OTTAWA EAVESTROUGHS

Downspouts & Drainage

Downspout installation, extensions, underground drainage connections, rain barrels, splash blocks, and directing water away from Ottawa foundations in clay-heavy soil.

19 Expert Answers from Gutter IQ

ottawaeavestroughs.com/construction-brain

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Q1

How do I prevent the bottom of my downspouts from getting crushed by snow plows in Ottawa?

Downspout damage from snow plows is one of the most common winter eavestrough problems in Ottawa, especially for homes on city streets where municipal plows create heavy snow berms along the curb. The combination of Ottawa's 200+ centimetres of annual snowfall and aggressive plowing operations puts serious stress on any downspout that extends into the plow zone.

The most effective solution is **installing hinged or removable downspout extensions** that can be disconnected before the snow season. These extensions typically attach with a simple slip joint or wing nut connection about 18 inches above ground level. In November, you remove the bottom section and store it in your garage, then reinstall it in spring after the final melt. This approach costs 40 to 80 dollars per downspout for the hardware and keeps your drainage system intact while protecting it from plow damage.

Underground drainage connections offer permanent protection but require more investment and planning. A proper underground system involves burying a 4-inch weeping tile or PVC pipe from the downspout base to a safe discharge point at least 1.8 metres from your foundation, as required by the Ontario Building Code. In Ottawa's clay-heavy soil with a frost line between 1.2 and 1.5 metres, underground drainage must be installed below the frost line to prevent freeze damage and heaving. Professional installation typically costs 800 to 1,500 dollars per downspout connection, including excavation and proper grading.

For homes where underground drainage isn't feasible, **protective barriers** can shield downspouts from direct plow contact. Some Ottawa homeowners install decorative stone or concrete bollards 2 to 3 feet in front of vulnerable downspouts. Others use flexible snow stakes or reflective markers to alert plow operators to the downspout location. These solutions work best on private driveways or lanes where you can control the plowing operation.

Flexible downspout materials like corrugated plastic or flexible aluminum tubing can absorb impact better than rigid sections, though they're more prone to kinking and don't look as finished. If you choose flexible extensions, secure them with stakes or weights to prevent wind displacement, and inspect them regularly for damage that could restrict water flow.

The timing of your protection strategy matters in Ottawa's climate. Snow can arrive as early as October and last through April, so plan to implement downspout protection by Halloween. Spring reinstallation should wait until you're confident the final melt has occurred, typically mid to late April in the Ottawa Valley.

For complex drainage situations or homes with multiple vulnerable downspouts, consulting with an eavestrough professional through the Ottawa Construction Network directory can help you design a comprehensive protection strategy that maintains proper drainage while surviving Ottawa's harsh winters.

Q2

What is the proper way to strap a downspout to vinyl siding without damaging it in Ottawa?

Strapping downspouts to vinyl siding requires careful technique to prevent cracking, warping, and water infiltration, especially in Ottawa's extreme temperature swings that cause both the siding and downspout to expand and contract significantly throughout the year.

The key is using **vinyl siding-specific straps and fasteners** that accommodate thermal movement without creating stress points. Standard galvanized steel downspout straps work well, but they must be installed with vinyl siding clips or blocks rather than screwed directly through the siding face. The strap should wrap around the downspout and attach to a mounting block or clip that distributes the load across multiple siding panels.

Install mounting blocks behind each strap location before attaching the hardware. These small vinyl or aluminum blocks slide under the siding and provide a solid, flat mounting surface that prevents the thin siding from flexing or cracking under load. The block also creates a weatherproof seal around the fastener penetration. Use stainless steel or galvanized screws that are long enough to penetrate at least one inch into the wall sheathing or framing behind the siding.

In Ottawa's climate, **space downspout straps no more than 6 to 8 feet apart** rather than the 10-foot spacing sometimes used in milder regions. Heavy snow and ice loading on downspouts requires more frequent support to prevent the downspout from pulling away from the wall or causing the vinyl siding to buckle. Install straps at the top near the elbow, at the bottom near ground level, and at intermediate points on longer runs.

Never overtighten straps on vinyl siding - leave approximately 1/8 inch of clearance between the strap and downspout to allow for thermal expansion. Ottawa's 65-degree annual temperature swing causes aluminum downspouts to expand and contract significantly, and a too-tight strap will either crack the siding or bend the downspout. Check strap tightness seasonally and adjust if needed.

Avoid installing straps during extreme temperatures - vinyl becomes brittle below minus 10 degrees Celsius and soft above plus 30 degrees Celsius. The ideal installation window is spring through early fall when both materials are at moderate temperatures and flexibility.

For homes with complex siding patterns or valuable vinyl systems, this work is best handled by professionals experienced with both eavestrough and siding installation. Browse eavestrough contractors familiar with vinyl siding through the Ottawa Construction Network directory at justynrookcontracting.com.

Q3

Downspout Rerouting Costs in Gloucester Ottawa

Downspout Rerouting Costs in Gloucester

Rerouting a downspout away from your foundation in Gloucester typically costs **$200 to $800 per downspout** depending on the complexity of the work involved. A simple above-ground extension using an aluminum elbow and splash block runs just **$50 to $150 per downspout** if you are comfortable doing it yourself, while a professional underground drainage connection costs **$400 to $800 per downspout** including excavation, pipe, and grading.

Gloucester sits on some of Ottawa's **heaviest clay soil**, particularly in the older sections near Ogilvie Road and Blair Road, as well as the newer developments around Chaperal and Beacon Hill. Clay soil drains very poorly, which means water pooling near your foundation is an especially serious concern in this part of the city. The Ontario Building Code requires downspouts to discharge at least **1.8 metres from the foundation**, and in clay-heavy Gloucester soil, pushing that distance to **2.5 to 3 metres** is strongly advisable.

The simplest reroute involves adding a **downspout extension** — a straight or flexible aluminum pipe that directs water further from the house at ground level. Extensions cost **$15 to $40 each** at Ottawa building supply stores and take about 15 minutes to install. Pair them with a concrete or plastic **splash block** ($10 to $25) to prevent erosion at the discharge point. This is a genuine DIY task that most homeowners can handle with basic tools.

For a more permanent solution, an **underground drainage pipe** carries water from the base of the downspout through a buried 4-inch corrugated or solid PVC pipe to a discharge point well away from the house. Professional installation of underground downspout drainage costs **$400 to $800 per downspout run** in Gloucester, covering excavation of a trench 12 to 18 inches deep, pipe installation with proper slope, a catch basin or pop-up emitter at the discharge end, and backfill with gravel and topsoil. The total for rerouting all downspouts on a typical 4-downspout Gloucester home underground runs **$1,600 to $3,200**.

