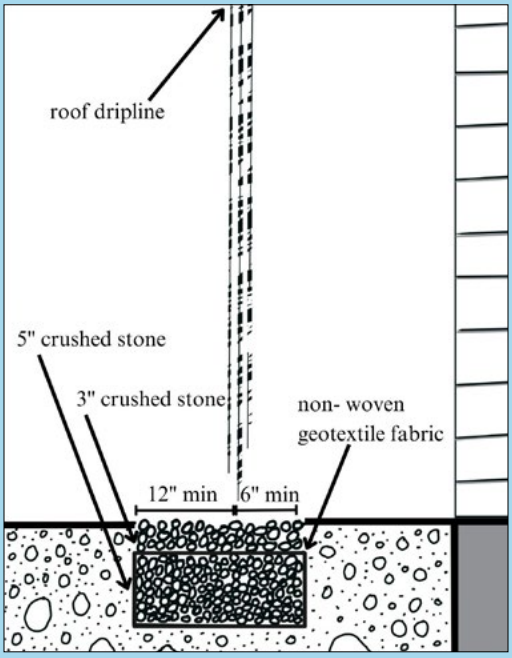
Maine Conservation Fact Sheets for Homeowners Series

Dripline Trench

A fully installed dripline trench along a section of building with no gutters.



Dripline trench cross-section.

Purpose:

Dripline trenches create a stable area for rainwater from your rooftop to land and soak into the ground without disturbing the underlying soil and causing erosion. They also reduce backsplash from soil onto the side of your home and can beautify your property. These trenches work best for rooflines without gutters.

Materials:

- ½- 1½" crushed stone
- non-woven geotextile filter fabric
  Note: Other geotextiles such as landscaping weed barrier can be used for smaller projects.

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.

Installation:

1. Dig a trench that is 18" wide and at least 8" deep along the drip line. Slope the bottom away from the house so that water will drain away from the foundation. The front and sides of the trench may be edged with stone or with pressure-treated lumber to hold the stones in place.
2. To extend the life of the dripline trench, line the sides and bottom with non-woven geotextile fabric and fill to within 3" of the ground level with ½" -1½" crushed stone.
3. Fold a flap of non-woven geotextile fabric over the top of the trench and top off with additional crushed stone.

Note: Dripline trenches work best in sand and gravel 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.

Maintenance:

Periodically remove accumulated debris and weeds from the surface. Trenches lined with non-woven geotextile fabric will require less frequent maintenance, however, they will still clog over time and the stone will need to be removed and washed to clean out the accumulated sexdiment and debris.

Scan here for more information

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Portland Water District
From Sebago Lake to Casco Bay