

PROJECT RAIN BARREL

a River Network program

Workshop Planning Guide



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Have Questions?

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Please review this entire guide before applying to host a Project Rain Barrel Workshop





Project Rain Barrel Background

Project Rain Barrel is a collaboration between [River Network](#), The Coca-Cola Company, and local workshop host organizations across the United States. The program facilitates public rain barrel making workshops by supplying host organizations with free materials, workshop planning support, and event promotion. Rain barrel workshops are a cost-effective way to engage individuals, families, and communities in water education and conservation.



River Network supports the construction of more than 1,400 rain barrels every year at 50+ workshops. Generous support from the Coca-Cola Company helps River Network connect approved workshop hosts with local Coca-Cola bottlers or distributors to arrange donation of recycled 35 or 55-gallon food-grade ingredient drums. The drums are capable of capturing and storing rainwater which can be used for a variety of household purposes including watering gardens and lawns. Rain barrels help people save money on water bills, reduce demand for treated tap water, control erosion around foundations, save water for use during droughts, and reduce the amount of polluted stormwater that flows into our rivers and lakes. Rain barrels also stimulate people to begin thinking about their water system and how they can reduce their water footprint.

Eligibility & Requirements

Most non-profit and community organizations engaged in water education, management, or conservation are eligible to host Project Rain Barrel workshops. Individuals are not eligible to host workshops but may volunteer with a local organization to help produce an event or install rain barrels in public locations. Eligible organizations include all free and paid [River Network member organizations](#) as well as neighborhood improvement groups, conservation districts, local government agencies and utilities, university extension programs, gardening organizations, and others.

Project Rain Barrel materials are limited and distributed through a competitive application process.

The application deadline for fall 2019 and spring 2020 workshops is November 15th, 2019.

Applications from first-time workshop hosts and paid River Network member organizations which demonstrate strong educational components will receive preference. Workshops hosted in [lower-income communities](#) (median household income < \$45,000) will also receive preference. All applicants will be notified of their application status by November 18th (or sooner if your workshop date is prior to January 1st, 2020). All approved workshop hosts may receive up to 30 free hardware kits (\$1,050 retail value) regardless of River Network membership status. Building rain barrels for use at public locations including schools, community gardens, etc. is acceptable [where legal](#) and does not require hosting a formal public workshop. You are encouraged to charge a workshop fee to recoup expenses. Additional requirements include providing post-event data and photos. River Network reserves the right deny Project Rain Barrel applications for any reason.

Hosting rain barrel workshops is a cost-effective way to generate interest in your organization by directly engaging and educating your community about water conservation. Facilitating successful workshops is labor intensive and logistically demanding. It requires dedicated staff and/or volunteer time for planning, marketing, transporting bulky materials, workshop implementation, and follow-up reporting. Project Rain Barrel makes this process as simple as possible.



What River Network Provides

River Network provides nearly everything needed to host successful public rain barrel building workshops. If your workshop is approved, River Network will provide the following:

Donated Coca-Cola Ingredient Drums

Approved workshop hosts will be provided with contact information for the nearest Coca-Cola bottling facility to arrange pick-up or drop-off of donated 35 and/or 55-gallon recycled ingredient drums. Please review [this map](#) to see if there is a Coca-Cola facility in your area. Your organization must coordinate directly with the designated Coca-Cola representative to obtain donated drums for your workshops. Drums are generally donated in groups of 25 - 30 because transporting and building more than 30 barrels per workshop is exceedingly difficult. Coca-Cola has been extremely generous in providing these high-quality food grade drums. Please thank your local facility for their donation and consider recognizing them on your social media pages, website, and annual report.



RainRecycle Hardware Kits

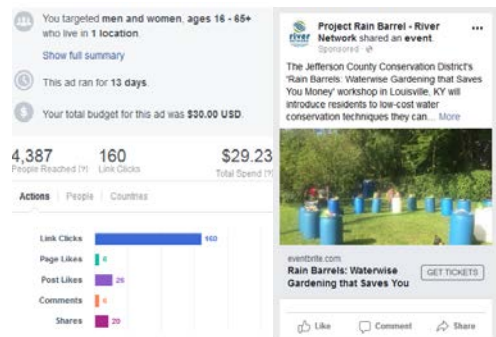
[RainRecycle kits](#) include all the hardware needed to construct a fully functioning rain barrel except a base. Each kit includes a set of hole saws for drilling into the barrel and downspout, a spigot, a downspout diverter, flexible connection tube, rubber seals, and a “non-potable water” sticker. The kit eliminates the need for an overflow outlet and creates a closed system which prevents mosquitoes from breeding inside the barrel. This design only works if buildings have functioning gutters and standard residential 2” x 3” or 3” x 4” downspouts.



