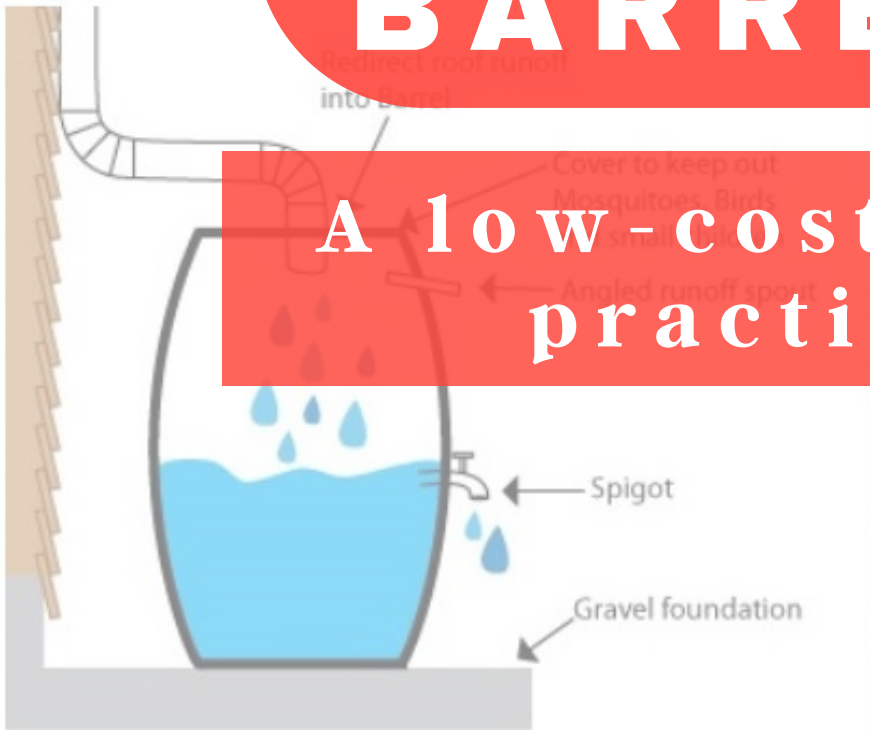




# RAIN BARRELS

A low-cost best practice



Installing rain barrels under downspouts is one low-cost BMP (Best Management Practice) that can help reduce runoff. Rain barrels collect rainwater from rooftops during each rain event reducing water velocity and peak flows. The collected water can then be used around the landscape. You can use the water to water gardens and lawns, clean garden tools, fill fountains, extinguish campfires, etc.

In early spring, rain barrels can also be placed in planting areas that are difficult to access with hoses. This allows water to be collected during the rainy months to be used during the dry months. (Watering during the the first few dry seasons is necessary and can be critical with new plantings.)

Using the rain barrel's stored water around the landscape saves water resources and reduces the amount of water purchased from municipal sources.

Rain barrels are inexpensive, relatively easy to assemble, and vary in size which makes them suitable for homes and larger buildings. To accommodate runoff from larger rooftops, multiple barrels can be connected to capture more water.

Every rain barrel should have an overflow. Be sure to direct the overflow to a garden or lawn, rather than to an impervious surface like a sidewalk or driveway. Rain barrel maintenance is minimal but important. Check parts routinely and disconnect and clean the barrel once per year. Be sure there is no exposed, standing water where mosquitoes can breed. During winter months, disconnect the barrel and store it in a shed or garage or keep the faucet open so water does not freeze causing the barrel to crack.

[www.skagitpud.org/conservation/rain-barrels/](http://www.skagitpud.org/conservation/rain-barrels/)

