

MAINTAINING YOUR RAIN BARREL

- Keep your rain barrel spigot closed when you are not using the water. Overflow water will spill from the vent on the top and the hole on the side near the top.
- Regularly check your gutters, downspouts, rain barrel water intake screen, rain barrel mosquito screen and rain barrel spigot for leaks, obstructions or debris.
- Keep your rain barrel lid sealed.
- Drain your barrel before temperatures drop below freezing.
- In winter, keep your rain barrel spigot open so water does not accumulate in the rain barrel and freeze. You can also turn it upside-down or bring it inside to ensure no water accumulates in the barrel.
- Lubricate the metal locking ring with household oil.

PREVENTING MOSQUITOES

Your rain barrel comes with a mosquito-proof screen under the lid. When the mosquito netting is intact, and there are no leaks where mosquitoes can enter the barrel, your rain barrel should be mosquito-free

- Place your barrel on a pervious landscaped surface so that overflow water soaks into the ground instead of pooling on paved surfaces.
- Keep your rain barrel lid sealed.
- Keep your barrel free of organic material.
- Remove accumulated water from the top of the barrel every 3-4 days during the rainy season. Mosquitos need at least 4 days of standing water to develop larva.
- If you believe mosquitoes may be breeding in your rain barrel, empty it completely, to kill all mosquito larvae that may be in your barrel.

DISCLAIMER

With proper installation, maintenance and use, your rain barrel should function properly. The Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago assumes no liability for the installation, maintenance or use of your rain barrel. We are not responsible for any rain barrel malfunction; property damage or injury associated with your rain barrel malfunction; property damage, or injury associated with your rain barrel, its accessories or contents.

Buy a Rain Barrel

The Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago provides rain barrels to our constituents at cost, for only \$50 each. To buy a rain barrel:

1 Go to www.mwrd.org and pay for the rain barrel with a credit or debit card. Set your browser to allow pop ups for the site to work correctly. Print your receipt.

2 Take your printed receipt to the nearest MWRD rain barrel pick up location. Rain barrels are available for pick-up the first week of the month at the following locations and times:

The first **TUESDAY** of the month

North Side Water Reclamation Plant

3500 Howard, Skokie

4pm-7pm

The first **THURSDAY** of the month

Calumet Water Reclamation Plant

400 East 130th Street, Chicago

4pm-7pm

The first **SATURDAY** of the month

Stickney Water Reclamation Plant

6001 West Pershing, Cicero

9am-1 pm

North Side Water Reclamation Plant

3500 Howard, Skokie

9am-1pm

- Sales are pre-paid only. No on-site cash or check sales. Rain barrels can only be purchased online at the MWRD website (www.mwrd.org) with a credit or debit card.
- You must provide your pre-paid receipt for pick-up.
- There is a limit of two barrels per household.
- Please do not arrive early. Police will ask you to leave. No parking is allowed along MWRD facility fences or property lines.



METROPOLITAN WATER RECLAMATION
DISTRICT of GREATER CHICAGO

BOARD of COMMISSIONERS

Terrence J. O'Brien

President

Kathleen Therese Meany

Vice President

Gloria Alitto Majewski

Chairman of Finance

Frank Avila

Patricia Horton

Barbara J. McGowan

Cynthia M. Santos

Debra Shore

Mariyana T. Spyropoulos

Richard Lanyon

Executive Director

For more information:
MWRD Office of Public Affairs at 312.751.6633
email: publicaffairsinfo@mwrd.org



Printed with soy based ink on recycled paper



Installation, Placement
and Purchasing Guide

Metropolitan Water Reclamation
District of Greater Chicago

What is a rain barrel?

The MWRD's 50 gallon rain barrel is a frost-proof, durable plastic resin container that collects and stores rainwater from your rooftop (via your home's disconnected downspout) for later use on your lawn or garden, or other outdoor uses.

Will my barrel overflow when it rains?

Probably. A 1,000 square foot roof runs off approximately 310 gallons of water in a half-inch rain. If the roof has 4 downspouts each accepting roughly the same amount of water, 75 gallons will run into one downspout, causing the barrel to overflow by 25 gallons.

What should I do with the overflow?

Make sure overflow does not cause flooding or flow into a neighbor's property. Some options for overflow:

- Connect the overflowing barrel to a second rain barrel.
- Ensure there is enough pervious surface around the barrel to soak up overflow. Trees and plants with deep roots are good absorbers. Concrete and asphalt are not acceptable.
- Direct overflow back into the sewer with a downspout diverter (available online at various websites).

Is a rain barrel right for my house?

