Order Form

Name: ________________________________
Address: ______________________________
Phone: ________________________________

All rain barrels are $80.00 and are approximately 55 gallons.

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<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Qty</th>
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<td>Black</td>
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<td>Grey</td>
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<td>Terra Cotta</td>
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<td>Grand Total</td>
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A $30.00 deposit will be required for each rain barrel ordered. Order must be paid in full at pick up.

If you have any questions about the rain barrels you can reach us at...

(815) 756-3234 Ext. 3

NOTE: We take orders at all times...Our office may have some rain barrels available. If we do not have any rain barrels available, or if the color you request is not available we will add your name to a reserved list, as we periodically will receive rain barrels throughout the year. We will call when your rain barrel is available to be picked up.

Pictures in this pamphlet are only examples and don't depict the actual rain barrels sold by DeKalb County SWCD. Rain barrels can be seen at our office.
This booklet is to help educate homeowners on harvesting rainwater by using a rain barrel. Harvesting rain water allows the homeowner to supplement other irrigation sources at minimal cost. Storing rainwater also aid in the reduction of stormwater runoff which can lead to reduced levels of pesticides and fertilizers in stormwater ponds, streams and lakes. As the area continues to have extended periods of below-normal rainfall, having extra water on hand is a good idea.

This booklet focuses only on storing rainwater for nonpotable outdoor uses as a supplement to natural rainfall and other sources of irrigation. Rainwater harvesting for potable uses, such as drinking, cooking and bathing, is possible and is done in many parts of the country and throughout the world. However, using rainwater for potable uses requires filtration, treatment and routine testing for safety—all topics which are beyond the scope of this text. This booklet cover only simple collection and distribution methods related to landscape watering.

Cisterns and rain barrels have been around for thousands of years and the time has come for more homeowners to enjoy their benefits.

PAINTING YOUR RAIN BARREL

When it come to being creative, you’re only limited by your imagination! Painting your rain barrel is not only fun, but it will also protect the surface of the barrel from breaking down due to the harsh effects of the sun. Painting a rain barrel is a great activity for children and can introduce them to the importance of conserving water.

Outdoor acrylics and spray paint work well, but the barrel must first be primed so these materials adhere properly to the surface. A product on the market is a spray paint designed specifically for outdoor plastic furniture, buy it will work on almost any plastic surface. The benefit to this product is that the barrel does not have to be primed before applying the spray paint. If using spray paint but need to paint small details, spray some paint into a small cup, making a liquid puddle. This paint can be brushed on.

Regardless of what type of paint you choose, it is a good idea to apply one or two coats of polyurethane to your finished barrel to protect it.

To Prime your barrel:
1. Thoroughly clean the exterior surface of the barrel by wiping away excess dirt and grime with a clean rag soaked in a 1:1 mixture of vinegar and water.
2. Using a fine-to medium-grade sandpaper, “rough up” the surface of the barrel. This helps the paint adhere to the plastic barrel.
3. With a dry cloth, wipe the barrel again to get rid of any fine plastic shavings.
4. Apply one coat of outdoor primer. Primer is typically white, but it can be mixed with another paint color or tinted to match the final design color of the barrel. Allow the primer to dry according to the directions on the container.

Now the barrel can be painted any way you like—by stencil, a pattern, freehand, etc. Allow the paint to dry completely before applying one to two coats of polyurethane. Allow the polyurethane to dry between coats.

Note: Krylon has come out with a new brand of spray paint they call “Fusion” that adheres well to a rain barrel’s surface. They offer several new colors to choose from to match the color of your home.
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What about water quality?
The quality of rainwater shedding off a roof or gutter system is more than adequate for plants. In fact, it can be beneficial due to the lack of chlorine and a lower pH level than utility-provided water. As rainwater sheds off a roof or other catchment area, it can carry with it some levels of algae, roofing chemicals or bird droppings. These are not a concern for nonpotable uses or occasional contact by the homeowner.

