Why use Rain Barrels?

Rain barrels capture and store free water that can be used in your yard, thereby lowering your water bills, particularly in the summer months. A rain barrel can save approximately 1,300 gallons of water during peak summer months (see www.uri.edu/ce/healthy lanscapes/rainbsources. html).

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Because rainwater collected in rain barrels is naturally soft, oxygenated, and devoid of minerals, chlorine, fluoride, lime, calcium, and other chemicals it can help improve the health of your gardens, lawns, and trees

(see www.rainbarrelguide.com).

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Rain barrels help reduce water pollution by reducing stormwater runoff, which picks up debris, motor oil, fertilizers, bacteria and more on its way to Brown County streams causing erosion, flooding, and habitat degradation.

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Rain barrels provide an emergency source of water that can help gardens and landscape during dry spells.

For more information on rain barrels go to:

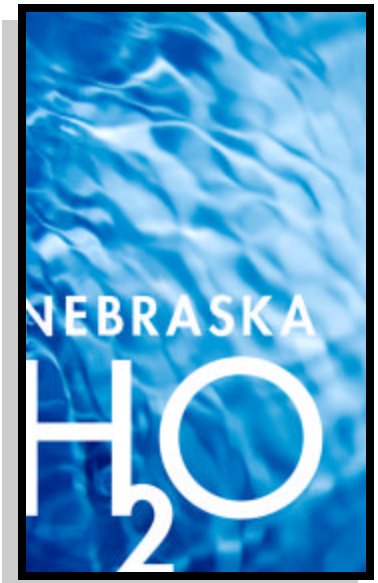
www.rainbarrelguide.com
www.rainbarrelsconserve.com
www.rainsaverusa.com
www.realgoods.com
www.gardenwatersaver.com
www.gardeners.com
www.watersavers.com
www.naturalrainwater.com

Note: The Nebraska Stormwater Cooperative maintains this list as a courtesy to the public and does not endorse or guarantee the quality of the service offered or provided.

Program funding provided by the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality.

Rain Barrel

Informational Brochure



What is a Rain Barrel and How do They Work?

A rain barrel is a tank, commonly made from plastic, which is used to collect rainwater that can be used to water lawns, gardens, and house plants.

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A rain barrel collects roof water from a home's downspout. Rain barrels come in a number of different forms; however, at a minimum most models come equipped with a spigot that can be attached to a regular garden hose.

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In order to collect rainwater as it runs off a roof, the barrels are placed below a home's downspout on a level surface. Some rain barrels are equipped with a mesh screen that will allow water to flow directly out of the downspout and into the barrel while others can be equipped with a downspout attachment that will allow water to flow into the barrel until it is full and then any excess onto the ground just as a downspout normally would.

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Placement of a rain barrel may require some modification to a home's down spout, including resizing. Flex elbows are commonly used to provide seamless flow of water from the downspout to the barrel.

Rain Barrel Tips:

Always keep your rain barrel covered. Even small amounts of water can present a drowning risk to children and pets.

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Do not drink any water collected by a rain barrel. Roofs pick up contamination from leaves, bird droppings, dust, and other airborne material. Sometimes, the roofing material itself can contaminate harvested rainwater. In the case of some roofs, such as old tar and gravel, old

asbestos shingle, or treated cedar shakes, the homeowner should not harvest roof water.

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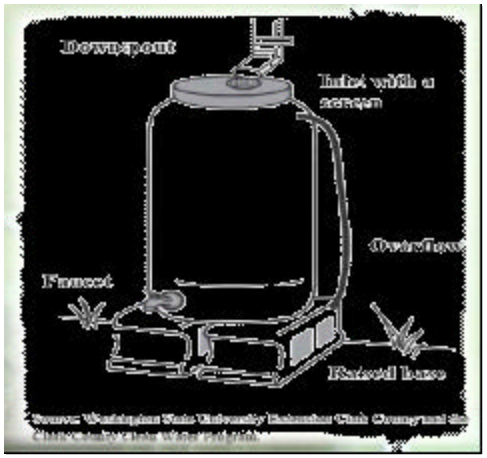
Cover your rain barrel with a screen or top. This kind of precaution will prevent debris from dirtying your water and clogging your drainage system. It will also eliminate the chance that mosquitoes will pick your rain barrel as a great place to breed.



Place your rain barrel on level ground and consider securing it in place to ensure that it does not tip over when it is filled with water and at its heaviest.

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In the winter, empty your rain barrel and store it upside down to keep it clean for next year.

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Always make sure to monitor your rain barrel for overflow to avoid damage to your foundation—if you go on vacation, make sure you plan ahead!

(see www.rainbarrelguide.com)

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Rain barrels should be a solid color since translucent barrels encourage algae growth.