



## *Sustainable Neenah Committee* **Benefits of Rain Barrel Usage**

Residential irrigation can account for 40% of domestic water consumption in a given municipality. Rain barrels not only store water, they help decrease demand during the sweltering summer months. Only 1/4 inch of rainfall runoff from the average roof will completely fill the typical barrel. Collection of water from rooftop runoff can provide an ample supply of this free "soft water" containing no chlorine, lime or calcium. Because it tends to have fewer sediments and dissolved salts than municipal water, rain water is ideal for a multitude of applications, including organic vegetable gardens, landscape plantings, indoor plants, automobile washing, and cleaning household windows. Rainwater diversion will also help decrease the burden on water treatment facilities and municipal drainage systems during storms.

Summary of the direct benefits of collecting rainwater:

- Reduces the amount of potable water used on lawns and gardens
- Saves municipal resources by reducing volume of water treated (chemicals, electricity, storage costs)
- Decreases the negative impact of storm water flowing to our rivers and lakes
- Lowers the percentage of roof top rainfall as a component of urban runoff
- Backup source of water during times of drought or between rain showers
- Naturally softened water is preferred for delicate houseplants, auto cleaning and window washing
- Lowers household water bills
- Chlorine-free water helps maintain a healthy biotic community in the soil
- Educational tool for teaching residents about water conservation and other sustainable practices

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Below are some Rain Barrel links for Do It Yourselfers. Remember, rain barrels should be properly maintained and covered to prevent nuisances and insect infestation.

Wisconsin DNR Rain Barrel Info -- <http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/runoff/rg/links.htm#barrels>

HGTV How To Build a Rain Barrel Video- You Tube -- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MGFDikJOdaM>

Sustainable Neenah "Make Your Own Rain Barrel" guide - <http://www.ci.neenah.wi.us/assets/files/departments/sustainable-neenah-committee/Rain%20Barrel.pdf>

Rain Barrels can also be purchased from local hardware and landscape stores. Contact your local store for info.

The Sustainable Neenah Committee thanks you for your interest.

Braze Ace Hardware  
Rain Barrel



Krueger True Value  
Rain Barrel



Examples of home built Rain Barrels