Hardware kits are shipped directly to your organization once you’ve confirmed that Coca-Cola is able to donate ingredient drums in time for your workshop. River Network will cover the cost of shipping hardware kits and expects all hardware to be used in a timely manner. You may be responsible for shipping any unused kits back to River Network. You may order additional kits by [contacting Gene and Peggy Kelly](#) at the [Rain Barrel Depot](#) and requesting River Network discounted pricing of \$25 per kit.

Workshop Promotion

All approved workshops will receive up to \$30 in “boosted” Facebook posts on the [Project Rain Barrel Facebook page](#). Boosted posts will be targeted to your workshop location and posted approximately one month prior to the workshop. Be sure to “like” the Facebook page and share posts across your social media platforms! River Network can also post workshops to our [Community Events Calendar](#) and [Patagonia Action Works](#). **You must update River Network if the details (date, time, location, price, etc.) of your workshop change!**



Heavy Duty Stencils

Painting rain barrels is a great way to get families more involved during a workshop. River Network can mail you a set of free fish and flower stencils if you plan to offer rain barrel painting.

Personalized Workshop Planning Support

River Network’s Community Engagement Manager facilitates Project Rain Barrel and is available to answer questions and provide personalized workshop planning support.

Workshop Resources

River Network has developed a suite of resources to help your organization easily lead an engaging educational workshop. Electronic resources will be emailed, printed brochures and other collateral will be mailed if your application is approved.

Customizable PowerPoint

This slide deck is designed to teach workshop participants about their water source and issues impacting local water quality and/or quantity. Please download and customize the highlighted slides with your logo and relevant information about your organization and watershed.

Trifold Brochure

This professionally designed brochure outlines the benefits of rain barrels and several important reminders. Please send each workshop participant home with a printed copy.

Posters Template, Stock Images and Graphics

Use the customizable poster to advertise your workshop around town. Pre-formatted graphics, images, sign-in sheets and press releases are also available for your use.

How to Video

Our partners at Coca-Cola and Chattahoochee Riverkeeper produced this video explaining how to construct a rain barrel. Download and [watch the video](#) prior to your workshop and consider playing it during your presentation to give attendees a quick overview. Please note: the video shows drilling into the side of the downspout. Smaller downspouts should be drilled in the front. Always drill into the 3” side of the downspout.

Promotional Video

[This 45 second video](#) was created by Coca-Cola to highlight benefits of Project Rain Barrel. You may use the video to promote your workshop on social media.





What Your Organization Provides

Your organization should anticipate incurring a few relatively minor expenses to host Project Rain Barrel workshops. You should recover these expenses by charging a workshop fee.

Staff Time

Planning, promoting, and hosting a Project Rain Barrel workshop takes time. Utilize your volunteer base to keep staff costs low. Facilitating the average workshop should take no more than 10 hours.

Drum Transportation & Storage

Your organization will be responsible for transporting donated ingredient drums from your local Coca-Cola facility to the event location. You may need to rent a truck (see page 7, step 7). You will also need a space large enough to store the drums until the day of your workshop.

Power Drills

Power drills are required for constructing rain barrels and installing them at their final location. Ask coworkers, volunteers, and friends if you can borrow a few drills for your workshop. You could also ask workshop participants to bring drills. [Power drills can be rented](#) for around \$20 per day from local home improvement stores. River Network recommends at least one drill for every 8 - 10 barrels.

Personal Protective Equipment

Workshop participants must wear [safety glasses](#) and [work gloves](#) when constructing rain barrels. Hole saws are sharp and can produce flying plastic fragments.

Food and Beverages

Consider providing a small snack and/or beverages for workshop participants. Hosting a potluck as part of your workshop in another great way to build a sense of community! Workshops hosted at breweries also tend to be very successful.

Paint

You may choose to offer rain barrel painting as part of your workshop. This is a great way to get children more involved in workshops. Plastic primer is required to make paint adhere to barrels. Consider contacting a local recycling center or home improvement store for donations of miss-mixed paint. Paint pens also work well, especially for kids. Consider asking local artists to decorate barrels for auction or use at public locations. See the trifold brochure for painting advice and remember that additional time will be required to let paint dry before barrels can be transported home.

Post-Event Reporting

You must agree to provide River Network with photos and accurate data about your workshop within five business days of the event. Reporting only takes ten minutes and helps us share the collective impact of Project Rain Barrel. Failure to complete the report will disqualify your organization from receiving future Project Rain Barrel support.



Planning Your Workshop

Step 1: Determine Your Goals

Project Rain Barrel workshops are intended to go beyond simply providing low cost rain barrels to the community. Workshops are an opportunity to help participants understand where their water comes from, the quality of their drinking water delivery system, where their stormwater goes, and how their everyday activities affect the health of local waterways and drinking water sources. Participants should leave your workshop with a better understand of their local water system, its respective challenges, and potential solutions.