If you want the underground pipe to connect to the **municipal storm sewer**, you will need to check with the City of Ottawa first. Connecting private drainage to the city storm system requires approval, and in some Gloucester neighbourhoods with combined sewer systems, it may not be permitted at all. Call 3-1-1 to verify what is allowed for your specific address. If a permit is required for storm sewer connection, add **$150 to $300** for the permit fee.

Ottawa's **deep frost line of 1.2 to 1.5 metres** means underground drainage pipes must be installed with proper slope so they drain completely before winter. Standing water in a pipe that sits above the frost line will freeze and crack the pipe, causing exactly the kind of foundation-area water problem you are trying to prevent. A slope of at least **1 percent grade** (1 inch of drop per 8 feet of run) ensures water clears the pipe before freezing weather sets in.

For professional downspout rerouting and foundation drainage work in Gloucester, the Ottawa Construction Network directory at justynrookcontracting.com can help you find experienced contractors who understand the local soil conditions and drainage requirements.

Q4

Best Downspout Material for Ottawa Cold Winters - Crack Prevention

The best downspout material for preventing cracking in Ottawa's extreme cold is **aluminum**, and it is not a close contest. Aluminum downspouts do not become brittle at low temperatures, will not crack from ice expansion, and handle Ottawa's full temperature range from **minus 30 to plus 35 degrees Celsius** without any structural concern. This is why aluminum accounts for roughly 85 percent of all residential downspout installations in the Ottawa market.

Aluminum's resistance to cold-weather cracking comes down to metallurgy — aluminum remains ductile and flexible even at the coldest temperatures Ottawa experiences. When water freezes inside a downspout and expands, aluminum flexes slightly to accommodate the pressure rather than fracturing. Standard residential downspouts in **2-by-3-inch rectangular** or **3-inch round** profiles handle freeze-thaw cycling season after season without degradation.

Materials to Avoid in Ottawa

Vinyl downspouts are the worst choice for Ottawa winters and the most common source of cold-weather cracking. PVC plastic becomes increasingly brittle below **minus 20 degrees Celsius**, and Ottawa regularly hits minus 25 to minus 30 during January and February cold snaps. When water trapped inside a vinyl downspout freezes and expands, the rigid brittle plastic cracks or splits along the seams. Even without ice, simply bumping a vinyl downspout with a snow shovel or snowblower at minus 25 can shatter it. Most experienced Ottawa contractors will not install vinyl downspouts and actively recommend replacing existing vinyl systems before they fail.

Galvanized steel downspouts offer good cold-weather durability and will not crack from ice expansion. Steel's main weakness in Ottawa is **rust**, not cracking. Over 10 to 15 years, the galvanized coating wears through, especially at the bottom section near ground level where salt splash, standing water, and physical contact accelerate corrosion. Steel downspouts cost **$10 to $22 per linear foot**, comparable to aluminum but with higher long-term maintenance costs.

Copper downspouts perform beautifully in cold weather and never crack, but at **$25 to $45 per linear foot** they represent a premium investment best suited to heritage homes and high-end properties in neighbourhoods like Rockcliffe Park and the Glebe.

To specifically prevent ice blockages that stress any downspout material, proper sizing matters enormously. A **3-by-4-inch oversized downspout** drains faster and is far less likely to freeze solid than a standard 2-by-3. Ottawa contractors often recommend oversized downspouts on homes with large roof areas or on the north-facing side of the house where limited sun exposure means ice persists longer. Installing a downspout with a **wide-mouth outlet**

at the top where it connects to the eavestrough also reduces the narrowest point where ice typically forms first.

Keeping downspouts clear of debris is the single best way to prevent ice blockages regardless of material. A clogged downspout traps water that freezes from the bottom up, creating an ice column that can split even aluminum at vulnerable seam joints. **Twice-annual cleaning** — once in late spring and once in mid-November before the first hard freeze — dramatically reduces winter ice problems. For professional downspout installation or replacement, the Ottawa Construction Network directory at justynrookcontracting.com connects you with local eavestrough specialists.

Q5

How Many Downspouts Does an Ottawa Bungalow Need?

A typical Ottawa bungalow needs **a minimum of four downspouts**, and many homes perform better with five or six depending on roof size, pitch, and the intensity of Ottawa's summer thunderstorms.

Getting the Downspout Count Right

The standard industry rule is **one downspout for every 35 to 40 linear feet of eavestrough run**, but Ottawa's rainfall intensity means you should lean toward the lower end of that range. During a heavy July thunderstorm, Ottawa can receive **25 to 50 millimetres of rain in under an hour**, and your eavestroughs need to drain fast enough to prevent overflow. A standard 1,200-square-foot bungalow with a hip or gable roof typically has 120 to 150 linear feet of eavestrough, which means four downspouts is the minimum and five is often the smarter choice.

Placement matters just as much as quantity. Each downspout should be positioned at a **low point in the eavestrough run**, which means your gutter needs proper slope — a minimum of **one-quarter inch per 10 feet** — directing water toward each downspout location. Corner downspouts are standard, but if your bungalow has a long unbroken roofline exceeding 40 feet, you need either a mid-run downspout or a dual-slope system that pitches the eavestrough from the centre toward both ends.

Ottawa's **clay-heavy soil** adds another layer of importance to proper downspout placement. Clay drains poorly, so any water that pools near your foundation sits there far longer than it would in sandy soil. Each downspout should discharge water **at least 1.8 metres from the foundation** per Ontario Building Code requirements, and many Ottawa contractors recommend extending that to **2 to 3 metres** using downspout extensions or splash pads. If you have a finished basement, this distance becomes even more critical.

For homes in heavily treed Ottawa neighbourhoods like the **Glebe, Rockcliffe Park, or Old Ottawa South**, oversized downspouts — 3-inch by 4-inch rectangular instead of the standard 2-inch by 3-inch — reduce the

chance of debris clogging the outlet. A single leaf clump can completely block a standard downspout and turn your entire eavestrough into an overflowing trough.

Installing an additional downspout on an existing system typically costs **$200 to $600** in Ottawa, including the elbow connections and a short extension. That is a very small investment compared to the **$5,000 to $15,000** that foundation waterproofing costs when poor drainage causes basement moisture problems. If your eavestroughs overflow during heavy rain, adding a downspout is almost always the most cost-effective fix.

