

# Every Drop Counts...

## Rain Barrel Benefits

### By installing a rain barrel at your home you will

— Reduce flooding in your yard or your basement, by collecting the water and using it for watering plants or slowly releasing it and allowing it to sink into the ground.

— Provide your plants with water they will love! Unlike treated water, which is “softened” with dissolved minerals, rain water is naturally soft. The water stored in your rain barrel is better than municipal water for washing your car and watering indoor or outdoor plants.

— Save money and water! Instead of water from the tap or faucet, you can use the water you’ve saved to keep your home landscape happy and growing. You’ll also reduce your water bill and sewage bill!

— Protect our rivers and streams! Water stored in your rain barrel is water that won’t rush off into our streams. Instead, as you use the stored rain water around the home and garden, it will absorb slowly into the ground replenishing groundwater supplies. By decreasing the volume of storm runoff, rain barrels also help moderate stream erosion and the resulting pollution that is impairing our waterways.



### Installing and Managing Your Rain Barrel During the Growing Season and Winter

— Choose your installation location. Place and level barrel on cynder blocks. Ensure steady footing.

— Cut downspout 18” above barrel or install shorter piece from guttering. Add Flex-a-spout and attach to downspout adapter in top of barrel.

— Connect 4” corrugated drainage pipe to overflow port. Direct hose away from your foundation. Allow a minimum hose length of 2 feet for crawlspace and 6 feet for basements.

— Attach garden hose or spigot to shut off valve at bottom of barrel. To fill barrel, close valve. Open valve to use or empty barrel.

— Disconnect the barrel from the downspout during winter and return to original configuration.

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## Water wise gardening with the rain barrel

Rain patterns show regular rainfall events occur during April, May and June, just when vegetable gardens and perennial beds are being established. A water wise approach is to water annuals and perennials with rain barrel water and mulch heavily to retain moisture during the dryer months of July and August. Occasional rains in late summer will continue to refill the barrel.



## Increase the capacity of rainwater storage

You can connect more than one rain barrel together at each downspout. Raising the barrels off the ground by placing them on cement or wooden blocks will ease access to the faucet and provide the natural gravity to increase water flow.

## Managing heavy rains

It is essential to consider the impact of heavy rains on your drainage system. An overfull barrel has the potential to cause erosion around your home. If heavy rains are predicted attach the overflow hose and aim away from the foundation of your home.

## Controlling mosquitoes

Regular use of your rain barrel will prevent mosquito eggs from hatching. The rain barrel may be capped with fiberglass screen that allows water in, but keeps mosquitoes from getting into the barrel to lay their eggs. Also to prevent mosquitoes from breeding you may add a tablespoon of cooking oil to form a sheen on the top of the water. However, if you are still concerned about mosquitoes breeding in your rain barrel, you can add a whole or a half of a Mosquito Dunk to the water in your barrel to kill mosquito eggs. Mosquito Dunks can be purchased at most garden supply stores and from [www.aquabarrel.com](http://www.aquabarrel.com).

### WARNING:

Do not use rain barrels for drinking, cooking or bathing. If your roof is asphalt you should not collect water for vegetable gardens.

Contact Info: 765.213.6468 or [www.wishthefish.com](http://www.wishthefish.com)

This project is in partnership with the White River Watershed Project and Centers for Disease Control.

