



Using a rain barrel in your landscape is an inexpensive and easy way to save water for landscaping, as well as keeping roof water from becoming runoff. There are a variety of options commercially available, or you can make your own barrel out of any large, sturdy container with a few pieces of hardware.

It may not seem like much to divert one of your downspouts into a rainwater harvesting container, but on average, an inch of rain over a 1000 square foot roof will provide 600 gallons of stored water. So, if you have four downspouts, and one is hooked up to a rain barrel, that is about 150 gallons of water for every one inch storm!

Rain barrels can be used with a watering can, or with a soaker hose to divert rain water over time into ornamental landscape beds. This can greatly reduce the need for additional watering, conserving resources, time AND money!

Building Your Own Rain Barrel

Start saving water and install a rain barrel at your house! Rutgers Cooperative Extension (RCE) sponsors rain barrel building workshops and demonstrations around Ocean County. During a rain barrel workshop, staff teach participants about stormwater management techniques, the importance of conserving water, and guidance on how to build and install a rain barrel. Workshop participants will recycle food grade barrels into rain barrels which they can take home and use.

For information on upcoming "Build a Rain Barrel" workshops, please contact Steve Yergeau at yergeau@njaes.rutgers.edu or 732-505-3671.

RCE of Ocean County also provides DIY instructions on building your own barrel through a series of fact sheets:

- [Rain Barrels Part I: How to Build a Rain Barrel](#)
- [Rain Barrels Part II: Installation and Use](#)
 - [Learn how to install a rain barrel by watching this video](#) (YouTube video)
- [Rain Barrels Part III: Building a Rain Barrel from a Plastic Trash Can](#)
- [Rain Barrels Part IV: Testing and Applying Harvested Water to Irrigate a Vegetable Garden](#)
- [Rain Barrels and Mosquitoes](#)
- [Rooftop Rainwater Harvesting for Plant Irrigation I: Design Concepts and Water Quantity](#)
- [Rooftop Rainwater Harvesting for Plant Irrigation II: Water Quality and Horticultural Considerations](#)