

Rain Barrels: An Old Idea With a New Following

Did you know residential water use increases 40 to 50% during summer months due to outdoor watering? And, did you know stormwater runoff is the leading type of residential non-point source pollution? Be a wise water user: capture runoff and use less water with a rain barrel.

What is a rain barrel?

A rain barrel collects and stores rainwater from rooftops to use later for lawn and garden watering. Water collected in a rain barrel would normally pour off your roof and become stormwater runoff. This runoff can travel onto hard surfaces, pick up pollution, and flow untreated into a nearby waterbody.

- Rain barrels conserve water and help lower costs (a rain barrel can save approximately 1,300 gallons of water during peak summer months).
- Rain barrels reduce water pollution by reducing stormwater runoff, which can contain pollutants like sediment, oil, grease, bacteria and nutrients.
- Rain barrels are inexpensive and easy to build and install.

Ready-made rain barrels range from \$89 to \$135 each depending on size, style and added features. For local suppliers, inquire at your local home and garden supply store, garden center, nursery, or hardware store. Or you can make your own from a 55 gallon drum and other easily obtainable materials. Do an internet search on rain barrels to learn more.



Adapted by Minnehaha Creek Watershed District from: URI Greenshare Program, Cooperative Extension Center, <http://www.uri.edu/ce/healthylandscapes/rainbsources>