To find an eavestrough professional who can evaluate your bungalow's drainage needs, browse the Ottawa Construction Network directory at justynrookcontracting.com.

Q6

Where Should Downspouts Discharge Water in Ottawa's Clay Soil?

Downspout discharge placement is one of the most important decisions you can make to protect your Ottawa home's foundation, and the city's **heavy Leda clay soil** makes this even more critical than in other regions.

The Ontario Building Code requires downspouts to discharge water **at least 1.8 metres from the foundation wall**, but experienced Ottawa contractors consistently recommend a minimum of **2 to 3 metres** because of how poorly our local clay drains. Leda clay — also called Champlain Sea clay — is notorious across the Ottawa Valley for its extremely low permeability. Water that pools on clay near your foundation does not soak away quickly. Instead, it sits against the foundation wall for days, working its way through any crack or weak point in the concrete, and hydrostatic pressure builds up against basement walls.

Best Discharge Options for Ottawa Homes

The simplest and most common solution is a **downspout extension** — either a rigid aluminum elbow or a flexible corrugated extension that directs water across the surface away from the house. These cost **$15 to $50 each** and are easy to install yourself. The key is ensuring the ground **slopes away from the foundation at a grade of at least 2 percent** (roughly a one-inch drop per four feet) so the water continues moving rather than pooling at the end of the extension.

For a more permanent solution, many Ottawa homeowners install **underground drainage pipes** that carry downspout water to a pop-up emitter or daylight outlet located **3 to 5 metres from the house**. Underground drainage runs cost **$500 to $1,500 per downspout** installed, depending on pipe length and soil conditions. The pipe must be buried **below the frost line** (1.2 to 1.5 metres deep in Ottawa) if it connects to any pressurized or sealed system, though pop-up emitters that drain freely can be buried shallower since they allow water to freeze

and expand without cracking.

Splash blocks — those angled concrete or plastic pads placed under the downspout outlet — are better than nothing but are really the bare minimum. They redirect the initial splash but do not carry water far enough from the foundation in clay soil. If splash blocks are your current setup, upgrading to proper extensions is a worthwhile weekend project.

Never direct downspout water toward your **driveway, walkway, or a neighbouring property**. In Ottawa, the City's lot grading requirements specify that each property must manage its own storm water. Discharging onto a neighbour's lot can create a bylaw complaint. Also, never connect downspouts to Ottawa's **sanitary sewer system** — this is a municipal bylaw violation. Some older Ottawa homes still have illegal connections from decades ago, and the City actively identifies and requires disconnection of these during property sales.

If you are dealing with foundation moisture despite proper downspout extensions, the Ottawa Construction Network directory at justynrookcontracting.com lists contractors in both eavestrough and foundation waterproofing categories who can provide a comprehensive drainage assessment.

Q7

Should I Connect Downspouts to Underground Drainage in Ottawa?

Connecting downspouts to underground drainage tiles is an excellent long-term investment for many Ottawa homes, but it needs to be done correctly to avoid creating more problems than it solves — especially given our deep frost line and clay soil conditions.

Underground drainage tile systems work by routing downspout water through buried pipes to a discharge point well away from your foundation. When properly installed, they eliminate surface extensions that get kicked around, tripped over, or moved by lawnmowers, and they provide a permanent, invisible drainage solution. For Ottawa homes sitting on **Leda clay**, which holds water like a bathtub, getting roof runoff as far from the foundation as possible is genuinely important for long-term structural health.

What a Proper Ottawa Installation Looks Like

The drainage pipe — typically **4-inch rigid PVC** — should be installed with a **minimum slope of 1 percent** (about one-eighth inch per foot) running away from the house to a discharge point. In Ottawa, this discharge point is usually a **pop-up emitter** that sits flush with the lawn and pops open under water pressure, releasing the flow at the surface 3 to 5 metres from the foundation. The alternative is a **daylight outlet** where the pipe exits on a slope or into a swale at the property's low point.

The critical Ottawa-specific consideration is **frost depth**. Our frost line sits at **1.2 to 1.5 metres**, and any section of underground pipe that holds standing water above the frost line will freeze solid in winter, creating an ice plug that backs water up into your eavestroughs. The solution is ensuring your system drains completely — no belly sections or low spots where water can sit — and using a pop-up emitter that allows residual water to drain out rather than a sealed system that traps it.

A professional underground drainage installation in Ottawa costs **$500 to $1,500 per downspout**, depending on the run length, depth, and whether the contractor encounters rock or tree roots. A typical bungalow with four downspouts might run **$2,500 to $5,000** for the complete underground system. This is significantly more than simple extensions, but it adds value to your property and provides decades of maintenance-free drainage.

Do not connect downspouts to your home's weeping tile system. This is a common and costly mistake. Weeping tiles around your foundation footing are designed to collect groundwater seepage, not handle the volume of roof runoff. Dumping hundreds of litres of rainwater into your weeping tile during a thunderstorm can overwhelm the system and actually **push water into your basement** through the sump pit. Keep roof drainage and foundation drainage as completely separate systems.

Also, connecting downspouts to Ottawa's **municipal storm or sanitary sewer is prohibited** under City bylaws. If your home has an older connection, the City may require disconnection during a renovation or property transfer.

For a proper underground drainage installation, look for contractors experienced with Ottawa's clay soil conditions through the Ottawa Construction Network directory at justynrookcontracting.com.

Q8

How Far Should Downspout Extensions Run From Your Ottawa Foundation?

In Ottawa, downspout extensions should carry water **a minimum of 1.8 metres (6 feet) from your foundation wall**, which is the Ontario Building Code requirement. However, given Ottawa's notoriously poor-draining Leda clay soil, most experienced local contractors recommend extending that distance to **2 to 3 metres (7 to 10 feet)** for genuine foundation protection.

The reason Ottawa homeowners need more distance than the OBC minimum comes down to soil behaviour. The **Leda clay** found across most of Ottawa and the Ottawa Valley absorbs water very slowly and expands when saturated. Water that pools on clay near your foundation creates **hydrostatic pressure** against basement walls, and that pressure finds every hairline crack, cold joint, and imperfection in your concrete. Ottawa's **50-plus freeze-thaw cycles per winter** then turn any small moisture intrusion into a larger crack as trapped water expands and contracts repeatedly.

