

Reduce Storm Water Runoff with a Rain Barrel

A rain barrel collects rainwater from downspouts. Water stored in your rain barrel is water that won't rush off into our streams. Instead, as you use the stored rain water around your home and garden, it will absorb slowly into the ground, replenishing groundwater supplies. By decreasing the volume of storm runoff, rain barrels also help moderate stream erosion and the resulting pollution that is impairing some St. Louis area streams. A typical 1/2-inch rainfall will fill a 50 to 55 gallon barrel. Figure about a half gallon of water per square foot of roof area during a 1-inch rainfall. A 2,000-square-foot roof can collect about 1,000 gallons of water. The water savings from using stored rainwater rather than municipal or well water can be substantial over a period of time. A rain barrel can also help reduce the amount of water that may settle around the foundation of your home.

Anatomy of a Rain Barrel



Rain barrels can be purchased relatively inexpensive, ranging from \$80 to \$100 through online vendors, home and garden stores, or made at home. They come in all shapes, and sizes...from 55 gallons to 180 gallons.

Rain barrels should be capped with a screen that allows water in, but keeps debris and pests from getting into the barrel.

So your rain barrel doesn't freeze and crack during the winter, unhook the rain barrel from the downspout and store it in a garage or shed.