



# why use **RAIN BARRELS?**

## **WHY USE A RAIN BARREL?**

During the summer months, it is estimated that nearly 40 percent of household water is used for lawn and garden maintenance. A rain barrel collects water and stores it for those times that you need it most—during the dry summer months. Using rain barrels can help homeowners lower water bills while also improving the vitality of plants, flowers, trees, and lawns.

Rain is naturally soft water, and does not have the minerals, chlorine, fluoride, and other chemicals found in hard water from our municipal water systems. Hard water can cause damage to soil and sensitive plants. Water collected from the roof of your home picks up very little contamination, and is very healthy for plant life.

## **WHAT IS A RAIN BARREL?**

A rain barrel is typically made using a 55-gallon drum, a vinyl garden hose, PVC couplings, a screen grate to remove debris and keep insects out, and other materials found at most hardware stores. Further information on making your own rain barrel is available online at [www.marc.org/Environment/Water/buildrainbarrel.htm](http://www.marc.org/Environment/Water/buildrainbarrel.htm)

Rain barrels can be constructed in a number of ways, but they all serve the same purpose—to collect rainwater and decrease the amount of stormwater runoff that leaves your property. Using rain barrels is one way to decrease your household's impact on local waterways and to become a good steward of the local watershed.



For more tips on how you can improve  
water quality in your community, visit  
[www.marc.org/water](http://www.marc.org/water).

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Regional Water Quality Education Program