Choosing the Right Extension Method

Rigid aluminum extensions are the most common and cost just **$15 to $30 each**. They attach directly to the downspout elbow at the base and can be angled to direct water along the most effective path. The drawback is that rigid extensions get bumped by lawnmowers, stepped on, and knocked out of alignment. Painting them to match your eavestrough colour helps them blend in visually.

Flexible corrugated extensions in black or white plastic cost **$10 to $25** and can be routed around landscaping obstacles. They work well but tend to collect debris inside the corrugations, so flush them out with a hose each spring. Some homeowners bury the corrugated end slightly under mulch for a cleaner look, which is fine as long as the outlet end remains clear.

Roll-up extensions are a popular compromise — they coil flat against the house when dry and automatically unroll under water pressure during rain. These cost **$20 to $40 each** and solve the lawn-mowing obstacle problem, though they are less durable than rigid options and typically need replacement every two to three seasons.

For the most permanent solution, **underground drainage pipes** carry water 3 to 5 metres from the foundation to a pop-up emitter or daylight outlet, costing **$500 to $1,500 per downspout** installed. This is the gold standard for Ottawa homes with finished basements or chronic moisture concerns.

Regardless of which extension method you choose, the **ground must slope away from your foundation** at the discharge point. If you extend the downspout 3 metres but the ground there slopes back toward the house, you have just relocated the problem. Check the grade with a level — you want at least a **2 percent slope** (one inch of drop over four feet) away from the foundation across the entire discharge zone.

If your basement shows any signs of moisture despite proper extensions, a drainage professional can evaluate your full system. Browse eavestrough and waterproofing contractors through the Ottawa Construction Network directory at justynrookcontracting.com.

Q9

What Size Downspouts for 6-Inch Eavestroughs in Ottawa?

If you have upgraded to **6-inch K-style eavestroughs**, you need **3-inch by 4-inch rectangular downspouts** to handle the increased water volume those larger gutters collect. Pairing 6-inch eavestroughs with undersized 2-by-3-inch downspouts is one of the most common drainage mistakes in Ottawa, and it creates a bottleneck that defeats the purpose of the larger gutter.

A 6-inch K-style eavestrough holds roughly **40 percent more water per linear foot** than a standard 5-inch profile, which is exactly why Ottawa homeowners with steep roofs, large roof areas, or valley-style rooflines choose the bigger size. But all that extra capacity is meaningless if the downspout cannot drain the trough fast enough during a heavy storm. Ottawa regularly experiences **summer thunderstorms dumping 25 to 50 millimetres per hour**, and a 2-by-3-inch downspout on a 6-inch gutter simply cannot keep up. The eavestrough fills, overflows at the seams, and sends water cascading down your fascia and siding — exactly the damage you paid more to prevent.

Sizing by the Numbers

Standard 2-inch by 3-inch downspouts can drain approximately **600 square feet of roof area** effectively. **3-inch by 4-inch downspouts** handle roughly **1,200 square feet of roof area**, doubling the drainage capacity. For a typical Ottawa two-storey home with a roof area of 1,500 to 2,000 square feet, you would need a minimum of two 3-by-4 downspouts, though three or four is the practical standard to ensure redundancy if one becomes partially blocked by debris.

The outlet hole where the eavestrough connects to the downspout also needs to match the larger size. If you are upgrading from 5-inch to 6-inch eavestroughs, the contractor should install **3-by-4-inch outlets** cut into the new gutter trough. Retrofitting larger downspouts onto existing 5-inch eavestroughs rarely makes sense — the outlet hole in a 5-inch trough is not large enough to feed a 3-by-4 downspout efficiently.

Round downspouts are another option, with **3-inch and 4-inch round** being the common residential sizes. A 4-inch round downspout has slightly less capacity than a 3-by-4 rectangular but offers a cleaner look on certain home styles. Round downspouts are more common on half-round eavestrough systems used on heritage homes in **Rockcliffe Park, New Edinburgh, and the Glebe**. For 6-inch half-round gutters, a **4-inch round downspout** is the appropriate match.

Cost-wise, upgrading to 3-by-4-inch downspouts adds **$50 to $100 per downspout** over standard 2-by-3 sizing when done as part of a new installation. Retrofitting larger downspouts onto an existing system runs **$200 to $400 per downspout** since the outlet openings need to be reworked. Given that proper drainage protects your foundation from thousands of dollars in potential water damage, this is one of the most cost-effective upgrades in the eavestrough system.

For professional sizing advice specific to your roof configuration, browse eavestrough contractors through the Ottawa Construction Network directory at justynrookcontracting.com.

Q10

How to Reroute a Downspout Away From a Neighbour's Fence in Nepean

Yes, you can absolutely reroute a downspout, and if it is currently dumping water against your neighbour's fence in Nepean, you really should address it before it becomes a property dispute or bylaw issue.

Under the City of Ottawa's **lot grading and drainage bylaws**, every property owner is responsible for managing their own storm water runoff. You are not permitted to direct concentrated water flow — like a downspout discharge — onto a neighbouring property in a way that causes damage or nuisance. A downspout pouring directly against a shared fence is a clear problem: it accelerates rot on wooden fence posts, can undermine the fence's concrete footings, and saturates the soil along the property line, potentially causing drainage issues for your neighbour's lot or even their foundation.

Your Rerouting Options

The simplest fix is adding an **elbow and extension** at the base of the downspout to redirect the water flow back onto your own property, away from both the fence and your foundation. A basic aluminum elbow with a rigid extension costs **$20 to $50 in materials** and takes about 30 minutes if you are comfortable with a screwdriver and sheet metal screws. Direct the extension so water discharges at least **1.8 metres from your foundation** (OBC requirement) and flows toward a part of your yard that slopes away from both houses.

If space is tight — which is common in Nepean's newer subdivisions like **Barrhaven, Chapman Mills, and Stonebridge** where lot widths are narrow — you may need to get more creative. An **underground drainage pipe** running from the downspout base to a pop-up emitter in a better location costs **$500 to $1,200** installed and solves the problem permanently without any surface obstacles. This is especially worthwhile on **side-lot downspouts** where there is only 1 to 2 metres between houses.

Another option is relocating the downspout entirely to a different position on the eavestrough. This involves capping the existing downspout outlet, cutting a new outlet hole in the eavestrough at the desired location, and running a new downspout. A contractor typically charges **$200 to $600** for this work, depending on the height of the home and complexity of the reroute. On a single-storey Nepean bungalow, this is straightforward; on a two-storey home, scaffolding or an extension ladder adds to the cost.

