

Rain Barrel Workshop – Participant Guide

When leave this workshop, remember to take the remaining parts and instructions from your Rain Recycle kit. You'll need these to properly install your new rain barrel.



Fact: For every 1,000 square feet of roof area, 600 gallons of water can be collected with only 1 inch of rain!

Today, we will convert used 35-gallon or 55-gallon syrup concentrate ingredient drums (donated by Coca-Cola) into rain barrels using Rain Recycle do-it-yourself diverter kits. These rain barrels are relatively simple to construct and can divert water from any residential gutter down spout.

Fact: Stormwater runoff is a leading cause of pollution in our streams and lakes.

Stormwater runoff — water that flows over the ground after a rainstorm — picks up debris, chemicals, soil, yard waste, fertilizer, motor oil and other pollutants. A rain barrel is a system that collects and stores rain water from your roof that would otherwise drain into storm drains and streams, thus reducing runoff pollution.

Fact: Lawn and garden watering can account for over 40% of total household water use during the summer.

With your new rain barrel, you can collect rain water and store it for when you need it most – like during periods of drought – to water plants. It provides an ample supply of free water that contains no chlorine, lime or calcium, making it ideal for gardens, flower pots, and car washing.

Fact: A 55-gallon rain barrel can save most homeowners 1,300 gallons of water each year.

Saving water not only helps protect the environment, it saves money and energy (by decreasing demand for treated tap water). Diverting water from storm drains also decreases the impact of runoff to streams and rivers.

Important Rain Barrel Tips

- Do not use rain barrel water for cooking, drinking, pets, or recreation.
- Be sure your barrel is marked with a 'non-potable water' or 'do not drink' sign. There is one provided with the Rain Recycle kit.
- Do not collect rain water if you use a moss-killer on your roof.
- Disconnect and drain the barrel in winter (if you live where water will freeze).
- If you do not have a wrap on your barrel or are not planning to paint it, you will need to add a tablespoon of bleach to the barrel every time it fills up to prevent algae growth.
- Make sure your barrel is a closed system or has fine screen covering all openings so insects can't get into your barrel. You don't want mosquitos from breeding in there!
- Optional - multiple barrels can be connected together for greater water storage.



This workshop was made possible with support from The Coca-Cola Company, The Coca-Cola Foundation, River Network – and you. **Thank you for taking action to conserve water and care for the Earth!**

You are part of a country-wide movement. To learn more about the National Rain Barrel Program and other ways to reduce your water footprint, visit: www.rivernetwork.org/get-involved/reduce-your-water-footprint

Rain Barrel Painting Guide

We recommend that you prime and paint the barrels to control algae growth from organic matter found on most roofs. Sunlight filtering through the white, translucent syrup drums mixed with this organic matter will cause algae to bloom. Most algae are harmless but there are strains that can be very dangerous and should be avoided.

Rain barrel painting supply list:

- 1 can of plastic spray paint primer per drum
- Latex and/or non-latex gloves
- Acrylic paints and paint brushes, or paint pens
- Small buckets for cleaning brushes if acrylics are used
- Drop clothes to protect ground
- 1 can of clear plastic varnish spray-paint sealer – spray 24 hours after rain barrel art painting to make sure acrylic paint has dried before sealing



Painting tips:

- Prime the plastic with plastic paint primer, (“Krylon Fusion” spray paint works well). Drums can be painted all one color, like a house paint color or green to blend in bushes and “disappear” next to a house. For artistic rain barrels, acrylics can be used over the primer, then seal the dried paint with a top coat of varnish, (clear matte UV resistant Krylon fusion spray paint works well).
- It is much easier to paint if drums are raised off ground. Drums are not heavy, but are bulky.
- If children are doing the painting, we suggest using paint pens and directing them to draw flowers, bugs, butterflies, rainbows and rain drops.
- Provide clothes covers or wear old clothes that can be ruined. *You will get paint on your clothes.*
- Stencils are wonderful to help guide a drum theme.
- Sealing is important to protect the paint from weather and scratching.
- It will take around 24 hours for the paint to completely dry before you can spray the protector or move the barrel safely.

