

Maintaining Your Rain Barrel

Maintenance requirements for rain barrels are minimal and consist only of regular inspection of the unit as a whole and any of its constituent parts and accessories. The following components should be routinely inspected, at least twice a year, and either repaired or replaced as needed.

- *Roof catchment*, to ensure that no particulate matter or other parts of the roof are entering the gutter and downspout to the rain barrel.
- *Gutters*, to ensure that no leaks or obstructions are occurring.
- *Downspouts*, also to assure that no leaks or obstructions are occurring.
- *Entrance at rain barrel*, to ensure that there are no obstructions and/or leaks occurring.
- *Rain barrel*, to check for potential leaks, including barrel top and seal.
- *Runoff / overflow pipe*, to check that overflow is draining in non-erosive manner.
- *Spigot*, to ensure that it is functioning correctly.
- *Any accessories*, such as rain diverter, soaker hose, linking kit, and additional guttering.



Mission: "The Watershed Alliance of York (WAY) is a coalition of stakeholders committed to being innovative leaders encouraging watershed-based planning, restoration and protection, through locally led conservation, education and stewardship initiatives, in York County and beyond."

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BE WATER WISE— RAIN BARRELS AT HOME

*Encouraging watershed planning,
restoration and protection, in York
County and beyond*



www.watershedsyork.org

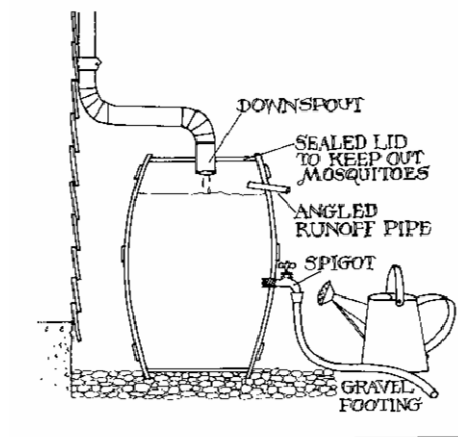
Why are rain barrels important?

Who should conserve water? Anybody who depends on water use outdoors.

What is rainwater conservation? Rather than allowing rainwater runoff to flow down your driveway or into storm sewers, capture this resource for later reuse or at least allow it to gradually soak into the ground and recharge the groundwater. One way is to divert water from your downspouts into a "rainwater conservation barrel".

Where rainwater can be conserved? Almost any impervious surface including the roof of a house, garage, porch, shed, and deck.

When rainwater can be conserved? Residential irrigation can account for up to 40% of domestic water consumption. Water conservation measures such as rain barrels can be used to reduce the demand on your water and sewer systems, and save money, especially during the hot summer months.



What is a rain barrel?

A Rain Barrel is an effective and efficient tool for conserving rainwater and managing stormwater runoff beginning at home. Most rain barrels are low technology, low-cost, and easy to maintain.

A typical rain barrel design includes:

- 55-gallon barrel (i.e., metal, plastic, wood)
- Opening at the top to allow for downspout inflow
- Flexible elbow downspout adaptor
- 1/2" Hose Bibb Spigot in the side 3-4 inches from bottom of barrel
- Overflow pipe (1 1/2" diameter or greater)
- Cleanout plug (optional, near bottom)
- Nylon screen (cover all openings where mosquitoes may enter)

The size of a rain barrel is based on the rooftop surface area that drains into it. General rule of thumb—0.10 inch of rainfall on a 1000 square foot roof will yield approximately 60 gallons. Rain barrels can be connected in series to provide larger storage volume.

Additional considerations:

- Safety—Rain barrels may pose an immediate danger to life and health of pets and small children
- Opening(s) for ease of inspection, cleaning and maintenance
- Vector control (sealed or accessible for treatment)
- Gutter screens to prevent leaves and twigs from entering rain barrel
- Aesthetic appeal (e.g., color, shape, location, etc.)
- Regulation—While rain barrels are largely unregulated in many areas, local regulations may require that local health, safety and plumbing codes are be met.



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