrete according to directions (stiff mixture) and add concrete until it is flush with top of bell.



**Straight Pipe:** Cap the sewer pipe. This prevents water from going in. In most cases, you should be able to use a rubber cap secured by a hose clamp. Use a screwdriver or ratchet to tighten the cap until it is secure.



## Step 5



Insert the downspout into the elbow. You may need to crimp the end of the downspout with a pair of pliers to get a good fit. (You may want to secure the downspout with a screw or rivet).

## Step 6

Attach a downspout extension to carry water away from the house and foundation. We recommend 5 feet in a direction away from foundations, sidewalks and driveways. It is critical to make sure that disconnecting your downspout and redirecting the water does not cause a hazard or nuisance to you or your neighbors!

