

Frequently Asked Questions

What should I do with the barrel in the winter?

Either take it into your home and store it or disconnect the downspout, empty the water from the barrel, and flip it over so it does not accumulate any water.

How high should I elevate the barrel?

You should elevate the barrel at a minimum of the height of a watering can or a hose. Elevating the barrel will ensure adequate water pressure to build up.

How much does a typical barrel weigh?

A typical barrel exceeds 400 pounds (1 gallon is 8 pounds)

Will algae and/or mosquitoes appear in my barrel?

Although the top of the barrel is sealed and there is a mosquito net to keep them out, we cannot guarantee that mosquitoes will never appear. To ensure mosquitoes don't appear use some form of a mosquito repellent.

As for algae, the barrel is a solid, opaque color so sunlight will not be able come in contact with the water forming algae

Can you connect two barrels together?

Yes, in fact the MCSCD sells a double barrel, one as an overflow barrel and the other as the main barrel



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MCSCD
MORRIS COUNTY SOIL
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Rain Barrels: Setup and Tips



SAVING YOU MONEY
WHILE HELPING THE
ENVIRONMENT

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Setup and Tips

Things you will need:

- Downspout and/or elbow piece
- Garden Hose

Setup:

1. Find a level surface near or under a gutter outside of your house. If the ground the rain barrel is on is not level, water may leak out or the rain barrel may fall.
2. Elevate the rain barrel off of the ground with materials such as bricks or cinderblocks. It is essential that the rain barrel is elevated so that there is water pressure.
3. Cut the downspout just above the rain barrel. Ensure that you leave enough room to re-attach the downspout elbow to redirect the flow of water into the rain barrel.
4. Place the rain barrel on the elevated surface, make sure the downspout elbow is emptying water into the mosquito proof screen on the top of the rain barrel
5. Wait for the next rain storm to fill up the rain barrel.

Tips:

- Make sure the screen is always in place on top of the rain barrel. It serves to prevent mosquitoes from getting into the rain barrel and contaminating the water
- Do not: drink, cook, or use rain barrel water as a clean water source. Instead rain barrel water can be used to water plants, wash cars, and perform other tasks non-drinkable water is used for
- In the winter, disconnect the rain barrel from the downspout and store it inside or ensure no water enters it.
- Make sure to take note of any chemical contaminants on your rooftop. If you have just applied a moss killer or chemical contaminant to your roof, allow for 4 or 5 heavy rainstorms to wash off the contaminated water off your roof before collecting any rain water.
- Do not store water in the rain barrel for more than a week. Use the water before a week comes by or else the water will become filthy.
- Although the downspout is used to get rid of excess water, it is always good practice to empty your rain barrel before another rain storm hits.
- Make sure to clean the rain barrel periodically (every 3-4 weeks)



How To Paint:

To paint the rain barrel:

1. Cover the overflow and the spigot on the rain barrel with a protective covering
2. Lightly sand the surface of the rain barrel so that the paint has something to stick to
3. Apply a plastic applicable paint: such as Krylon's™ "Fusion"
4. One can of paint should be able to cover the whole rain barrel but to ensure a nice even coat, it is suggested that a second coat is applied.

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