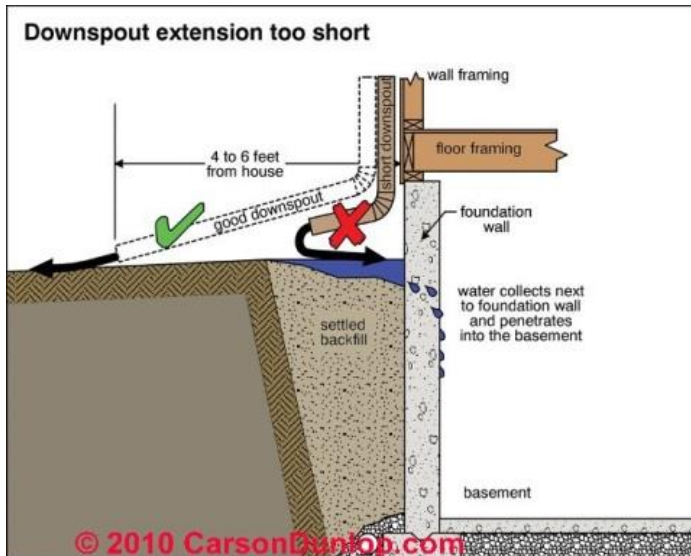


Why Trust Anyone Else?

The Importance of Gutters and Downspouts



Water is surprisingly damaging to a home. Rain water that continually falls off a roof and pools around the foundation of a home can have very harmful long-term effects! That is why gutters on a home are very important.

Although gutters and downspouts are on the top of a house, they are actually very important to the bottom of the house: the foundation! If the ground around a foundation is frequently wet and soggy, it can become a haven for the growth of mildew and mold. Water can also cause ground erosion and wet basements and crawlspaces, concrete damage, and worst of all, foundation damage.

When water saturates the soil around a foundation, it becomes heavy and creates a lot of pressure against the walls. This can cause bowing and cracking. Interestingly, water can also wash

away the soil which supports the structure, leaving it without enough support. Soil also expands when it is wet, and contracts when it is dry. This cycle can be damaging to a foundation.

Healthy gutters and downspouts play a critical role in channeling water around a home and then away from it. When there's a period of heavy rain, gutters catch the water, direct it to downspouts, and the downspouts carry it away from the structure.

The Mid-America Regional Council reports that each downspout on a house directs twelve gallons of water per minute away from a home during a 1-inch rainfall. Wow! That's a lot more water than homeowners realize, and all that water can be a powerful force against a home if it's not properly channeled.

Gutters should be kept in good repair. Homeowners ought to see to it that their gutters are not clogged by leaves, aren't pulling away from the house, and aren't crushed or disconnected in any locations.

If water comes straight out of the downspout at the base of a home, it may seep towards the basement or crawl space, thus compromising the foundation and possibly creating wet, leaky spaces that encourage the growth of mold and mildew. Homeowners should see to it that downspouts direct water away from a home's foundation at least three feet or more.



After a heavy rainfall, it is a good idea to walk the perimeter of a home, checking for standing water or excessive moisture that is channeled back towards the foundation. If, during the perimeter walk, suspicious water is found, the gutters and downspouts should be inspected for clogs, and damage.