Before doing the work, it is worth having a friendly conversation with your neighbour. If the fence has already sustained water damage, addressing it proactively shows good faith and may prevent a more formal dispute. If the fence is shared under the **Ontario Line Fences Act**, you may both have a stake in ensuring drainage does not compromise it.

No permit is required for rerouting a downspout in Nepean or anywhere in Ottawa, as long as you are not connecting to the municipal storm sewer system. For professional help rerouting stubborn drainage situations, check the Ottawa Construction Network directory at justynrookcontracting.com for eavestrough contractors familiar with Nepean's lot configurations.

Q11

Round vs Rectangular Downspouts for Ottawa Eavestroughs

Both round and rectangular downspouts work well in Ottawa, but **rectangular downspouts are the better choice for most Ottawa homes** because they handle higher water volumes and pair naturally with the K-style eavestroughs that dominate our market.

The standard **2-inch by 3-inch rectangular downspout** has a cross-sectional area of roughly **6 square inches**, while a **3-inch round downspout** has about **7 square inches**. So at first glance, round seems to win on capacity. But rectangular downspouts sit **flush against the wall**, creating a tighter seal at the eavestrough outlet and reducing turbulence where the water transitions from the horizontal gutter into the vertical pipe. That smooth transition means rectangular downspouts often drain more efficiently in practice, even if the raw cross-section is slightly smaller.

When Each Style Makes Sense

Rectangular downspouts (2x3 or 3x4) are the standard residential choice in Ottawa for several good reasons. They mount flat against your home's exterior, taking up less visual space. They connect directly to K-style eavestrough outlets without adapters. They are widely stocked at Ottawa building supply stores, making replacement parts easy to find. And the larger **3-by-4-inch rectangular** size — which you should use with 6-inch eavestroughs — provides roughly **12 square inches** of drainage capacity, handling even Ottawa's heaviest thunderstorms with ease.

Round downspouts (3-inch or 4-inch) are traditionally paired with **half-round eavestroughs**, which are the historic style seen on heritage homes in **Rockcliffe Park, New Edinburgh, Sandy Hill, and the Glebe**. Round downspouts have one practical advantage: they are **self-cleaning**. Debris that enters a round pipe is more likely to wash through without catching on corners, while rectangular downspouts can trap leaf clumps at the 90-degree internal corners. If your Ottawa home is surrounded by mature trees, this self-cleaning property can reduce downspout clogs.

The catch with round downspouts is that they **protrude further from the wall**, which can look awkward on modern homes. They also require **specialized brackets and connectors** that are less commonly stocked than rectangular fittings, and they cost **10 to 20 percent more** due to lower demand in the Ottawa market. Connecting a round downspout to a K-style eavestrough requires an adapter fitting, which adds a potential leak point.

From a **winter performance** standpoint in Ottawa, there is no significant difference. Both styles are equally susceptible to freezing when water sits in them during cold snaps below minus 20 degrees. The key to preventing frozen downspouts is ensuring they drain completely after each rainfall — proper slope and no low-point traps matter far more than the pipe shape.

For pricing, rectangular downspouts installed as part of a complete eavestrough system run **$200 to $500 per downspout** in Ottawa. Round downspouts on half-round systems cost **$250 to $600** due to the specialized hardware. If you are installing a new system and your home is not a heritage property requiring period-correct materials, rectangular is the practical and economical choice.

To discuss which downspout style suits your home, browse eavestrough professionals through the Ottawa Construction Network directory at justynrookcontracting.com.

Q12

How to Stop Downspouts From Freezing in Ottawa Winters

Frozen downspouts are one of the most common winter headaches for Ottawa homeowners, and when temperatures plunge below **minus 25 degrees Celsius** — which happens multiple times each winter — a downspout full of standing water will freeze into a solid ice column that blocks all drainage until spring.

The root cause is almost always **water sitting in the downspout rather than draining out completely**. After a rain or mid-winter thaw, water flows down the downspout but gets trapped by a low spot in the pipe, a crushed elbow at the base, or a clogged underground connection. That standing water freezes during the next cold snap and creates an ice plug that grows with each subsequent thaw-freeze cycle. Ottawa experiences **50 or more freeze-thaw cycles per winter**, so a small ice blockage in November can become a complete frozen column by January.

Prevention Strategies That Work in Ottawa

Ensure complete drainage by checking that your downspout has no belly sections, dips, or low points where water can pool. The bottom elbow should angle away from the house at a consistent downward slope so the last drops of water exit the pipe completely. If your downspout connects to an underground drainage tile, make sure the

connection has no sag — even a slight dip creates a water trap that will freeze solid.

Clean your eavestroughs and downspouts before freeze-up, ideally in late October or early November. Leaf debris that partially blocks the downspout outlet slows water flow and creates damp spots that freeze first, building a plug from the inside out. Flush each downspout with a garden hose from the top to confirm water flows freely all the way through.

Disconnect downspout extensions before winter if they sit on flat ground. Extensions lying on frozen ground can trap water at the connection point, and that ice works its way up into the downspout itself. Let winter runoff splash freely at the base (you can redirect it with a temporary splash block) and reconnect the extension in spring.

Heat cables are the most reliable solution for chronically freezing downspouts. A self-regulating heat cable runs inside the downspout and activates only when temperatures drop near freezing, consuming **2 to 5 watts per linear foot**. Installation costs **$150 to $400 per downspout** in Ottawa, including the cable and electrical connection. **Hardwired heat cables require an ESA (Electrical Safety Authority) permit** and must be installed by a licensed electrician. Plug-in self-regulating cables do not need an ESA permit and can be installed by a qualified eavestrough contractor, though they must still meet Ontario Electrical Safety Code standards.

If a downspout is already frozen, **do not pour boiling water down it** — the thermal shock can crack aluminum elbows and split seams. Instead, use **warm (not hot) water** poured slowly, or aim a hair dryer or heat gun at the frozen section from the outside. For severe blockages, a professional can use a steamer to clear the ice without damaging the pipe, typically at a service call cost of **$150 to $350**.

For help winterizing your eavestrough system or installing heat cables, the Ottawa Construction Network directory at justynrookcontracting.com connects you with local eavestrough and electrical professionals.

Q13

Rain Barrels on Ottawa Downspouts — Rebates and Installation

Rain barrels are a smart addition to your downspout system in Ottawa, and yes — the City of Ottawa has historically offered rebates through its **Rain Ready Ottawa** program, though availability and amounts change annually, so checking the City's website or calling **3-1-1** for the current season's offerings is always worth doing before you buy.