Hosting Project Rain Barrel workshops enables your organization to reach new constituents and attract positive attention through earned media coverage. Educational rain barrel workshops often inspire participants to get involved with water conservation in other ways. Be prepared to share ideas for how the community can get more involved with your organization's work!

Start outlining your workshop by evaluating your target audience and determining your goals and criteria for success. For example, the goal of your workshop could be to directly educate 40 people who live in your watershed about where their drinking water comes.

Step 2: Select a Tentative Workshop Location and Date

Hosting a Project Rain Barrel workshop requires a publicly accessible venue where you can assemble rain barrels and deliver an educational presentation. This will likely require access to a computer, projector, a screen or wall to project on, and seating for all participants. River Network recommends capping workshop attendance at 40 people. Workshops may be held outdoors but you should have an indoor backup location in case of inclement weather. Building rain barrels specifically for use at public facilities doesn't require hosting a formal public workshop.

Spring is generally the best time of year to host workshops because people will be prepping their gardens for the upcoming growing season. Hosting a workshop at an Earth Day festival or as part of a larger community event is a great way to showcase your organization's work to a broader community. Rain barrels also make great gifts for the family gardener so consider hosting a workshop the week before Mother's or Father's Day. Most workshop hosts plan for a 1.5 or two hour workshop on a weekend morning or evening. Tentative details are acceptable when submitting your application.

Step 3: Apply for Support from River Network

Please outline basic information about your proposed workshop including location/venue, timeframe (e.g. mid-April), before applying for Project Rain Barrel support from River Network. See the How to Apply for Support section at the end of this document for the application link.

Step 4: Contact your Local Coca-Cola Facility

Independently owned and operated Coca-Cola bottling facilities and warehouses have generously agreed to donate empty 35 and/or 55-gallon heavy duty plastic food-grade ingredient drums to Project Rain Barrel. Please respect facility manager's time as they are going above and beyond normal work responsibilities to facilitate these donations.



You will receive contact information for a local Coca-Cola facility if your application is approved. **Please email and/or call your contact at least 6 weeks prior to your workshop** so they may begin setting ingredient drums aside. Ask them to please include the barrel caps. You must coordinate directly with Coca-Cola and notify River Network once you've confirmed ingredient drum availability. Hardware kits will be shipped once you've verified that donated drums are available.

You may source barrels from a supplier other than Coca-Cola if there is no facility near your workshop location, if Coca-Cola is unable to deliver drums to a more convenient location, or if not enough barrels are available. You must ensure that all drums did not contain harmful chemicals or irritants.

Step 5: Promote your Workshop

Please promote your rain barrel workshop aggressively via email, your organization's newsletter, social media, and traditional media (e.g. press releases and flyers). Please give Coca-Cola and River Network credit for facilitating the program. Remind participants that their home must have gutters and downspouts and that they may need permission from their Home Owner's Association or landlord before installing a rain barrel.



Consider creating a simple rain barrel photo contest to help promote future workshops. Workshop participants could be invited to post pictures of painted & installed rain barrels on your Facebook page or to email them for posting on your website, like the [Galveston Bay Foundation's Rain Barrel Program](#). Select one winner at random, have staff choose the winner, or ask Facebook followers to vote. The winning barrel could be featured in your next newsletter or the winner could receive your demonstration barrel as a prize.

Consider partnering with other community organizations to host and promote your workshops. Your local water utility could be a great partner. Some cities even have rebates or [incentives for installing rain barrels](#). Churches, civic groups, universities, farmers' markets, and Master Gardeners might be interested in helping host a workshop or advertising to their followers. Consider inviting employees from your local Coca-Cola facility to volunteer and participate as well.

Step 6: Register Participants and Collect Workshop Fees

River Network strongly recommends requiring workshop participants to pre-register and pre-pay for workshops. There are several options for registering workshop participants. The simplest but most time consuming method is to have interested participants email or call your organization to reserve their space. Alternatively, you could use a simple [Eventbrite](#) page for registration or create a registration form on your organizations' webpage. Please always provide a phone number for those who lack internet access.

Charging a workshop fee at the time of registration greatly increases the likelihood that registered participants will show up on time and follow through with installing their rain barrel at home. Workshop fees also help cover costs associated with hosting the workshop. Using Project Rain Barrel workshops as a fundraiser for your organization is acceptable and encouraged. River Network recommends clearly stating a strict no refund policy on workshop registration pages. Unclaimed rain barrels can be donated or saved for your next workshop.

Most workshop host organizations charge \$30 - \$50 for admission to the workshop which includes a complete rain barrel. This is inexpensive compared to commercial rain barrels which sell for at least \$100. Charging a workshop fee is not required but is strongly recommended. Free workshops specifically targeted to low-income communities are acceptable and strongly encouraged.

