

RCWD RAIN BARREL GUIDE

Rain Barrels are an effective tool to reduce and capture stormwater runoff from buildings. The basic design is to place a barrel with a signet or hose at the end of a downspout. Stormwater collected in a rain barrel can be reused to water a lawn or garden. There are several ways to acquire a rain barrel including home improvement stores or online manufacturers.

Installation & Maintenance

When installing a rain barrel, ensure that it is placed directly under a downspout and secured in place. Placing screens on both the rain barrel and the gutter is recommended to prevent insects debris buildup inside the barrel. Check the screens regularly to remove any leaves or debris to prevent blockages.

To clean out the barrel, drain all the water and remove the screens. Spray down the whole system with a hose and use soap or vinegar to clean the inside. Ensure the barrel is completely dry before reassembling. Adding a small amount of vegetable oil on the surface of the standing water can smother mosquito and insect larvae.



Winterization

Before freezing temperatures arrive, completely drain the barrel. Do not let water freeze in the barrel as water expands when frozen and can cause damage.

Store the rain barrel upside down and leave the spigot open. If available, store the barrel in an enclosed space like a garage or shed. Reinstall the rain barrel in spring, but be aware to drain the barrel if an unexpected spring freeze is forecasted.