A rain barrel collects roof runoff from your downspout and stores it for later use on gardens, lawns, and outdoor cleaning. A typical Ottawa home's roof sheds roughly **1,000 to 2,000 litres of water during a single 25-millimetre rainfall**, so even a standard **200-litre barrel fills up fast** from just one downspout during a moderate spring or summer storm. That free water is ideal for garden irrigation because it is naturally soft, free of municipal chlorine, and at ambient temperature — which plants actually prefer over cold tap water.

How Rain Barrels Connect to Your Downspout

Installation is straightforward. A **downspout diverter** is cut into the downspout at the height of the barrel's inlet, routing water into the barrel when it is not full and automatically bypassing it back to the downspout once the barrel reaches capacity. Quality diverter kits cost **$25 to $60** and can be installed in under an hour with basic tools. The barrel itself sits on a stable, level platform — **patio blocks or a concrete pad** work well — and must be elevated enough that a watering can or hose fits under the spigot. A full 200-litre barrel weighs approximately **200 kilograms** , so the base needs to be solid.

The **critical rule** with rain barrels in Ottawa is ensuring the **overflow is properly directed away from your foundation**. When the barrel is full, additional water needs somewhere to go, and if it simply spills over the top against your house, you have created a worse drainage problem than having no barrel at all. Install an overflow hose from the barrel's overflow port, directing it at least **1.8 metres from the foundation** per Ontario Building Code requirements. Many Ottawa homeowners daisy-chain a second barrel to the first for additional capacity before overflow.

Winter disconnection is mandatory. Before Ottawa's first hard freeze — typically late October or early November — you must disconnect the rain barrel, drain it completely, and reconnect the downspout directly. A full barrel that freezes will crack, and even a partially full barrel can split seams as ice expands. Store the barrel upside down in your garage or shed over winter. The downspout diverter should be set to bypass mode so winter melt flows normally through the downspout.

Cost-wise, basic rain barrels run **$50 to $100** at Ottawa hardware stores, while larger or more decorative models cost **$150 to $300**. The City of Ottawa's **Rain Ready** rebate program has offered **$50 to $75 off rain barrel**

purchases in past years — sometimes through subsidized sales at local community events or garden centres rather than a direct mail-in rebate. The program falls under the City's broader stormwater management initiatives, so check **ottawa.ca** for the latest details.

Rain barrels are entirely DIY-friendly for homeowners comfortable with basic tools, but if you want to integrate one with a larger downspout rerouting project or underground drainage system, eavestrough contractors listed in the Ottawa Construction Network directory at justynrookcontracting.com can help design a complete solution.

Q14

Downspout Connected to Ottawa Storm Sewer? What You Need to Know

If your downspout is still connected to Ottawa's storm sewer system, you could be in violation of the City of Ottawa's **sewer use by-law** and may face enforcement action. Ottawa has been actively working to separate storm and sanitary sewers for decades, and many older neighbourhoods — particularly in **Centretown, the Glebe, Old Ottawa South, and Sandy Hill** — still have homes with legacy downspout connections to the municipal system.

Why Ottawa Requires Disconnection

The core issue is **combined sewer overflow**. When heavy rainfall floods the combined system, raw sewage mixed with stormwater can overflow directly into the Ottawa River and Rideau River. Ottawa's climate makes this worse — major summer thunderstorms can dump **50 to 75 millimetres of rain in an hour**, overwhelming systems that are also handling rooftop drainage from thousands of connected homes. During spring snowmelt, the problem compounds further as the deep snowpack Ottawa accumulates over winter rapidly drains into the system.

The City of Ottawa's **Residential Protective Plumbing Program** has been encouraging and in some areas requiring disconnection for years. Under the current by-law, homeowners in designated areas must disconnect downspouts from the sanitary or combined sewer system. **Failure to comply can result in fines**, and the city can order disconnection at the homeowner's expense. If your home was built before the 1970s and you have not verified your downspout connections, there is a reasonable chance at least one downspout still ties into the underground system.

Disconnecting a downspout from the storm sewer is a relatively straightforward project. The downspout is cut or redirected to discharge onto a **splash pad, downspout extension, or rain barrel** at ground level, with water directed at least **1.8 metres away from the foundation** as required by the Ontario Building Code. The cost in Ottawa typically runs **$200 to $600 per downspout** for professional disconnection, including capping the old underground connection and installing a proper above-ground discharge.

There are a few important considerations for Ottawa specifically. The city's **clay-heavy soil** drains poorly, so simply dumping water next to your foundation without a proper extension or splash block can create basement moisture problems. If your lot has poor grading, you may need to extend downspouts further or install a **dry well** or **underground drainage pipe** that directs water to a more suitable area of your property. In neighbourhoods with tight lot spacing like **Sandy Hill or Lowertown**, directing water away from both your foundation and your neighbour's requires careful planning.

For homeowners unsure whether their downspouts are connected, a professional can run a **camera inspection** or simply trace the downspout path. If the downspout goes straight into the ground with no visible discharge point, it is almost certainly connected to the underground system. You can also contact **3-1-1** to check whether your property is in a designated disconnection area. Browsing eavestrough and drainage contractors through the Ottawa Construction Network directory at **justynrookcontracting.com** is a good starting point for finding someone experienced with Ottawa disconnection requirements.

Q15

How Leda Clay Soil Affects Eavestrough Drainage in Ottawa

Ottawa's Leda clay soil is one of the most challenging ground conditions in Canada for managing eavestrough drainage, and where you direct your downspout water makes a critical difference in protecting your foundation. Leda clay, also called Champlain Sea clay, is a sensitive marine clay deposited thousands of years ago when the Ottawa Valley was covered by a post-glacial sea. It is notorious for two properties that directly affect eavestrough drainage: it absorbs water extremely slowly, and it swells significantly when saturated.

Managing Downspout Drainage on Clay Soil

When your eavestroughs dump a concentrated stream of water near your foundation through short downspout extensions, that water pools on the surface and slowly saturates the clay around your basement walls. Saturated Leda clay expands, exerting **lateral pressure on foundation walls** that can cause bowing, cracking, and eventual water infiltration. During dry summer periods the clay contracts again, creating gaps that allow even more water penetration during the next rain. This cycle of swelling and shrinking is the primary cause of foundation problems across Ottawa neighbourhoods built on clay, including much of **Barrhaven, Kanata, Orleans, Gloucester**, and the older neighbourhoods along the Rideau River.

