

DIFFERENT APPROACHES TO BETTER YARD DRAINAGE

If you can't ignore that soggy spot out back any longer, there are lots of options for improving your yard's drainage. Below are a few traditional

ways to drain water. Or you can go with an approach gaining favor and create a rain garden that captures runoff on your property.

HOW MUCH RISE DO YOU NEED?
The general rule is a slope of 1/4 inch per one foot of travel. So when laying a 10-foot pipe, one end should be 1 1/4 inches higher than the low end. If you are running 80 feet of pipe, your starting point in the back yard should be 10 inches higher than the exit at the curb.



BUILDING A RAIN GARDEN

A rain garden is a low area where water can pool and slowly seep into the ground. If you have a small back yard or live on a slope this is not a good approach, so you will have to use traditional drains to move water off your property.



CHANNEL DRAIN

Used in locations where the surface is sealed — such as tiled patios. Surface grading is not crucial since the drain can extend as wide as necessary to capture the water. Types of channel drains that can be driven over can be install in a driveway to keep water out of a garage or house.



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USING A POP-UP EMITTER

One of the easiest ways to get rid of water is with a pop-up emitter — a plastic basin that connects to a drain pipe. When water pressure in the pipe builds up, the plastic top lifts just enough to let water flow out. The downside with pop-ups is that it is hard to control where the water ends up. One good spot is next to a driveway, so water will run down the driveway approach and into the street. Pop-ups usually mean you don't have to hassle with tunneling under a sidewalk and you don't have to deal with the expense and hassle of getting a permit to cut the curb.

CUTTING THE CURB

To be sure the water ends up in the street, you can cut a hole in the curb and put the pipe up to the hole. There are several considerations:

- Curb face must be high enough to allow for a 3-inch hole — usually at least 6 inches high.
- It's a messy job to tunnel under a sidewalk.
- Permit is required since you are encroaching on the publicly owned curb — often costing \$400-\$500.
- The contractor you hire to cut the curb may get the permit for you — part of his services for the several hundred dollars he is charging.

Sources: NDS, Orange Coast College Horticulture Dept., East Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District

Graphic by SCOTT M. BROWN (sbrown@ocregister.com) / The Register

FILTER DOWNSPOUTS

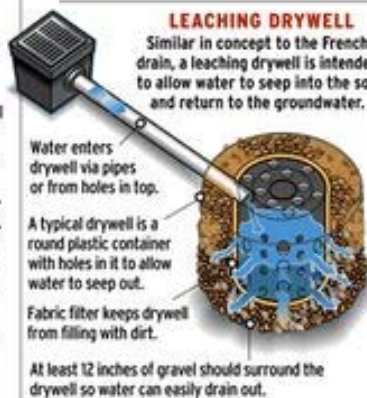
To keep debris from clogging your pipes, consider having the downspout empty onto a catch basin. Large objects, such as leaves, will be filtered out and heavier bits, such as dirt, will sink to the bottom of the basin. Alternatively, you can add clean-out boxes to downspouts — sections of pipe with small grates that catch debris. A small door opens for cleaning.

RAIN BARRELS

Storing runoff not only reduces the amount you have to drain away, but also reduces your water bill. A wide variety of rain barrels are available, typically from 50 to 100 gallons. If the budget and space allow, consider buying a lot of them. A 2,000-square-foot roof drains about 1,200 gallons of water after 1 inch of rain. To capture a significant amount of runoff requires numerous barrels — they can be connected so one hose can be fed by several containers.

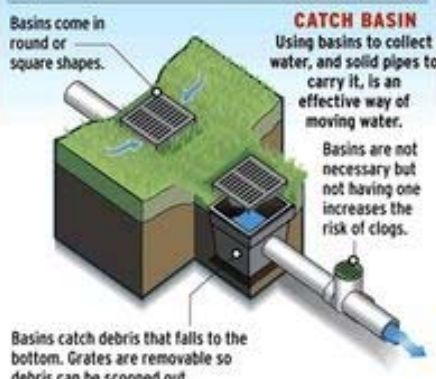
LEACHING DRYWELL

Similar in concept to the French drain, a leaching drywell is intended to allow water to seep into the soil and return to the groundwater.



CATCH BASIN

Using basins to collect water, and solid pipes to carry it, is an effective way of moving water. Basins are not necessary but not having one increases the risk of clogs.



SUMP PUMP DRYWELL

If your back yard is not high enough to have water flow out, you can use a pump to remove runoff.

