

Downspout Disconnection Guidelines

for Gresham Residents

These guidelines are for residential properties only. Gresham does not require a permit for disconnection of residential downspouts, but please contact 503-618-2657 for a free safety inspection prior to conducting work.

Drainage modifications to commercial or multi-family buildings must be permitted through the City of Gresham and include a drawing by a licensed engineer and must be installed by a state-certified plumber. Contact 503-618-2845.



What you need

- ☐ Measuring tape
- ☐ Pencil
- ☐ Downspout elbows and extensions (*may vary for each downspout*)
- ☐ Downspout straps (*average 1 per downspout*)
- ☐ Hack saw or reciprocating saw with blades suitable for steel or aluminum
- ☐ Standard, or flat-head screwdriver or electric drill with ¼" magnetic hex head driver bit
- ☐ Short ¼" hex head sheet metal screws (*average 6 per downspout*)
- ☐ Longer ¼" hex head sheet metal or wood screws with rubber gasket (*average 1 per downspout*)
- ☐ Hammer or pry bar
- ☐ Crimpers (*specialized hand tool for fitting downspout parts together*)
- ☐ 3" or 4" test plug or cap for the stand pipe
- ☐ Splash block – or similar flow-spreading device

Most of these items can be found at a local hardware or home improvement store.

Please use gloves, protective eyewear and ear plugs to protect you from sharp downspout material and the loud noises associated with cutting metal.

12 steps for safely disconnecting your downspouts:

1 Determine if your property is safe for disconnection

We do not encourage downspout disconnection if any of the following describe your site:

- ✦ Basement floods during heavy rain
- ✦ Rain water stands in yard for more than 24 hours
- ✦ House is on the top or side of a hill (increases risk of landslide)
- ✦ Disconnection is likely to cause soil erosion or send water to neighbor's property

Some parts of Gresham are more suitable for disconnection than others. Look on the City's suitability map to determine whether your property is in one of the more suitable areas.

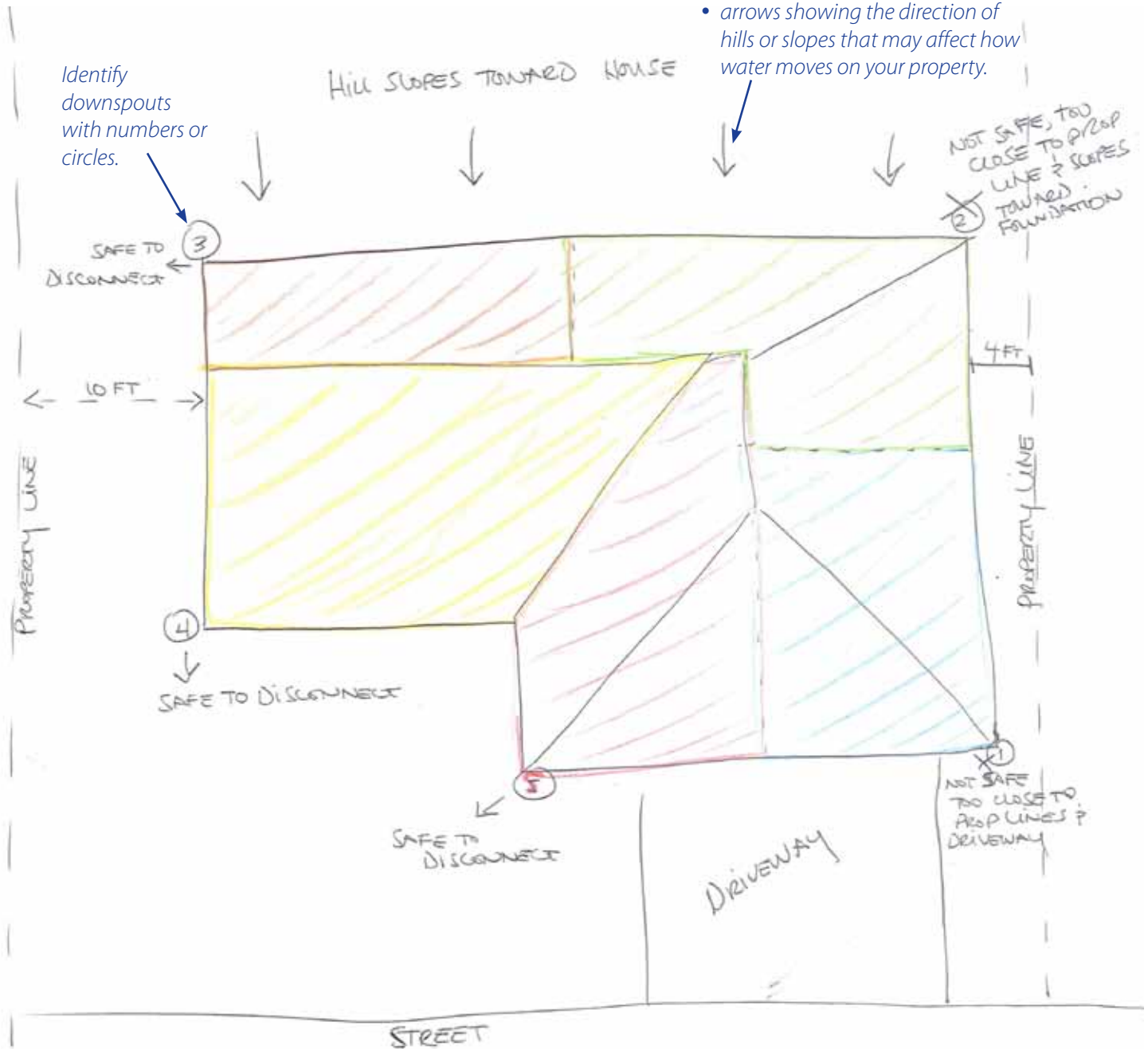
- ✦ Go to GreshamOregon.gov/Maps.
- ✦ Click on "Access Gresham Map."
- ✦ Click on "Layers," then under "Incentives and Grant Eligible Areas" select "Downspout Disconnection/Rain Garden Area."
- ✦ Click on "Search" and enter your address.
- ✦ If your property is highlighted in purple, you are in an area that tends to be more suitable for disconnection.

