

How to improve rain gutter drainage.

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James has water that spills out of one corner of his rain gutters where there is no downspout. And the downspout that goes into the weeping tiles often overflows.

It could be that the slope of the rain gutters is not steep enough to drain away the water, or that the size of the rain gutter is too small for the size of the roof. The larger the roof, the more water will be coming down.

To improve things, putting in a new downspout where there is none could be a good idea, and James had the right idea of getting it to flow far away from the foundation with a long horizontal section of downspout. To make that long horizontal section of downspout less of an annoyance, we showed him a new gadget called Aim-a-drain. This allows you to fold the horizontal part of your downspout up vertical to get it out of the way, but also to rotate it left and right to get it out of the way but still leave it functional. The gadget was invented by a Canadian in a wheelchair who had real problems getting past long downspouts lying across the ground. Flow-Guard Mfg in St. Albert, Alberta.

The downspout that goes into the weeping tiles could also be cut off and then directed away from the house. In fact many municipalities do not even allow you to run this water into the sewage system, which is often what happens with weeping tile connections. But on the other hand, running the water into the ground is often very convenient to avoid those long horizontal sections of downspout always going across walkways. If you do want to drain into your weeping tiles, but keep them free of junk, we showed two other gadgets. The first is called The Wedge, and it is simply a better leaf strainer to put at the top of the downspout.

The second is called EasyClean. (Note 2009: EasyClean seems to have gone out of business - but I have found a less slick but functional debris diverter at GutterWorks.com.) You cut out a section of your downspout, and insert the leaf strainer. The water falls from above and flushes the leaves right down with it. The EasyClean separator intercepts the leaves with a slanted grill and the leaves flow forward onto the ground. Where there are no leaves, the water flows straight through. A great self cleaning device.

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