

Rain Barrel



A rain barrel is an above ground storage tank that collects rain water from your gutter's downspout. A rain barrel is a smaller version of a cistern and typically comes in sizes ranging from 30 to 100 gallons. Rain water collected in a rain barrel can be used for many activities including watering plants (gardens, lawn) and washing your car.

The benefits of a rain barrel include:

- Savings on your water bill. Rain barrel water can be used for irrigation instead of drinking water.
- A reduction in stormwater runoff from your property. This also reduces the amount of sediment and other pollutants that would be washed away with the runoff into nearby storm drains and local streams.
- Groundwater recharge. The slow release of the water allows it to soak into the ground, which supplies water to local streams in between storms.

It is best to regularly use the water in your rain barrel to ensure there is capacity to store water from the next rain storm. Locate the rain barrel in a shady or protected location to avoid algae growth in the tank. Darker colored tanks will help prevent algae growth as well. Prior to the first winter freeze, disconnect and drain the rain barrel.

Reduced cost rain barrels are available through the Northern Virginia Rain Barrel Program.

Learn more about the reduced cost program at <http://arlingtonenvironment.org/barrel.php>



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Rain barrels come in a variety of styles and can be customized with artwork. Some barrels include space for plantings.