

Where Can I Learn More About Rain Barrels?

In the City of Philadelphia, the Water Department offers programs that provide and install free rain barrels.

In Montgomery County, you can purchase rain barrels at a number of local businesses. We also work with communities and organizations that provide rain barrel workshops and discounted rain barrels.

Please contact us to learn more about these programs:

Tookany/Tacony-Frankford Watershed Partnership

215.744.1853

info@ttfwatershed.org

www.ttfwatershed.org



Tookany/Tacony-Frankford
Watershed Partnership, Inc.

Our mission is to enhance the health and vitality of the Tookany/Tacony-Frankford Creek and its watershed. We initiate and support efforts to restore the health of the watershed, and to mobilize our communities as watershed stewards through community outreach, networking, educational programs, and projects. Our watershed includes neighborhoods in North, Northeast, and Northwest Philadelphia and Abington, Cheltenham, Jenkintown, Rockledge, and Springfield in Montgomery County.

As a partner in the Philadelphia Water Department's *Green City, Clean Waters* program, we work to increase public stewardship, appreciation, and understanding of our watershed and improve our streams, parks, and communities.



What is a Rain Barrel?



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Why a Rain Barrel?

Rain barrels and other green infrastructure store rainwater where it falls and retain it so that it can be released in drier weather. This helps prevent combined sewer systems from overflowing and polluting our waterways.



When it rains, rainwater passes over—and mixes with—oil, dirt, chemicals, pesticides, and other pollutants as it flows over roads, lawns, and other hard surfaces.

What are the Benefits of Rain Barrels?

- **Cleaner water:** The water collected in your rain barrel would normally flow through roof gutters and downspouts, then over paved surfaces, where it would pick up pollutants before making its way into local storm drains and streams.
- **Reduced water bills:** By using the water stored in a rain barrel for your outdoor water, your need for outdoor tap water is reduced, which saves you money.

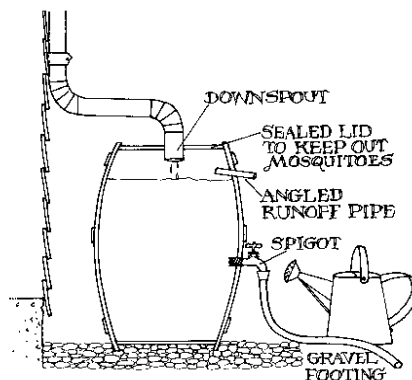
What Does a Rain Barrel Look Like?

A rain barrel is composed of a 55-gallon drum, a vinyl hose, and a screen grate to keep debris and insects out.

A rain barrel is relatively simple and inexpensive to construct and can sit conveniently under any residential downspout.



How Can I Install a Rain Barrel at My House?



- Place barrel on a level surface near a downspout
- Place overflow pipe so that any overflowing water follows the downspout's original course
- Check attachments periodically to ensure they are connected properly
- Keep screen clear of debris
- Attach hose to spigot or use as a faucet
- Raise barrel on blocks if more pressure is needed in spigot
- You can attach multiple barrels in a series

During the Winter Months

- Bring barrel inside or flip upside-down to avoid freezing and cracking
- When barrel is disconnected, redirect flexible attachment to the original drain pipe

What Can I Do with My Rain Barrel?

You can use the water in your rain barrel to water flowers, lawns, or gardens or to wash your garden tools.

When using water from your rain barrel to water your vegetable garden, remember to follow these important guidelines:

- Water close to the ground
- Stop watering close to harvest time
- Wash all harvested food carefully with drinkable water before eating
- If your roof has been treated with chemicals in the past five years, do not use rainwater on vegetables

Important!

Water collected in your rain barrel is not drinkable. It can contain bacteria and other disease-causing organisms. Do not use water from your rain barrel to feed pets or people.



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