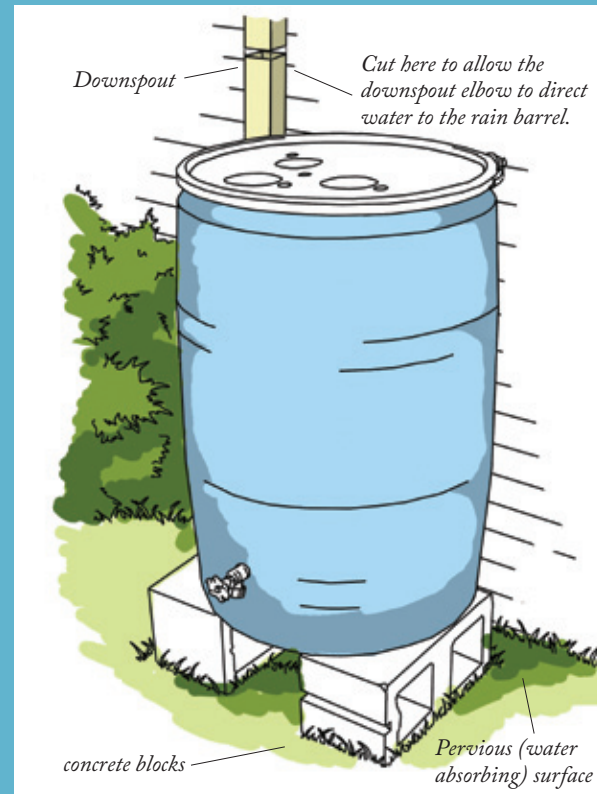
A rain barrel may be a good idea for you:

1. If you use the rain water collected often after rains (i.e. weekly).
2. If you can place your barrel underneath a disconnected downspout.
3. If the land surrounding the rain barrel slopes away from your house and surrounding homes.
4. If the area surrounding the rain barrel has enough pervious (water-absorbing) surface to soak up excess water from overflows.

Why would I want a rain barrel in my yard?

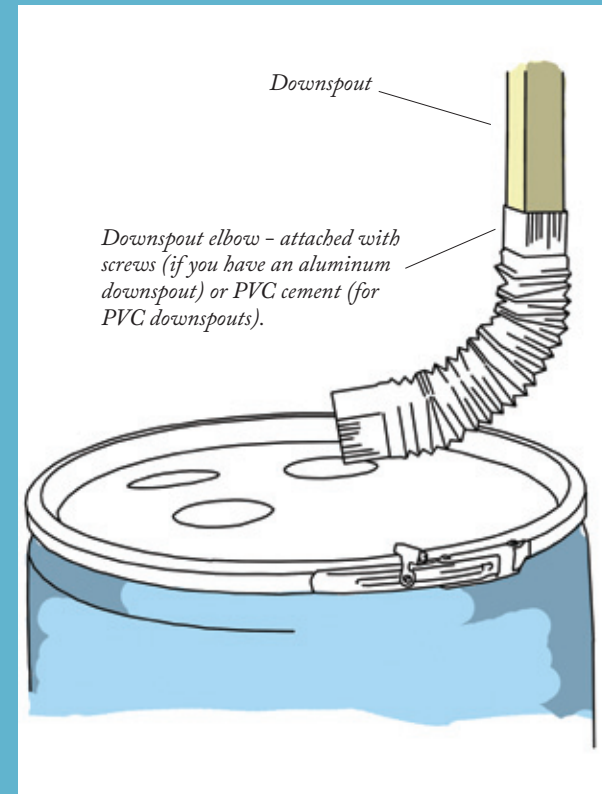
Rain barrels are primarily used as a water conservation tool, but can also be helpful in managing stormwater. Used in conjunction with other stormwater Best Management Practices throughout your neighborhood, they can improve water quality in our rivers. Lawn and garden watering can use up to 40 percent of your household water during summer months. You can significantly reduce the amount of water you consume by using rainwater instead of tap water. The barrel's spigot is threaded so you can attach a garden hose directly to the barrel. Water collected in your barrel can be used for watering your garden and lawn, washing your car or bike, cleaning work boots and tools, or watering potted plants.

PLACING YOUR RAIN BARREL



- Place your rain barrel by your house or garage in an area close to the plants and garden that you water most. Other downspouts can be disconnected and directed into your yard.
- Pick a spot where your barrel's overflow will soak into your own yard, and not your neighbors' property.
- Put the rain barrel on a pervious surface (e.g. landscaped surface that allows overflow from your rain barrel to soak into the ground), otherwise rain barrel water overflow during heavy rains could pool or seep into your house or garage foundation.
- Place the rain barrel up on concrete blocks to allow gravity to increase the flow and so a watering can will fit underneath the spigot.

INSTALLING YOUR RAIN BARREL



Tools: *Hacksaw. For aluminum downspouts: 6 screws and a screwdriver. For PVC downspouts: PVC cement.*

1. Place your barrel near the downspout you selected to plan how to direct the downspout.
2. Disconnect your downspout by sawing the downspout above where the top of the rain barrel will be. Leave room for the elbow to be attached.
3. Attach a downspout elbow to the end of your downspout, directing the rain through the plastic screen vent on top. For an aluminum downspout, secure it to the elbow with screws. For a PVC downspout, secure it to the elbow with PVC cement.
4. Optional: Attach a hose to the spigot, and/or to the overflow hole on the top side of the barrel. Make sure that the overflow is directed into your own yard.