

SOGGY BACKYARD SOLUTIONS

Landscape drainage can be a potentially huge disaster for your backyard.

This however can be avoided if you study the landscape and the way your landscape slopes.

This should all be checked before you buy a property.

If it's too late and you have a soggy backyard already, never fear, here is the solution.

If your backyard is swampy now, the first thing to do is find the reason for your problem. Most of the time it is pretty obvious where the problem is and where the water is coming from.

You can rid yourself of small drainage problems by making sure your house is not at the bottom of a hill or slope, and the soil slopes away from your house.

Properly installed and cleaned gutters will also make a big difference.

The best way to get rid of excessive water is to dig a dry well. First thing you need to do though is find out where the best place is to drain the excess water.

Look for a spot that's lower than the house. Make sure you don't go draining water into your neighbors yard.

The next step is to start digging and create your dry well or trench. I highly recommend you speak to a professional before you do this.

In the back corner of our yard we have a lot of standing water. I would like to drain that so the kids can utilize this space. How do I go about draining out this soggy, wet yard space?

Answer:

In a perfectly graded world, the land around your home would slope away from the exterior walls preventing flooded basements and crawlspaces. Then it would continue to slope to the boundaries of your property lines and miraculously disappear without ever causing a soggy back yard or flooding out your neighbors!

Alas, perfect grading is hard to find and thus we need a few creative solutions to help move things along. To move standing water out of a low lying area in your yard, a curtain drain works well. A curtain drain is a shallow trench dug to collect water from low lying areas and run it away via a perforated drain pipe surrounded by stone and covered by filter cloth.

To construct one, you'd dig a trench (maybe 12 x 12) just above the saturated area on the uphill side. The base of the trench should slope to a lower-lying area away from the area you are trying to dry out. Then, add about 2 inches of washed round stone or gravel (each stone should be 1 to 1 ½ in diameter).

On top of the stone, install a perforated PVC draining pipe. I prefer the 6 diameter PVC pipe and don't recommend the black plastic corrugated pipe that landscapers often use (it tends to crush easily). After the pipe is installed, make sure the end of it drains to daylight if possible to discharge the water away. Finally, add more stone to cover the top of the pipe, then cover that with filter cloth and top it off with two or three inches of soil. If built correctly, your soggy back yard will become a thing of the past!

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Alas, perfect grading is hard to find and thus we need a few creative solutions to help move things along. To move standing water out of a low lying area in your yard, a "curtain drain" works well. A curtain drain is a shallow trench dug to collect water from low lying areas and run it away via a perforated drain pipe surrounded by stone and covered by filter cloth.

To construct one, you'd dig a trench (maybe 12" x 12") just above the saturated area on the uphill side. The base of the trench should slope to a lower-lying area away from the area you are trying to dry out. Then, add about 2 inches of washed round stone or gravel (each stone should be 1 to 1 ½ in diameter).

On top of the stone, install a perforated PVC draining pipe. I prefer the 6" diameter PVC pipe and don't recommend the black plastic corrugated pipe that landscapers often use (it tends to crush easily). After the pipe is installed, make sure the end of it drains to "daylight" if possible to discharge the water away. Finally, add more stone to cover the top of the pipe, then cover that with filter cloth and top it off with two or three inches of soil.

When you are done, you'll have an invisible curtain drain that intercepts water, and runs it away and leaves you with a dry yard to enjoy!