Step 7: Collect and Transport Donated Ingredient Drums

Be sure to pick up your donated ingredient drums at least one week before your workshop. Most Coca-Cola facilities have security guards and internal processes for admitting guest onto their property. Please coordinate directly with your designated local Coca-Cola contact to determine if special arrangements need to be made.

All Coca-Cola facilities have standard operating procedures for moving their empty ingredient drums to a recycler or chipper onsite. Please verify that the barrels you are picking up have been reserved for you. All facilities also have procedures for triple-rinsing and removing labels from donated ingredient drums. Some barrels may require extra rinsing and/or de-labeling before your workshop. **YOU MUST REMOVE ANY AND ALL REMAINING LABELS FROM DONATED INGREDIENT DRUMS!** River Network is at risk of losing program funding if barrels are distributed to the public with labels still attached.

Be very careful when transporting drums on the road. You could cause a serious traffic accident if a drum falls out during transportation! The drums are bulky and will require a large truck and/or trailer for safe transportation. Vehicles must be able to hold and secure the entire load in one trip. This means you may need straps, rope, and/or a box truck. Coca-Cola facility staff rarely have time to help load vehicles. Bring at least two people to load drums and do not make multiple trips to the Coca-Cola facility!

| | | |
|------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Drum Size | 55 gallon | 35 gallon |
| Height | 39 inches | 33 inches |
| Diameter | 26 inches | 19 inches |
| Weight | 23 pounds | 16 pounds |
| Volume | 7.4 cubic feet | 4.7 cubic feet |

There are several options for transporting donated ingredient drums:

- 💧 Rent a box truck. A 10' U-Haul truck can be rented for \$20 per day plus \$.79 per mile. A 10' truck will hold approximately 25 drums. River Network prefers this option because it eliminates the need to secure drums with tie-downs. U-Haul even has a [truck donation program](#) for registered 501(c)3 non-profits. Contact them at least three weeks before your event to request free use of a truck!
- 💧 Borrow a truck and trailer. A standard pickup truck can only hold only hold a few drums. A 12' by 16' utility trailer with high sides can hold 24 drums strapped together. Consider putting out a request for volunteers who are willing to help you pick up and transport drums with their trailers. You may need multiple vehicles. Consider using [Volunteer Match](#) to reach volunteers.
- 💧 Some Coca-Cola facilities may be able to deliver empty ingredient drums to a grocery store or other Coca-Cola retail location as part of their regular distribution route. Please recognize that this an additional cost for Coca-Cola. Have staff or volunteers ready to quickly unload barrels when the delivery truck arrives and thank them profusely!





Step 8: Build a Demonstration Barrel

Build one demonstration barrel before your workshop. You'll be better able to describe the process to workshop participants after having built a barrel yourself. Your organization may keep a single demonstration barrel for future workshops.

Step 9: Host Your Workshop

Planning ahead is the key to success! Remember to record required workshop data (see Step 10) and take high quality photos of the event. Ask workshop participants if it's OK to take their photo. A typical two-hour workshop starting at 10 am might proceed as follows:

- 10:00 – 10:10 Workshops participants arrive and sign in
- 10:10 – 10:30 Introduction to your organization's work, issues facing your watershed (PowerPoint)
- 10:30 – 11:00 Rain barrel introduction – show "how to" video & explain RainRecycle kit parts
- 11:00 – 11:10 Participants break out, select a barrel, gather materials
- 11:10 – 11:45 Build barrels in small groups, sharing drills and safety glasses
- 11:45 – 12:00 Wrap up, share other ways to get involved, send participants home with remaining parts of the hardware kit and a brochure

Step 10: Follow Up with Participants and River Network

River Network recommends emailing all workshop participants within one week after your workshop. Thank your participants for attending and taking action to protect their local water resources. This is an opportunity to remind participants to share photos of their painted and installed rain barrel on social media. Also consider sharing other opportunities to get involved with your organization's work and ways to stay informed or donate.

Your organization must submit this [post-event report form](#) to River Network within 5 business days of completing your workshop. **Failure to report accurate and timely data will disqualify your organization from receiving Project Rain Barrel materials in the future.** You will be required to report the following information:

- ◆ Number of workshop participants and general age breakdown (age estimates are acceptable)
 - ◆ Number of rain barrels constructed and installed *during* the workshop
 - ◆ Number of rain barrels to be installed in public locations
 - ◆ Number of volunteers engaged and hours worked
 - ◆ One or two salient quotes from participants
 - ◆ At least two high-quality workshop photos
 - ◆ Total income (if any) generated from workshop fees
-

How to Apply for Support

Your organization may apply for Project Rain Barrel materials and support from River Network after reviewing this guide and outlining the tentative details of your workshop. [Use this form to apply](#) at least six weeks before your proposed workshop. Applications will close on November 15th, 2019. All organizations will be informed of their application status by November 18th at the latest. Please [contact us](#) with any questions.

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