

# STORMWATER NEWSLETTER

Nitro, WV

May 2022

## RAIN BARRELS

A Rain Barrel is a water tank which is used to collect and store storm water runoff, typically from rooftops via gutters and down spouts. They are devices for homeowners to easily collect, maintain, and use harvested rain. Rain Barrels are commonly installed to make use of rain water for gardening use, reduce public utility water use, and aid self-sufficiency. Here are 6 benefits of having a rain barrel at home!

**It helps to reduce runoff and improve water quality.** Because rain barrels collect storm water runoff that would otherwise runoff into storm sewer systems, taking with it pesticides, fertilizers, oil, dirt, trash, and other pollutants that it picked up traveling through lawns and along driveways and streets.

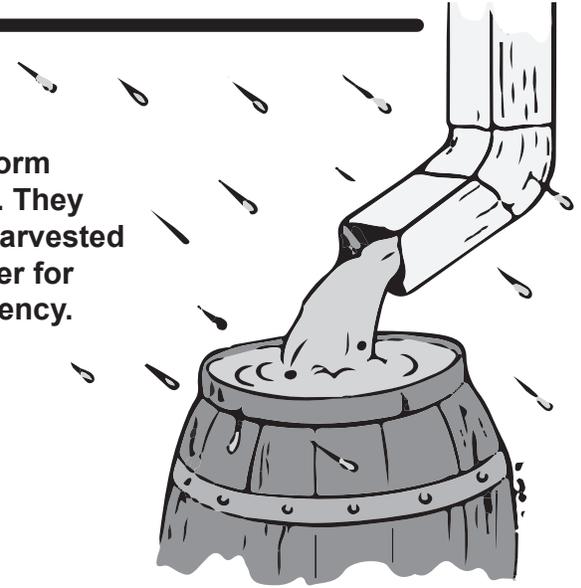
**It's healthier for your plants.** If you have outdoor plants, they're already getting rainwater the natural way. But using water from a rain barrel for your plants even on dry days is much better for them than treated tap water.

**It can help prevent soil from eroding.** Collecting storm water runoff from your gutters can prevent excess water from going through your yard when it's raining. Slowing down stormwater runoff can help reduce the amount of erosion that happens.

**It helps conserve water and money.** By collecting and using rainwater to tend to your garden or even wash your car, you're saving money on the tap water you'd usually use for these tasks.

**It comes in handy in a drought.** If you live in an area where water is scarce in the hot summer and are under water conservation restrictions, having a rain barrel full of water can really come in handy to keep your garden growing.

*\*Rain barrel water should only be used for gardening or outdoor cleaning. Do not drink rainwater unless you have a rain harvesting system with a water filtration system.*



## TIPS

**Whether you DIY a barrel or buy a ready made rain barrel, make sure to follow the instructions that come with the product that you chose. That said, here are some more tips!**

- Look at your down spouts and pick one near your garden. Then, adjust the area as needed or build a platform so you have a safe and secure level spot for the soon to be very heavy barrel.
- You may want to elevate the barrel on a platform or blocks, so you can get the spigot as low on the barrel as possible and still get a watering can under it.
- Clean your barrel out before you hook it up. Most DIY rain barrels are second-hand barrels that were previously used for food or chemical shipment.
- Make sure you keep your barrel closed so you don't help grow the mosquito population.
- Regularly clean your gutters, downspout, and rain barrel as needed so it doesn't get clogged or overwhelmed with leaves.
- Winterize your barrel. If you leave it full in freezing temperatures you run the risk of the barrel cracking.

**STORMWATER HOTLINE** - See a stormwater issue? Let us know! You can call City Hall at (304) 755-0705, or email the stormwater hotline at [MS4hotline@cityofnitro.org](mailto:MS4hotline@cityofnitro.org)