

Rain Barrels Placement and Maintenance

What are the benefits of a rain barrel?

Rain barrels can increase water efficiency and aid in water conservation efforts. Rain barrels divert water from storm drains, store high-quality water for gardens, direct overflow water away from building foundations to desired locations, and can potentially reduce water and sewer bills. Stored rainwater is often used to irrigate landscaping because it is free of chlorine, calcium, and other minerals.



Placing your rain barrel

- Choose a downspout on your house or garage that is close to the plants and garden you water most.
- Make sure that your rain barrel's overflow will soak into your own yard and not your neighbors' yard.
- Elevate your rain barrel at least 6 inches above a pervious surface. This will allow gravity to push water through the hose and allow you to fit a watering can under the spigot.

Using rain barrel water

- Water your flowers, trees, shrubs, and lawn.
- Keep your rain barrel lid on tight at all times to prevent children and animals (insects) from entering or falling in.
- DO NOT DRINK WATER from your rain barrel!

Maintaining your rain barrel

- Regularly check your gutters, downspouts, rain barrel screens, and spigot for obstructions or debris.
- Keep your rain barrel lid sealed.
- Keep your rain barrel spigot closed when you are not using the water.
- Most rain barrel screens begin to wear after one year. Check your screens annually for wear and tear and make repairs or replace as needed.

Preventing mosquitoes

- Use a fine mesh, wire screen to keep mosquitoes from laying their eggs.
- Eliminate any gaps between the screen and the top of the barrel.
- Check screens often for tears or holes – mosquitoes can fit through very tiny places.
- Keep your rain barrel lid sealed and free of organic material or standing water.
- Use mosquito dunks, a mosquito larvicide to kill off mosquito larvae or contact the Sacramento-Yolo Mosquito and Vector Control District for additional options.
- For more information contact the Sacramento-Yolo Mosquito and Vector Control District by calling 1-800-429-1022 or at www.FIGHTtheBITE.net.