Downspout Planters

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What is a downspout planter?

- Decorative planter-box
- Connected to the downspout system of a house
- Absorbs and filters stormwater
- Great for small spaces!
Benefits

- Similar function and benefits as rain gardens!
- Attractive irrigated flower garden
- Slows and reduces stormwater runoff
- Filters sediment and pollutants from stormwater
Wooden vs. Metal

- More size options
- More “traditional” look
- Stores more water
- Easier to build
- Lighter and easier to move
Building a Downspout Planter

Because the wooden planter required a lot of water-proofing and sealing, as well as the installation of an underdrain, it’s more complicated to build.
Start with a 100-gallon galvanized water trough (available at Tractor Supply stores) - for scale
Install a “false” bottom of perforated sheeting supported by 4-inch PVC columns
Install a perforated overflow

And you have your metal downspout planter!
Installation

- Determine orientation of the planter (relation to existing downspout, utilities, etc.)
- Level the area where the planter will sit
- Create a base for the planter (cinder block, brick, treated wood)

- Then hook it up to your stormwater system!
- Fill the planter box with pea gravel, filter fabric, and soil
Installation

- **Downspout**
- **Downspout cut here**
- **Elbow and sections of downspout attached to bring water into box.**
- **Overflow & underdrain connected to drain pipe.**
- **Existing drain pipe (in lieu of stub)**

_Before_ vs. _After_
Installation

Make sure to place gravel for splash rock where water will be running into the planter.
Then add plants, and you are done!
If you are interested in learning more, check out the Philadelphia Rain Check program, where much of this presentation’s information and photos came from!

https://www.pwdraincheck.org/en/

Their website includes guides on:

- Construction of downspout planters
- Installation of downspout planters
- Maintenance of downspout planters
- And more!
Thank You!

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