Plano Yard Drainage Storm Walk and Pre-Hire Checklist

For a house in Plano or a nearby city with water standing in the yard. Use it to watch one real storm, check what your plat allows, and compare drainage estimates line by line, whoever you hire.

1. Walk the yard in the next steady rain

Water moves fastest during the storm, not after it. Stay out of moving water and away from any electrical equipment standing in it, and note what you can see from dry ground.

- [ ] Where water comes onto the lot: downspouts, a neighbor's yard, the street, a patio or a sprinkler zone
- [ ] Where it runs, and where it stops and stands
- [ ] Which downspouts let out right at the house, onto splash blocks or into buried pipe
- [ ] Whether water stands against the slab, the garage door or a walk
- [ ] Photos or a short video of each spot, with the time
- [ ] How long each spot stays wet once the rain stops

Date of the rain

Where water stood

How long it stayed

2. Check the plat and the rules

Plano lots are designed to drain toward the street, and water may not be sent onto the lot next door. Your plat shows the easements a drain has to respect.

- [ ] Find your plat through the Collin Central Appraisal District and note any drainage or floodplain easement
- [ ] Look for a side swale between houses, and anything built into it: a fence, an AC pad, a shed or a bed
- [ ] Note which way the yard falls: toward the street, the alley, the back fence or the house
- [ ] Check your HOA rules for drainage, fences, rock and turf
- [ ] If water comes from next door, note where it crosses the property line

City of Plano Stormwater Design Manual (no lot-to-lot drainage; at least 1% fall along side and back yards); Texas Water Code section 11.086.

3. Questions to ask before you hire

Ask each company the same questions and write the answers down. A clear answer to every line tells you more than a low first number.

- [ ] Where will the water leave the lot, and is that outlet allowed?
- [ ] Will the fall be measured along the whole run, and what fall will the pipe have?
- [ ] Who calls Texas811 to have buried lines marked before anyone digs?
- [ ] Who gets the city permit for a curb outlet or other work in the right-of-way?
- [ ] Is the trench lined with filter fabric and washed stone where it collects water?
- [ ] Will there be cleanouts where lines join or turn?
- [ ] Will water be run through the system before the trench is backfilled?
- [ ] How are the sod, beds and sprinkler lines put back, and what is extra?
- [ ] Will there be a walk-through when the work is finished?

4. Compare the estimates line by line

Two estimates for the same yard can describe different jobs. Line them up before you compare totals.

- [ ] The route: each run's length, and where it starts and ends
- [ ] How many catch basins, inlets and downspout lines
- [ ] The outlet: curb, pop-up emitter, an existing line or a pump
- [ ] The permit, shown as its own line where one is needed
- [ ] Restoration: sod, beds, rock and sprinkler repair
- [ ] What is left out: a pump circuit, wide new sod, rebuilt beds or concrete

Estimate A: route and outlet

Estimate B: route and outlet

What differs

5. When the job is done

Keep a record of what went in the ground. It saves the next person from guessing, including a buyer's inspector.

- [ ] Photos of the open trench and pipe before backfill
- [ ] A sketch of the route with the cleanouts and the outlet marked
- [ ] The city permit and its final sign-off, if the job needed one
- [ ] After the first big storm, check that the emitters open and the grates are clear
- [ ] Keep leaves and grass clippings off grates and the curb line each fall

Cleanout locations

Outlet location

General planning information, not a survey, an engineering design or advice about a particular property. City rules and permits change; confirm them with the City of Plano or the city where the property is.