

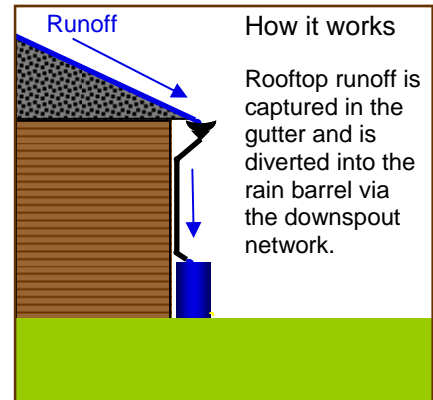
Rain Barrel Fact Sheet

What is a rain barrel?

A rain barrel is used to catch water flowing from your gutters. Rain Barrels reduce the amount of storm water runoff by collecting roof runoff and storing the water for future use.

How does it work?

The rain barrel is placed near a roof downspout outlet. The barrel is then connected to the downspout by a section of elbow pipe. Runoff is diverted into the rain barrel via the downspout.



Maintaining a rain barrel

Rain barrels are relatively maintenance free during the spring and summer months.

- Position the rain barrel at an area close to the downspout, where land slopes away from the foundation.

Standing water can be a favourable place for mosquitoes, please take these precautions to reduce mosquito breeding habitat.

- Keep the piece of fine mesh secured around opening of barrel.
- Keep your barrel free of organic material.
- One tablespoon of olive oil in your water will keep mosquitoes from breeding in the barrel.

Water quality – rain barrel water quality is not a major concern unless the water is intended to be consumed. Please do not use as a potable water source. Children and pets should not be allowed to drink from the rain barrel.

Winter care of a rain barrel

-In cold weather, take your rain barrel out of operation. When water freezes, it expands, possibly cracking your barrel or hose.

-Disconnect your rain barrel for the winter months. Store upside down so it will fully drain and remain relatively clean.

.Benefits and Uses!

- Cost-effective alternative to using tap water for watering yards and gardens.
- Reduces peak volume and velocity of stormwater runoff to streams and storm sewer systems.
- Help to reduce peak water demand during summer months.
- Applicable to all types of sites (residential/commercial/industrial).
- Takes advantage of already existing source of fresh rainwater.
- Inexpensive to install and maintain.

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Rain Barrel Fun Facts

That's a lot of water to catch!

For every inch of rain that falls on a square foot of your roof, you can receive just over half a gallon of water (0.6 gallons of water).

For example, if you have a shed that is 10' x 10', and you can collect the rainwater from all 100 square feet of roof, you could collect 60 gallons in one 1 inch rain.

Catch more from one downspout

Are you eager to collect as much water as possible? Try linking the overflow hose from the rain barrel directly under the downspout with another rain barrel to get twice the volume.

Won't the pressure be too low?

You may think the water pressure from your rain barrel will be too low to seep through a soaker hose or power an oscillating sprinkler. But, according to Charlene, in Raytown, Missouri, you *can* use a soaker hose with your rain barrel, and she finds the low water pressure ideal for her sprinkler.

Don't like the color?

Rain barrels may be painted any way you wish... a wine barrel.. a fish tank.. an elephant? A good base paint might be Krylon's new "Fusion" spray paint, which has been specially formulated to bond well with plastic.

But I'd rather have a longer overflow hose, a lower spigot, etc., etc...

The only limit to rainwater catchment systems is your imagination! You can make rain barrels from common hardware store parts.

City of Lawrence Waste Reduction and Recycling Division
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