The Ontario Building Code requires downspouts to discharge at least **1.8 metres from the foundation**, but on Ottawa's Leda clay you should aim for **3 metres or more** whenever your lot grading allows. Downspout extensions

or splash pads that merely redirect water a couple of feet are insufficient on clay soil because the water simply pools and migrates back toward the foundation.

The most effective solutions for clay soil drainage include **above-ground downspout extensions** of 3 to 4 metres that deposit water onto a sloped area draining away from the house. For a more permanent approach, **underground downspout drainage pipes** buried below the frost line carry water to a pop-up emitter or dry well further from the foundation. Underground systems cost **$300 to $800 per downspout** in Ottawa but provide the most reliable long-term protection on clay lots.

Rain barrels are popular in Ottawa for collecting downspout water, but on clay soil you need to ensure the barrel overflow also directs water well away from the foundation rather than simply spilling at the base. Connecting rain barrels to a secondary hose or pipe that runs to a garden bed at least 3 metres from the house is the safest approach.

Avoid directing all your eavestrough water to a single discharge point on your lot, as concentrated flow on clay creates erosion channels and localized saturation. Distribute downspouts evenly around the perimeter and ensure your lot grading maintains a **minimum 5 percent slope away from the foundation** for the first 2 metres. If you are unsure about your soil conditions or drainage grading, an eavestrough professional can assess your specific situation. Browse contractors experienced with Ottawa drainage challenges through the Ottawa Construction Network directory at justynrookcontracting.com.

Q16

Camera Inspection for Underground Downspout Drains in Ottawa

A camera inspection of your underground downspout drains is one of the smartest diagnostic investments you can make as an Ottawa homeowner, especially if you have an older home with buried drainage that you cannot visually inspect. Underground drains are out of sight and out of mind until they fail — and in Ottawa's climate, failure often shows up as **basement water infiltration, foundation erosion, or saturated landscaping** during spring thaw or heavy summer storms.

When a Camera Inspection Makes Sense

You should strongly consider a camera inspection if your home was built **before 2000** and has original underground downspout drains. Older Ottawa homes, particularly in established neighbourhoods like Alta Vista, Manor Park, and Riverside South, often have clay tile, concrete, or corrugated plastic drainage pipes that deteriorate over time. **Tree root intrusion** is the number one cause of underground drain failure in Ottawa — our abundant mature tree canopy sends roots directly into pipe joints seeking moisture, gradually blocking the pipe entirely.

Other clear signs you need an inspection include **water pooling near your foundation** after rain despite having functioning eavestroughs and downspouts, downspouts that back up and overflow at the connection point to the underground drain, or **unexplained soggy areas** in your lawn along the drainage path. If your basement has developed new moisture or seepage issues that coincide with heavy rain, a blocked underground drain is a prime suspect.

A camera inspection in Ottawa typically costs **$150 to $350** depending on the number of drain runs and accessibility. The technician feeds a waterproof camera on a flexible cable through the drain pipe, recording video that shows the pipe's condition, any blockages, root intrusion, collapsed sections, or offset joints. You receive a clear diagnosis and can make informed decisions about repair or replacement rather than guessing.

If the inspection reveals **root intrusion or partial blockages**, hydro-jetting can often clear the drain without excavation. Hydro-jetting uses high-pressure water to cut through roots and flush debris, costing **$200 to $500** in Ottawa. For collapsed or severely damaged pipes, replacement is necessary — expect **$1,500 to $4,000** for excavation and new pipe installation depending on depth and length. Ottawa's **frost line at 1.2 to 1.5 metres** means underground drains need to be buried deep enough to avoid frost heave, which adds to excavation costs.

One important Ottawa-specific consideration: if your underground downspout drains connect to the **municipal storm sewer system**, any modifications or reconnections may require a permit from the City of Ottawa. Some older Ottawa homes have drains that illegally connect to the sanitary sewer — a camera inspection can identify this issue before it becomes a bylaw violation. Call **3-1-1** for guidance on your specific situation.

As a preventive measure, Ottawa homeowners with underground drains should have them **flushed with a garden hose every spring** after the ground thaws and **inspected by camera every 5 to 7 years** as routine maintenance. This catches developing problems before they cause foundation damage that costs tens of thousands to repair. To connect with drainage professionals who can inspect and service your underground system, browse the Ottawa Construction Network directory at **justynrookcontracting.com**.

Q17

Installing a Rain Garden for Eavestrough Runoff in Ottawa

Yes, rain gardens are an excellent way to manage eavestrough runoff in Ottawa, and they are becoming increasingly popular as homeowners look for sustainable alternatives to simply dumping downspout water onto the lawn or into municipal storm sewers. A well-designed rain garden captures eavestrough runoff, filters pollutants naturally through soil and plant roots, and allows water to infiltrate the ground rather than contributing to urban flooding — something Ottawa has seen more of with increasingly intense summer storms.

Designing a Rain Garden for Ottawa Conditions

The key challenge for rain gardens in Ottawa is our **heavy clay soil**, which dominates most of the city's residential areas from Kanata to Orleans. Natural clay drains very slowly — sometimes only **2 to 5 millimetres per hour** — which means a rain garden built directly in native Ottawa soil will hold standing water for days after a storm, becoming a mosquito breeding ground rather than a functional drainage feature. The solution is **engineered soil mix**: excavate the garden area to a depth of **45 to 60 centimetres** and replace the clay with a blend of approximately **60 percent sand, 20 percent compost, and 20 percent topsoil**. This engineered mix drains at **25 to 50 millimetres per hour** while still supporting plant growth.

For sizing, a residential rain garden in Ottawa should be approximately **10 to 20 percent of the roof area** that drains into it. If your downspout collects water from a 500-square-foot section of roof, your rain garden should be **50 to 100 square feet**. This provides enough volume to capture the runoff from a typical Ottawa rainstorm of 25 millimetres without overflowing. Include a **gravel overflow outlet** that directs excess water away from your foundation during extreme storms.

Location is critical. Position your rain garden at least **3 metres from your foundation** and at least **1.5 metres from property lines**. It should be in a low area of your yard where water naturally flows, but **not** directly over your septic system (if applicable) or over utility lines. Call **Ontario One Call** before digging to have underground utilities marked — this is free and required by law.

Plant selection for an Ottawa rain garden should focus on **native species** that tolerate both wet and dry conditions, since the garden will be saturated after rain and dry between storms. Excellent choices include **Joe-Pye weed, cardinal flower, blue flag iris, switchgrass, and New England aster**. These species are hardy to Ottawa's **Zone 5a climate**, support pollinators, and have deep root systems that maintain soil drainage over time. Avoid planting trees or large shrubs in the rain garden itself, as their roots can clog the engineered drainage layer.

