

Coastal Alabama receives five and a half feet of rain per year, which falls and runs across roofs, lawns, and driveways, picking up litter, fertilizer, pet waste, and chemicals along the way. Stormwater is not treated, and these contaminants are transported directly to local waterways. Installing a rain barrel is a practical way to reduce stormwater impacts. A one-inch rainfall over a 1,000 ft² roof yields 620 gallons of water; installing a rain barrel allows storage for future use and protects our natural resources.



What is a Rain Barrel?

A rain barrel is a system that collects and stores rainwater from your roof that would otherwise runoff into storm drains and streams. A rain barrel is typically made from a 55 gallon drum, a gutter down-spout, vinyl hose, PVC couplings, and a spigot. Rain barrels are simple, inexpensive and can sit under any gutter down spout.

Benefits of Rain Barrels

- **Rain barrels provide a free water source** that can be used for watering gardens, washing cars, or bathing pets.
- Using water caught in a rain barrel to water flowerbeds and gardens can **reduce the cost of monthly water bills**.
- **Rain water is better for plants and soil** than tap water. Rainwater is free of salt, inorganic ions, and fluoride that accumulate in soil over time and harm plant roots. Using rainwater makes plants healthier and stronger.
- **Reduce runoff pollution.** When it rains, runoff picks up fertilizers, oil, pesticides and other contaminants and carries them into storm drains and streams. These pollutants can increase algae growth, alter the habitat for fish, and even make oceans dangerous for recreational activities. Collecting rain water helps prevent this damaging flow.



How to Maintain Your Rain Barrels

Tips to keep your rain barrels clean and functioning:

- Start at the gutter that feeds your rain barrel—clean the gutter of leaves and debris. Rinse this gutter with a hose to be sure it is draining properly.
- Inspect the overall condition- look for cracks in the barrel, clogged spigots, or debris on the bottom.
- Cleaning: empty all water, use a mixture of vinegar and water to scrub the inside and bottom of the barrel with a long handled brush. Rinse out and let dry.

Not for Consumption

Rain barrel water is not for human or pet consumption. As rain water flows over a roof, it picks up pollutants such as bacteria from animals and chemicals from roof materials.



Thank you for helping Create a Clean Water Future for generations to come!
For more information visit
www.cleanwaterfuture.com

What is...Create a Clean Water Future?

Create a Clean Water Future is a public service campaign to help residents of Alabama learn more about stormwater runoff and its impacts; increase demand for stormwater management programs; and provide tools that empower Alabama residents to reduce polluted runoff in our waterways.

The **Create a Clean Water Future** campaign has three easy ways **you** can become part of the solution:

Step up – Install rain barrels at **your** home or office.

Speak up – Let **your** voice be heard with local officials, policymakers, and the media to make sure stormwater runoff is on the agenda. Tell your friends about the problem and how you are helping address it by installing your rain barrel.

Follow up – Make sure **your** local government is offering stormwater education outreach opportunities such as rain barrel workshops.

Join the campaign visit

www.CleanWaterFuture.com

This project is made possible by:



If you or someone you know is interested in owning a rain barrel please contact
Baldwin County Planning & Zoning Natural
Resource Planner
251-423-3632
ashley.campbell@baldwincountyal.gov

Rain Barrels

