

What is a downpipe disconnection?

A downpipe disconnection simply intersects an existing downpipe which currently discharges into the combined sewer and diverts it away from the building to allow the surface water to naturally infiltrate into the ground.

When might I use a downpipe disconnection?

Downpipe disconnections are a very simple and cheap way of diverting rain water out of sewers to a nearby permeable area which should be downhill of the downpipe and away from other properties.

Rain water butts and downpipe planters or raised rain gardens can add value to a downpipe disconnection by storing and reusing water within your garden. This would have the additional benefit of reducing your water-use because you would need to water the garden less often. Overflows from these would then typically be connected to an infiltration feature such as a rain garden, filter drain or soakaway.

What do I need to consider when disconnecting my downpipe?

- Your downpipe should be disconnected to a permeable area at least 3m away from any building.
- The infiltration area should be sloping away from properties and roads
- The slope of the drain should not be greater than 1m vertical for every 50m horizontal (2%) to ensure the run-off has opportunity to infiltrate
- Rocks, flagstones or boulders can be used within the design of the downpipe disconnection to help slow the water and prevent erosion within the conveyance and infiltration area
- The existing discharge point should be capped to prevent rain water entering the combined sewer.

What will I need to do to maintain my downpipe disconnection?

Maintenance of a downpipe disconnection is similar to your existing gutters and downpipes, i.e. remove leaf litter and weeds.



Sources of further information

Information on designing, constructing and maintaining downpipe disconnections can be found at:

- raingardens.info – Rain Garden Guide
- riversides.org – Downspout Disconnection
- toronto.ca – Stormwater Management Mandatory Downpipe Disconnection
- portlandoregon.gov – How to Disconnect a Downspout