

Reasons to Harvest Rainwater

- Plants thrive on soft, oxygenated water with a neutral pH, ambient temperature, and absent of water treatment chemicals.
- Conserve water.
- Reduce water bill amount.
- Divert water from storm drain system.
- Protect rivers and streams from stormwater runoff (which becomes polluted after running across paved surfaces).
- Environmentally friendly action.



Did you know?

The estimated average roof size of a Delaware County home is 1,800 square feet. With one inch of rainfall, a roof that size produces 1,077 gallons of usable water.

Delaware County, Ohio averages 37 inches of precipitation per year, which results in the average home contributing 41,469 gallons of water annually going down the drain. Take action and install a rain barrel system!



The Delaware SWCD does not endorse any one rain barrel manufacturer or retailer. It is recommended you compare rain barrel styles and prices at your local garden center, home retail stores, or shop on-line to find the rain barrel that best fits your home's needs.

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Harvest Rain Water Using Rain Barrels



Take Action!
Save Money
Conserve Water

What is a Rain Barrel?

A rain barrel collects rain water from your rooftop which you can later use to water your garden, trees, or indoor plants. Rain barrels come in different sizes as well as a variety of colors and shapes to match just about any home. With a spigot at the bottom of the barrel, it is easy to attach hoses to allow easy watering of far-away flowerbeds.

Look for the Following Features when Purchasing a Rain Barrel

- A mesh screen top to keep out leaves, shingle grit, debris, and prevent mosquitoes from breeding in your barrel.
- An overflow spigot to enable you to drain excess water or hook into an irrigation system or soaker hose.
- Soaker hoses are inexpensive, easy to install, and easy to maintain. Rain barrels fill up fast! A soaker hose enable you to divert the water to your yard or garden, as desired.
- Plan for the appropriate size – collected water needs used within one week.
- Rain barrels can be connected together to allow for overflow to be diverted to another barrel.



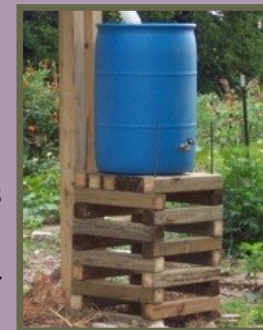
By collecting rain exiting a roof during spring and summer and storing it in a rain barrel, homeowners can create an alternative supply that won't tax water supplies or increase water bills. Because rainwater doesn't contain the minerals found in wells or chlorine found in municipal supplies, it's ideal for watering the lawn, trees, flowerbeds, and indoor plants. Rain barrels reduce the amount of water rushing into the stream or river during a rain storm. It is important to keep as much rainwater as possible on your lot. By doing so, you prevent the rain water from flowing over hard surfaces such as roads and driveways, picking up pollutants, and flooding and eroding a waterway.



Tips for Using Rain Barrels

- Do not use collected water for drinking, cooking or bathing.
- Keep the lid secure so children or animals cannot fall into the barrel.
- Disconnect the barrel during winter months to avoid freezing and the constant overflow during the rainiest months.
- If a moss killer has been used on the roof, let a couple of rainfall events go by before collecting roof runoff.

- Consider joining multiple barrels for additional capacity and elevate your rain barrel to make access to the spigot easier and to increase water pressure.



What Size Rain Barrel do I Need?

For those who just want a simple system to capture a barrel of rainwater to water gardens and trees, a 55 or 75 gallon barrel is recommended. However, for those who want a more complex system that has the capability to capture more rainwater, use these calculations.

To calculate how much rainwater you have the potential of catching off your house roof:
Supply in cubic feet = roof area (in sq. ft.) x rainfall (in feet)

Example: a 20 x 30 ft. roof area is 600 sq. ft. The roof area is multiplied by the amount of rainfall (in feet) to get the supply in cubic feet. In this case a 600 sq. ft. roof that received 0.9 in or .08 ft. (inches are converted to feet) of rain, for a total of 600 sq. ft. x .08 in = 48 cubic feet of rainwater.

To convert cubic feet to gallons, multiply by 7.48. So, 48 cubic ft. x 7.48 = 359 gallons of rainwater.

Catching too much water? Attach a second rain barrel to capture overflow by using a rain barrel linking kit, or use PVC pipe to extend the overflow outlet and divert the excess water onto the yard.