OTTAWA CONSERVATION DISTRICT

RAIN BARRELS

Rain barrels collect water from a roof and hold it for later use on lawns, gardens, and indoor plants. Collecting water in rain barrels is a great way to conserve water, reduce surface runoff from your yards, and reduce costs of watering your landscape.

ASSEMBLY

- Find or make a level area beneath the downspout and place bricks/stand on a level surface to elevate the barrel. (At least 1 foot)
- Place your barrel near the downspout you will be using and plan how you will direct the downspout.
- Saw/cut the downspout above where the top of the rain barrel will be. Be sure to leave room for the elbow to be attached.
- Attach a downspout elbow to the end of your downspout so that water from the downspout is directed into the rain barrel through the screen vent on top.
  - If you have an aluminum downspout, secure it to the elbow using screws
  - If you have a PVC downspout, secure it to the elbow with PVC cement
- Place your rain barrel under the downspout elbow.
- Attach a hose to the spigot and/or to the overflow hole on the top-side of the barrel.

WINTERIZATION

- Drain your rain barrels and flip upside down to ensure it is completely emptied.
- Remove hoses and rain spout diverter and leave faucets open.
  - Store hoses out of the elements to avoid damage
- Clear debris from the barrel and the filter screen
- If possible, store your rain barrel inside a garage or basement. Otherwise, the barrel should be covered with a tarp or turned upside down to prevent any water accumulation.

SAFETY

- Ensure that your stand is stable and placed on a flat surface where the rain barrel will not fall.
- To better secure it, consider fastening the rain barrel to the house.

For questions, contact Ottawa Conservation District at 616-842-5852 Ext 5 or ottawacd@macd.org.
To purchase rain barrels, visit our website at: ottawacd.org/store/.