The total cost for a DIY rain garden in Ottawa runs **$300 to $800** for materials including soil amendment, gravel, native plants, and an inlet from your downspout. Professionally designed and installed rain gardens cost **$1,500 to $4,000** depending on size and complexity. The City of Ottawa has occasionally offered stormwater management incentive programs — check **ottawa.ca** or call **3-1-1** for current programs.

Connect your downspout to the rain garden using a **rigid PVC pipe or a channel** that directs water to the garden's inlet. The connection should include a way to **disconnect in winter** since Ottawa's freeze-thaw cycles and frost penetration to **1.2 to 1.5 metres** can damage rigid connections to frozen ground. For help with downspout drainage design and installation, browse experienced professionals through the Ottawa Construction Network directory at **justynrookcontracting.com**.

Q18

Eavestrough Drainage on Reverse-Slope Ottawa Lots

A lot that slopes toward your house is one of the most serious drainage challenges an Ottawa homeowner can face, and your eavestroughs become the first line of defence against basement moisture and foundation damage. When the natural grade directs surface water and roof runoff back toward the foundation rather than away from it, you need a deliberate, layered drainage strategy that goes well beyond simply installing gutters.

Redirecting Water on a Reverse-Slope Lot

The first priority is ensuring your eavestrough downspouts discharge as far from the foundation as physically possible. The **Ontario Building Code requires a minimum 1.8-metre setback** from the foundation wall, but on a reverse-slope lot you should aim for **3 metres or more** using rigid downspout extensions rather than flexible corrugated pipe, which sags and clogs over time. Rigid aluminum extensions cost **$15 to $40 each** in Ottawa and maintain consistent flow even through heavy spring melt.

For more permanent solutions, many Ottawa homeowners on reverse-slope lots install **underground drainage pipe** that carries downspout water to a pop-up emitter or dry well positioned at the lowest point of the yard, well away from the foundation. A professional underground drainage installation typically costs **$1,200 to $3,500** in

Ottawa depending on the number of downspouts connected and the distance of the run. The pipe must be buried below Ottawa's frost line of **1.2 to 1.5 metres** if it connects to any permanent structure, though shallower burial with proper slope works for pop-up emitters that drain freely.

Ottawa's **clay-heavy soil** compounds the problem on reverse-slope lots because clay drains poorly and holds moisture against foundation walls for extended periods. During the spring thaw, when snowmelt combines with April rains, saturated clay soil on a reverse-grade lot creates enormous hydrostatic pressure against basement walls. Your eavestroughs must be sized to handle peak flow — **six-inch K-style gutters** rather than standard five-inch are strongly recommended, paired with **three-by-four-inch downspouts** instead of the standard two-by-three-inch size.

A **swale** or shallow drainage channel graded across the yard can intercept both surface water and eavestrough discharge, redirecting it around the house to a safe discharge point. Professional grading and swale installation in Ottawa runs **$2,000 to $5,000** depending on yard size and complexity. Some Ottawa homeowners also install a **French drain** along the foundation perimeter to intercept groundwater before it reaches the basement walls, which costs **$3,000 to $8,000** for a typical home.

Before investing in major drainage work, verify that your existing eavestroughs are functioning properly. Clogged gutters, insufficient slope, or leaking seams can dump concentrated water right at the foundation even on a properly graded lot. A professional eavestrough inspection costs **$100 to $200** and can identify problems that are cheap to fix. You can browse eavestrough and drainage contractors through the Ottawa Construction Network directory at **justynrookcontracting.com** to find professionals experienced with Ottawa's challenging soil and grading conditions.

Q19

Redirect Eavestrough Downspouts Away from Ottawa Walkways

A downspout emptying onto or near a walkway is more than just an annoyance — in Ottawa's winter climate, it is a serious **slip-and-fall hazard** that creates black ice on your walkway every time temperatures hover around freezing, which happens dozens of times each winter during our **50-plus freeze-thaw cycles**. It can also damage the walkway surface itself, as repeated water saturation followed by freezing causes concrete to spall, interlock pavers to heave, and asphalt to crack.

Redirecting Downspout Water Away from Walkways

The simplest and most common solution is a **downspout extension** that carries water past the walkway to discharge on a permeable surface like lawn or garden bed. Rigid aluminum extensions cost **$15 to $40** at Ottawa building supply stores and are available in colours that match standard eavestrough finishes. Rigid extensions are better than flexible corrugated extensions because they maintain consistent slope, do not sag or kink, and handle Ottawa's freeze-thaw cycling without cracking. For walkways that are close to the house, you may need a **90-degree elbow** at the bottom of the downspout to redirect flow parallel to the foundation before the extension carries it past the walkway.

For a cleaner look, consider a **flip-up or hinged downspout extension** that sits flat against the ground when not needed and flips down during rain. These cost **$25 to $50** and are particularly useful when the downspout is next to a walkway that gets regular foot traffic or snow clearing — you can flip the extension up before shovelling and flip it down when precipitation is expected.

The most permanent solution is an **underground downspout drain** that connects the bottom of the downspout to a buried pipe running under the walkway to discharge on the far side. A professional underground drainage installation in Ottawa costs **$500 to $1,500 per downspout** depending on the distance and whether you need to cut through concrete or interlock. The buried pipe should be **4-inch diameter rigid PVC**, sloped at a minimum of one-quarter inch per foot, and terminate at either a **pop-up emitter** or a **splash pad** on the far side of the walkway. In Ottawa, the pipe should ideally be buried below the **1.2 to 1.5-metre frost line** to prevent freezing, though shallower installation works if the pipe drains freely and does not hold standing water.

A **rain barrel** positioned between the downspout and the walkway is another option that captures the first flush of water and releases it slowly through a spigot directed away from the walkway. Rain barrels cost **$50 to $150** and are available through the City of Ottawa's occasional rain barrel sales. However, rain barrels fill quickly during Ottawa's heavy summer thunderstorms and still require an overflow outlet directed away from the walkway.

Whichever solution you choose, ensure the final discharge point is at least **1.8 metres from the foundation** as required by the **Ontario Building Code** and directed toward a permeable surface that drains away from both the house and the walkway. For professional help with downspout rerouting or underground drainage installation, browse contractors through the Ottawa Construction Network directory at **justynrookcontracting.com**.