Is maintenance required with my rain barrel?
If your rain barrel is properly installed, it should require very little maintenance. Periodic inspection of the tank for cracks or buildup of debris on the bottom may be all that is needed. Some barrels, especially light-colored or clear ones that are in direct sunlight, may become brittle over time. They can be painted to last longer.

Screens on the barrels will require periodic inspection and cleaning to ensure a good water flow.

It’s a good idea to drain your rain barrel in the winter this will ensure that your rain barrels will not crack due to freezing water in the barrels.

What about mosquitoes?
Mosquitoes and other insects are always attracted to standing water. The rain barrels the district sells have a screen so there should be little problem with mosquitoes getting into the barrel. Also, make sure the guttering is sloped properly and free of debris to prevent standing water where mosquitoes can breed.

Will my rain barrel tip over?
Water weighs a little over 8 lbs. per gallon, so a 50 gallon rain barrel will weigh over 400 pounds when full. If the barrel sits on a level and stable platform tipping over is not a problem.

NOTE: DeKalb County SWCD sells rain barrels that have been recycled. The rain barrel pictures in this brochure are for sole purpose of showing examples only. The rain barrels you purchase from here are similar but not exact. We usually have examples in our office if you would like to see the actual rain barrel you will be purchasing.

BENEFITS OF A RAIN BARREL

Rainwater harvesting is always beneficial, whether the water is used to water one houseplant or an entire garden. Also, the act of collecting rainwater can be an inspiration to find other ways to conserve water around the home.

The DeKalb County Soil and Water Conservation District sells 55 gallon rain barrels that were made from food-grade drums that use to carry food products such as olives and pickles. These barrels are small enough to fit on most residential or commercial lots.

Although these rain barrels may not provide all the water needed to sustain your plant matter, it can certainly supplement your current watering schedule. Planter bed, vegetable or flower gardens and potted plants can easily be irrigated with the water from a rain barrel.

The water savings from using stored rainwater rather than municipal or well water can be substantial over a period of time. A rain barrel can also help reduce the amount of water that may settle around the foundation of your home.
RAINWATER COLLECTION SYSTEM

Installing your rain barrel: A roof is the most common and adaptable area to use for rainwater collection. Due to its already existing slope and height, a roof makes a perfect catchment area by using gravity to direct the water. Most homes and commercial buildings are equipped with a guttering system that can easily be adapted to funnel water to your rain barrel.

Once you have identified where you want to put your rain barrel the next step is to modify the existing guttering system to divert the downspouts into the rain barrel. Remember to keep any gutter or downspout modifications sloping downward toward the storage tank. Keep in mind that the water pressure from the rain barrel will vary. The higher the water level in the tank, the greater the water pressure will be. Elevating the tank on a platform, such as cinder blocks at least 3 feet, can generate a small increase in pressure for any attachments hooked up to the barrel.

Filtration: As water sheds off a roof or other catchment areas, it may pick up leaf debris, bird droppings or chemical agents from the roof material. These are not harmful to plants. The rain barrels from the DeKalb County Soil and Water Conservation Districts have a screen mesh. The screen helps filter out debris such as leaves and also protects against mosquito breeding. Although the screen will keep out most debris, a small amount of debris will get into the barrel so it’s a good idea to clean the tank periodically to avoid a large build up on the bottom.

HOW MUCH RAINWATER CAN YOU COLLECT?

For a general calculation, you can collect about a half gallon of water per square foot of roof area during a 1-inch rainfall. As an example, a house with a 2,000 square-foot roof can collect about 1,000 gallons of water.

As you can see, it doesn’t take much rain to fill a small rain barrel. A typical 1/2-inch rainfall will fill a 50-55 gallon barrel. It is a good idea to use the overflow valve that is at the top of the barrel to divert any excess water to another part of the yard, which can reduce the amount of water that settles around the foundation of your house.

The rain barrels are equipped to connect 2 rain barrels together. All you need is a small flexible hose.