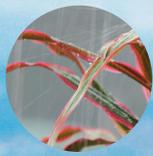


Recycle the RAIN



A How-To For Using A Rain Barrel

Harvesting rain water using a small rain barrel helps supplement irrigation for a small cost.

Storing rain water also helps reduce storm water runoff, which can lead to reduced levels of pesticides and fertilizers in our water.

Start with a rain barrel



A rain barrel is a system that collects and stores rain water from your roof that would otherwise be lost to runoff and diverted to storm drains and streams. A rain barrel is relatively simple and inexpensive to install and can sit conveniently under any residential gutter down spout.

Rain barrels are available for purchase from local businesses or over the internet.

Rain barrels come in many shapes, sizes and colors. Some rain barrel owners add creative touches such as painted flowers or scenery.



Uses for Collected Water

- Connect to a soaker hose (with the pressure-reducing washer removed)
- Fill a watering can and hand-water plants, flower beds and gardens
- Keep your compost bin moist
- Rinse off gardening tools, patio furniture, and your car

Do I need a permit?

Check with your county to see if a permit is required to install a small rain barrel for landscape watering. Some subdivisions with deed restrictions prohibit them. You can also check your local plumbing and health code for guidance.

Stay Away from Plumbing

It's important to keep your rain barrel independent from existing house piping or sprinkler system piping to prevent a cross-connection to your potable water.

How much rain water can I collect?

A typical 1/2 inch rainfall will fill a 50 to 55-gallon barrel. Figure about a half gallon of water per square foot of roof area during a 1-inch rainfall. A 2,000 square-foot roof can collect about 1,000 gallons of water (*accounting for about 20% loss from evaporation, runoff and splash*).

What about filtering?

Leaf debris, bird droppings and chemicals from roof material won't likely be harmful to plants. Use a window screen or wire mesh to keep out debris and insects and clean the tank periodically to remove any settling.

For more information:

Chesterton MS4 Program
(219) 728-1336

CHESTERTON
Storm Water Utility/MS4 Program



HOW IT WORKS:

Catch rain water...

from a roof with gutters.



Store rain water...

in barrels, both big and small, which can be plastic, fiberglass, concrete or metal, as long as they're non-porous and smooth. Even a garbage can will work.



Use collected water...

to water plants, by either filling a watering can or attaching a soaker or garden hose.

