

## BEST PRACTICES FOR DISCONNECTING YOUR DOWNSPOUT

When disconnecting your downspout, water should flow onto your grass, garden or rainwater harvesting/rainbarrel system. It is very important to ensure that:

- Water flows away from your foundation walls
- Ensure that the ground slopes away from the house a minimum of 1 metre
- Water does not flow onto your neighbours property
- Water does not flow directly onto a walkway, driveway or sidewalk
- Ensure your eavestroughs are clean and drain properly
- Obtain professional advice from a knowledgeable and licensed roofer, eavestrough contractor or civil engineer



## NEED MORE INFO *about Downspout Disconnection?*

Call our customer service representatives  
Monday thru Friday between 8:30 am - 4:30 pm  
905-546-4426  
or visit our web site at  
[www.hamilton.ca/water](http://www.hamilton.ca/water)

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Hamilton  
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## BEST PRACTICES FOR DOWNSPOUT DISCONNECTION

*Protecting your home and the  
natural environment from  
combined sewer overflows.*



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# WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT DOWNSPOUT DISCONNECTION

## WHAT IS A DOWNSPOUT?

Downspouts are the vertical pipes that carry rain water away from your roof and eavestroughs. The downspouts may be connected to your private sewer drain, cistern, rainbarrel or discharge the water directly onto your lawn or garden.

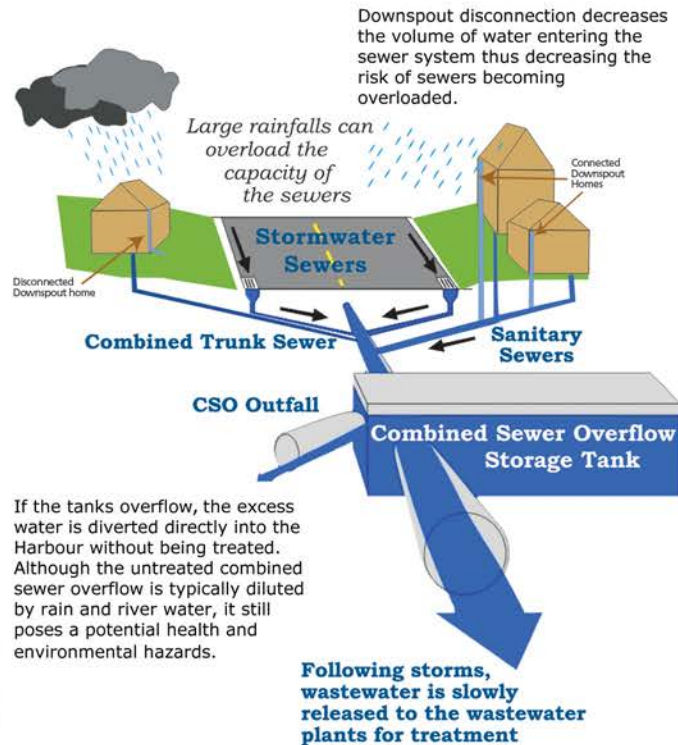
## What is Downspout Disconnection?

Downspout disconnection is the process by which your existing downspout is cut (approximately 9 inches) above the drain pipe and the drain pipe is then capped. An elbow and an extension are then added to the connection in order to divert the rainwater from flowing into your home's private sewer drain. A splash pad is added at the end of the downspout to help direct the flow and protect landscaping.



## Downspout disconnection positively impacts the quality of the water in our Harbour

By today's design standards, sewers are separated into sanitary and storm: however in the older parts of Hamilton, rainwater and sanitary sewage mix in a combined sewer system. During major rain events, the combined sewer system and wastewater treatment plants become overwhelmed and excess water fills the Combined Sewer Overflow tanks.



If the tanks overflow, the excess water is diverted directly into the Harbour without being treated. Although the untreated combined sewer overflow is typically diluted by rain and river water, it still poses a potential health and environmental hazards.

By disconnecting your downspouts, you reduce the volume of rainwater from entering the combined sewer system and minimize the incidence of combined sewer overflow to the Harbour.

## ADDITIONAL BENEFITS OF DOWNSPOUT DISCONNECTION?

### Recharges Groundwater Sources

It helps replenish and protect the groundwater table and reduces and delays stormwater runoff.

### Frees up capacity, saves money and helps the environment

When water in the combined sewer system reaches the Wastewater Treatment plant, the treatment plant must treat the rainwater as it has been mixed with sanitary sewage. By disconnecting your downspouts in a combined sewer area, it will reduce wastewater flows to the treatment plant and will create an energy savings and increased effectiveness at the Wastewater Treatment plant which in turn produces fewer greenhouse gas emissions.

### Free water for irrigation

By disconnecting your downspout and capturing the rainwater in a harvesting system or rain barrels, you can save that water for irrigating your plants and gardens instead of using tap water.

