

rainbarrels



what makes rainbarrels so great, and why should your family use one?

Rainbarrels are a fantastic way to conserve water and reduce runoff!

Rainwater collected can be used for a number of outdoor uses that would normally require tap water like watering gardens and lawns, or washing cars and pets. It is not recommended that the rainwater be used for drinking because no purification has been done. Concern has also been raised about leechate from the plastic of the barrels themselves as well as from the roof material and sediment on the roof.

When rainwater is used for various outdoor water needs (watering lawns alone is a huge drain on municipal water supplies every summer - in 2001, water consumption increased about 50% above average during the summer), less water needs to be drawn from the source (wells or surface water), treated to drinking water standards and pumped to households. The municipality thus

saves on operating costs when less water is used and in the long run saves a great deal on infrastructure costs because as water use rises new wells, pumping stations, treatment facilities, etc. need to be built. When less water is drawn into the municipal system the impact on the ecosystem is reduced as well. Drawing water from an aquifer, lake or river faster than it is naturally regenerated impacts the soil as well as the living communities that depend on water to survive.

During a rainstorm in an urban area, some water will fall on soil and be absorbed but a great deal falls on hard surfaces like rooftops, roads, and sidewalks, creating runoff. This runoff enters the sewer system (is mixed with the residential, industrial and institutional sewage in some urban areas) and must be treated in the sewage treatment plant. During heavy rains, the volume overwhelms the capacity of the treatment plant and the mix of runoff and raw sewage is released into a nearby lake or river. This is a massive source of pollution as residential sewage contains dangerous bacteria and

other microbes while the runoff and sewage from all sources contains hazardous wastes like heavy metals.

They are simple, safe and affordable. With summers becoming both hotter and dryer, why not give our water supply a much needed break and use a rainbarrel?

consider this:

If 10 people each bought a barrel and over the course of the season, each barrel filled just 3 times- that is 6 600 litres of water!



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GIRC hosts free workshops on both building and customizing rainbarrels! Be sure to check our website for frequent updates. If you, or someone you know is interested in rainbarrels or rainwater harvesting in any capacity, feel free to call us: (519) 822 3110 or email us at: rainbarrels@girc.org.