



## **Rain Barrels**

### **What is a rain barrel?**

A rain barrel is a rainwater collection system that stores rooftop run-off to be used later for activities such as lawn and garden watering, car washing, and even window cleaning. Collecting rainwater for use during dry months in rain barrels or other depositories is an ancient and traditional practice.

### **How does it work?**

Rain barrels are usually 55 gallon drums connected to your home's downspout that collect storm water directly from your gutters. The water enters through the screen in a removable lid. A brass spigot at the base is ideal for a watering hose. There is also a rubber hose attached at the mid section for water overflow.

### **What are the advantages of a Rain Barrel?**

**Save Water-** Your roof catchment area is equal to the total square feet of your house plus the extension of your eaves. (1 in of rainfall) \* (1,000 sq feet of catchment area) = 600 gallons of collectable rainwater. A rain barrel will save most homeowners about 1,300 gallons of water during the peak summer months, or about \$40.

**Reduce Pollution-** Rain Barrels collect water that would otherwise be lost to storm water runoff. Storm water running over impervious surfaces can pick up debris, chemicals, oil, and other pollutants and flow into a storm sewer system or directly to our creeks and rivers. Large amounts of rainfall causes the sewer system to overflow, dumping raw sewage and storm water into our water ways.

**Save Money-** Rain Barrels provide an ample supply of free "soft water" to homeowners, containing no chlorine, lime or calcium making it ideal for watering plants, washing cars and windows. Lawn and garden watering make up nearly 40% of total household water use during the summer.

Source: Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper