



# DRYWELLS

~managing roof runoff from homes with gutters~



Portland Water District



**Purpose:** Drywells collect and infiltrate runoff at gutter downspouts and other places where large quantities of concentrated water flow off rooftops. These systems help control erosive runoff on your property, and reduce wear on your house by minimizing back splash.

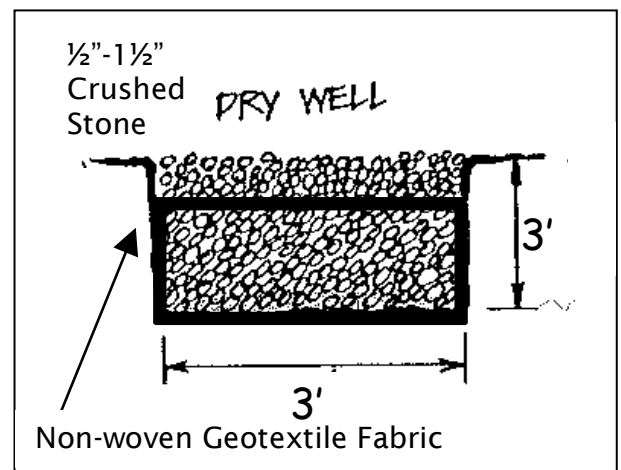
**Installation:** Drywells should measure about 3' x 3' x 3', be lined with non-woven geotextile fabric and back-filled with 1/2" to 1 1/2" crushed stone. Slope the bottom of the drywell away from the house so that water does not drain towards the foundation. Make sure to dispose of the removed soil in areas where it will not wash into the lake.

Extend the life of the dry well by lining the sides with non-woven geotextile fabric and filling to within 3" of the ground level with stone. Fold a flap of filter fabric over the top of the dry well and top off with additional stone.

**Note:** Drywells work best in sand and gravelly soils that can quickly disperse a large volume of water. They should not be used on structures with improperly sealed foundations, as flooding may result. If flooding is of concern, place the drywell 6' away from the base of the foundation.

**Materials:** Crushed stone can be purchased at your local gravel pit. Contact your local Soil and Water Conservation District for suppliers of non-woven geotextile fabric. Other geotextiles, including landscaping weed barrier, can be substituted for smaller projects.

**Maintenance:** To maintain these structures, periodically remove accumulated debris and weeds from the surface. Non-woven geotextile fabric will extend the life of these structures, however, they will eventually clog over time and the stone will need to be removed and washed to clean out the accumulated sediment and debris.



Part of the **Conservation Practices for Homeowners** Factsheet Series, available at:  
Maine DEP (800.452.1942); <http://www.maine.gov/dep/blwq/docwatershed/materials.htm>  
Portland Water District (207.774.5961); <http://www.pwd.org/news/publications.php>