



# Renew Our Waters

Every choice counts.

## RAIN BARRELS

**Catching rain when it falls offers benefits you *and* our local waters!**

The Fox Valley area receives an average of 22.23 inches of rain from April through October. Rain runs off your rooftop, onto your driveway, down the street and into the storm drain collecting dirt, debris, fertilizer and other harmful substances along the way. All of the polluted water ends up in our local waters **UNLESS** we stop the water where it falls!

### CATCHING THE WATER WHERE IT FALLS

A rain barrel is a system that collects rainwater from your roof that would otherwise be lost to runoff. Rain barrels come in a wide variety of materials, designs and colors. Rain barrels can be purchased at local hardware stores or can be built at a rain barrel workshop.

**Catching rain water in a barrel allows you to water your garden and plants indoors and out during dry periods.**

### CHOOSING & PLACING A BARREL

Rain barrels come in a wide variety of materials, designs and colors. Ready-to-use barrels are available at most hardware stores and garden centers. Alternatively, you can save money by making your own barrel. For more information on making your own barrel visit our website.

A rain barrel must be secured on a firm level surface. Water is heavy - a 55 gallon barrel weighs approximately 460 lbs, and tipping is a risk it is unsecured or on uneven ground. Building your own rain barrel? There are different kits offering downspout diverters that attach to the barrel (without having to cut your downspout) and systems for linking barrels to accommodate overflow.

### BENEFITS OF A RAIN BARREL

Rain water is best for plants. Catching rain water in a rain barrel allows you to water your garden and plants in doors and out during dry periods. Instead of paying for water from the tap, you can use the water you collect to keep your landscape healthy - saving you money!

Using a rain barrel not only benefits you but also our local waters. Water stored in a rain barrel and used for watering plants won't rush off your property and carry pollutants to our streams and rivers. Not only that, water that is used for watering sinks into the ground and replenishes the ground water supply. Two great benefits from one barrel!

Stormwater is rain or snowmelt and water from things people do, like overwatering the lawn or discharging pool water into the street drain. We can choose products carefully and shape our lawns and pavement so water sinks in. When we do, runoff is reduced, pollutants filter out and streams and groundwater are protected.

Untreated runoff is the biggest threat to our nation's water quality, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Let's make the small, important changes that will reduce that threat and improve water quality and our lives!

## Realize

What touches the ground enters the water