

Clean Gutters

Overview

- Cleaning the debris out of rain gutters will allow rainwater to flow out of the gutter, down the downspout, and away from the structure.
- If gutters are clogged, rainwater can overflow the gutter and pour into undesirable places, such as in front of a basement window or alongside the structure's foundation.
- Gutters can be cleared as a Do-It-Yourself project, or a company can be hired to complete the work.
- Gutters should be cleared approximately twice per year, once in the spring and again in the early fall. They should also be cleaned out whenever clogging occurs.
- If there are trees surrounding the structure, consider installing gutter guards to prevent leaves from continuously clogging the gutters.
- Also ensure that downspouts are pointing away from the structure and that the lawn is graded away from the structure so that water does not pool next to the building.



Key Takeaways

During flood events, water can pool in front of doors or along the foundation of the structure when gutters are clogged. Pooling can lead to water entering the structure and/or to foundation damage.

To reduce potential for flood damage, routinely clean the gutters of any debris or blockages.



I-ADAPT

Exterior Adaptation Clean Gutters

Estimated Costs/Benefits

*U.S. dollars (2022), estimates are subject to change

Potential Costs		Potential Benefits	
Item	Estimate	Post-Flood Recovery Actions	Estimate
Do-It-Yourself (clean out your own gutters)	\$0	Flood damage recovery (professional clean-up, mold removal, replacement/ repair of flood damaged items)	1 inch water ↓ \$10,800-\$53,500+
OR			1 foot water ↓ \$29,400-\$143,500+
Hire a gutter cleaning company to clean the gutters	\$70-\$425	Remove standing water	\$1,300-\$13,500
		Mosquito control	\$400-\$600 per treatment
ESTIMATED TOTAL COST	\$0-\$425	ESTIMATED TOTAL SAVINGS	\$12,500-\$157,600+

Additional Resources

- [FEMA: How to Make your Home Safer and Stronger](#)
- [FEMA: Protect Your Home from Future Flooding](#)

Resources can also be found at <https://de.gov/iadapt>

Expected Maintenance

- Periodically check gutters for clogging.

Additional Actions

- Install gutter guards to help prevent leaf litter buildup.
- Ensure that downspouts are functioning properly and drain away from the structure.
- Ensure that the lawn is graded for stormwater to flow away from the structure.

Permitting Agencies

Contacts for permitting requirements include but are not limited to the following:

- Your city and/or county government for local flood ordinances or regulations
- Your city and/or county government for building permits

Who to Contact

- Gutter cleaning or gutter guard company

Technical definitions and more information are located on the I-ADAPT website: <https://de.gov/iadapt>.



This information is intended to be used for planning purposes. It is not intended to substitute or take precedence over the guidance of design engineers, contractors, utility companies or regulatory agencies.

For more information, contact DNREC's Division of Climate, Coastal and Energy at DNREC_IADAPT@Delaware.gov

