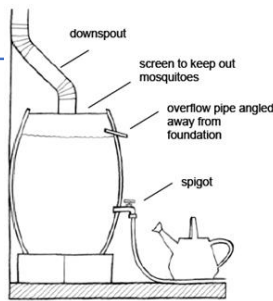


Rain barrels collect rainwater from your roof downspouts for non-potable reuse. Rain barrels can come in a variety of sizes, but 55-gallon containers are the most common. Rain barrels can be added to any building with downspouts and gutters, but are most common on single family homes and townhomes.



Do...

As Needed

- ✓ Check the entire system (gutters, debris filter, overflow pipe, fittings, spigot, etc.) to ensure the barrel is functioning properly.
- ✓ Place gutter guards and/or screens on top of roof downspouts and on top of the barrel to prevent leaves and sediment from entering the barrel.
- ✓ Remove leaves and other debris from the screen at the top of the barrel, the overflow pipe and the roof gutters.
- ✓ Empty barrel between rain falls whenever possible and drain you barrel before the winter season
- ✓ Make sure you filter screen is intact without holds and securely fastened to keep out mosquitos

Seasonally

- ✓ Disconnect barrel during the winter to avoid damage from freezing temperatures. Empty, wash and store it upside down in a protected location. Connect barrel to your downspout around April Fools' Day, whenever there is minimal risk of frost.
- ✓ Open the rain barrel spigot if you expect to be away from your home for an extended period of time, make sure it will drain away from your foundation.
- ✓ Clean the barrel using a non-toxic substance such as vinegar to remove residue or algae.
- ✓ Clean out downspouts and roof gutters for the most effective mosquito control. If you do find mosquitoes in your barrel, you may use Mosquito Dunks. A quarter dunk added monthly should be enough for a 55-gallon barrel.

Don't...

- ✓ Don't leave water in your barrel for long periods of time.
- ✓ Don't drink the water in your rain barrel, use the water inside your home or for your pets. This water should only be used as non-potable water.
- ✓ Don't let kids play in or around rain barrels.
- ✓ Don't forget to reconnect your rain barrel every year after the winter frost season
- ✓ Don't spray water directly on vegetables or leaves as it may contain bacteria from the roof. Thoroughly clean vegetables if you use barrel water for irrigating.
- ✓ Don't let the barrel foundation become unlevelled or unstable. A full 55-gallon barrel weighs 450 pounds and can tip over on an unstable surface.

By maintaining your rain barrel, you are doing your part to conserve water and protect our waterways, the Mississippi River and Silver Lake.

Troubleshooting

Symptom	Possible Cause	Solution
<i>Rain barrel is overflowing</i>	Rain barrel was full before rain event or is too small for roof area.	Empty the rain barrel between storm events. If more than one barrel is needed for your roof area, install additional barrels in series.
<i>Cracks or damage</i>	The rain barrel contained water and temperature dropped below freezing.	Make sure you empty your rain barrel prior to winter. Repair damage as needed.
<i>Forgetting to drain barrel before a storm</i>	Rain events may occur frequently.	Connect a soaker hose to outlet to direct the slow release of water to your garden or yard.
<i>Rain barrel is leaning</i>	Foundation has shifted.	Level the foundation and barrel

Recommended timeframes for typical maintenance

	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Leaf and Debris removal												
Water Drainage												
Monitoring												
Seasonal Preparation												

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