



Dear Friend,

Each month, BOWA Home Advisor provides you with important tips on how to improve and protect your home's value. We hope the following is helpful.



Are you ready for the next storm?

With summer storms upon us, it's important to ensure that your home's gutters, downspouts and yard drains are well maintained. With proper care and installation, gutters and downspouts can help minimize the risk of roof leaks, sticking windows and doors, foundation damage and wet basements.

At least twice per year, these drainage systems should be maintained by doing the following:

- Gain access to the roof with a ladder. Don't lean the ladder against a downspout or gutter, which can easily bend or break. Never hold on to the gutter or downspout for support, as they are not meant to support your weight.
- Remove leaves, twigs and other debris from gutters by hand or with a gutter scoop or small garden trowel. Put debris in a bucket or plastic trash bag placed on the roof or ladder.
- Use a garden hose with a spray nozzle, small pressure washer or leaf blower to help flush out the remaining mud, dirt and debris from the gutters. When choosing your tools for this job, keep in mind that you'll be high up and possibly in awkward positions making operations cumbersome.
- Flush the downspouts with a garden hose to ensure they are not clogged. If a plugged downspout can't be cleared with a hose, use a small plumber's snake or a straightened clothes hanger. Be gentle, as downspouts aren't as strong as house pipes.
- Ensure downspouts discharge onto a splash block to prevent the concentrated flow from gouging a gully or collecting along a foundation. The splash block absorbs some of the energy of the falling water and spreads it out so that it is less likely to erode the yard.
- Once the gutters and downspouts are cleared, check for

any areas in the gutters that collect standing water, as this is the cause of most gutter problems. To check this, pour some water into the gutter; water should flow evenly.

- If there is any standing water, ensure that gutters have a slight slope (about 0.5 percent) towards the downspout and do not have any sags. Eliminate sags by repairing loose or damaged hangers and adding additional hangers as needed.
- Finally, check yard drains to make sure they are free from dirt and debris. If necessary, remove the drain cover and use a plumber's snake or straightened clothes hanger to clear debris.

With just a minimal investment of time and money, you can easily maintain your gutter and drainage system and avoid costly structural damages.

If you would like more information on this topic or if there are other ways we can be of service, please contact [BOWA Builders](#).

Regards.



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