2 Create a site drawing

Print an aerial photograph of your property, or draw a rough bird's eye view of your house.

Include the following:

- roof lines,
- lawn and landscaping areas,
- property lines,
- driveway, and
- arrows showing the direction of hills or slopes that may affect how water moves on your property.



Determine which downspouts are suitable for disconnection, using the following criteria:

- Each disconnected downspout should be able to drain to lawn or landscaping that is 1/10th the size of the roof area draining to it. Measure roof areas and lawn/landscaping areas to confirm. E.g. downspout #3 drains 200 square feet of roof, so it should drain at **least** 20 square feet of yard.
- The ground should slope away from your house to ensure that water doesn't back up to the foundation.
- Water should exit the disconnected downspout at least 5 feet from your foundation, and 5 feet from all property lines. (Ten feet total distance from house to property lines.)
- Do not disconnect downspouts onto paved sidewalks or driveways where water will run back to the storm drains in the street.

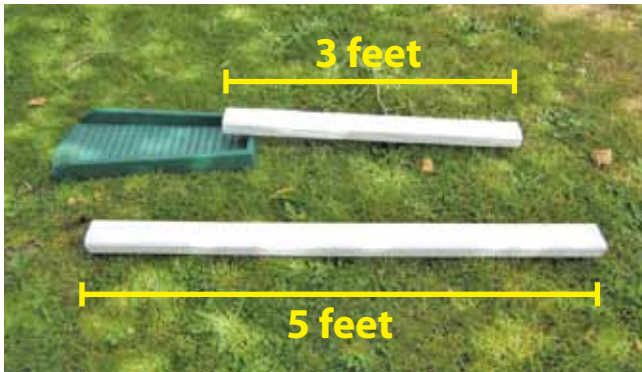
3 Plan the flow of your water

Assemble elbows and them hold up to the downspout to make sure water will flow in the direction you intend.



4 Create your extension

Cut a straight length of downspout material: 3 feet if you are using a splash block, 5 feet if you are not.



Hinged pre-cut extensions called 'dripper flippers' allow you to flip up your extension for mowing.



5 Assemble elbows and extension

Fit smaller ends of extensions into the larger ends of others. Each section should fit into the piece below it to prevent water from leaking out.



Attach extensions with two short sheet metal screws per joint. To prevent leaks, **do not put screws in the bottom** of any pieces.



Place screws only on the top or side of the gutter.

6 Decide where to cut

Hold the assembly up to the downspout, including the splash block at the end of the extension.



Mark the connected downspout one inch below where the elbow/extension assembly lines up with it. This is where you will cut.

7 Disconnect existing downspout

- Use pry bar to remove metal straps and loosen downspout.
- Use cardboard to protect your paint job, have a buddy hold the downspout.
- Cut downspout at your pencil mark using hacksaw or reciprocating saw.



8 Plug the stand pipe

Put a plumbing "test plug" or "test cap" into or over the existing stand pipe the downspout used to go into and tighten. Leave the standpipe in case you need to reconnect in the future.



9 Attach downspout strap to house

Move the hanging end of the disconnected downspout to the side and attach a downspout strap to the house behind it.



Use a longer wood screw with a gasket to prevent leaks into the siding.

10 Attach downspout disconnection assembly to house

Fit the new downspout disconnection assembly onto the disconnected downspout on the house.



Wrap the downspout strap around the new downspout assembly and attach all three pieces together with two short sheet metal screws.



Wiggle the attached downspout assembly to make sure it is secure.

11 Add a splash block

Put the splash block under the end of the new downspout to prevent water from eroding the soil.



12 Clean your gutters to ensure a working downspout!

Request a free yard sign!

