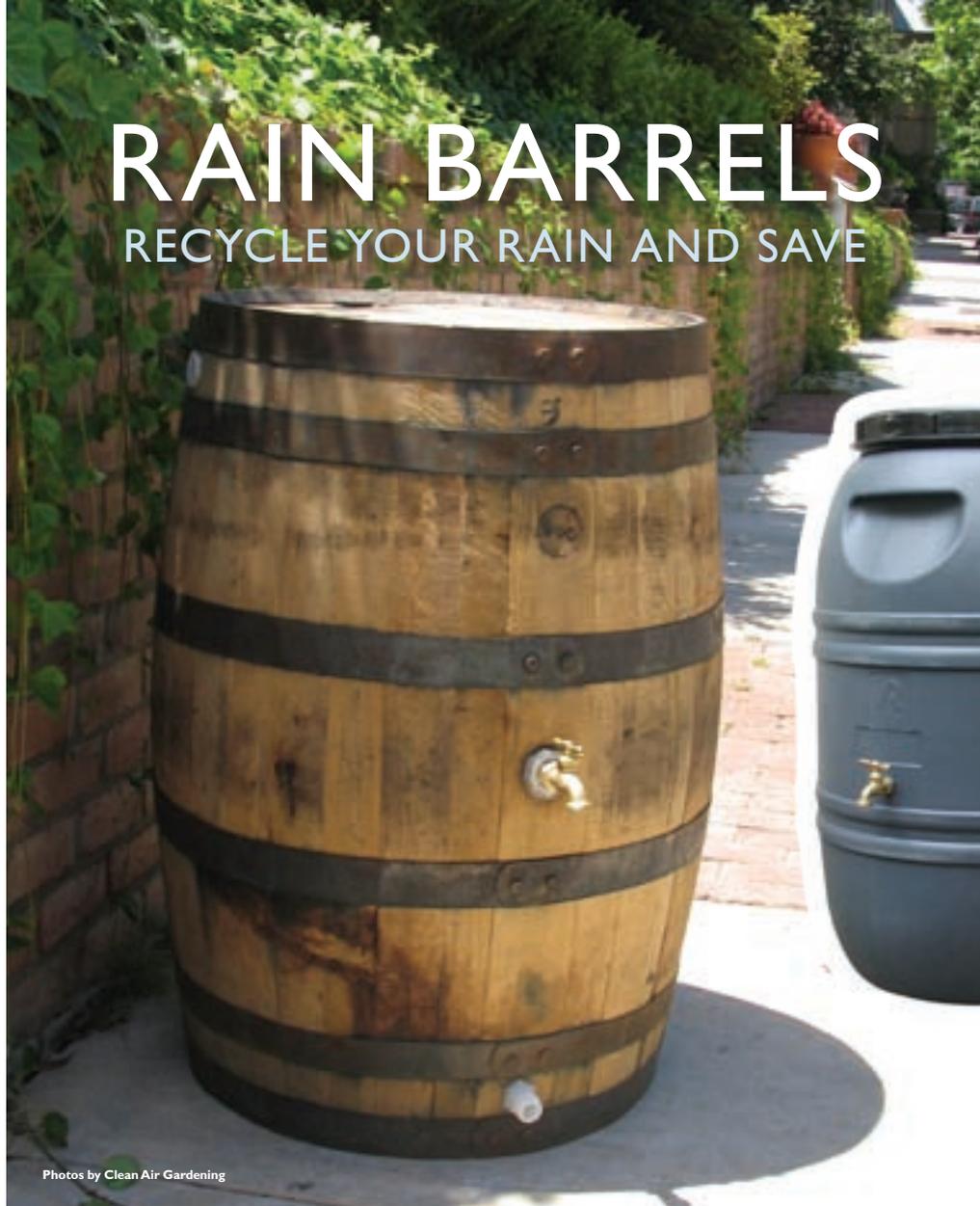


# RAIN BARRELS

## RECYCLE YOUR RAIN AND SAVE



Photos by Clean Air Gardening



◀ For rain barrel information and products, visit [www.cleanairgardening.com](http://www.cleanairgardening.com) and [www.rainbarrelguide.com](http://www.rainbarrelguide.com).

ize your rain barrel by adding spigots, mosquito proofing, or water filters. Some rain barrels even possess the option of including a slow release, which allows runoff to enter the soil in a more controlled and less damaging manner. If you don't want to make one, many garden or mail order garden suppliers carry barrels that can hold anywhere from 50 to 250 gallons and usually cost between \$100 and \$325.

Being proactive in the conservation of our water use can help benefit more than just ourselves, but those around us as well. Cities like Portland, Seattle, Toronto, Vancouver, and Boston have implemented their own water conservation programs in which participants can receive rain barrels at discounted rates or incorporate rain barrels with other free services. To find out if a community in your area is taking an initiative to improve the quality of our waterways, contact your local county office or state department of agriculture.

### Giving Something Back

Water is our most important natural resource and installing rain barrels takes a step in the right direction towards improving nature's bloodline. They are relatively inexpensive and an effective way to mitigate the negative effects of growth and development. There's no time like the present and besides, what a perfect way to spend an afternoon with your family and give a little something back at the same time!

BY DUSTIN DARNOLD



So you want to get creative this spring with your home improvements and help out the environment in the process? Do you want to be able to refill your pond or water your garden without running down the local water table or racking up your water bill?

### Preserve and Protect

Well, there's an easy solution that any one of us can utilize on a regular basis. Rain barrels or cisterns are convenient systems of rainwater collection that store runoff from your rooftop and can be used for a variety of activities. Residential irrigation accounts for more than 40 percent of domestic water consumption, so it's important for us to preserve and use what nature has provided us.

This collection and reuse of our most valuable resource is important as runoff can collect pollutants such as oil, bacteria, grease, and

excess nutrients; dumping it into our waterways. The water collected in a rain barrel is also healthier for your plants because it does not contain the chlorine that treated tap water does. And there are some financial benefits for those of you who are on city sewer and water:

- Saving tax dollars by reducing or delaying the need to expand or upgrade sewage treatment facilities.
- Helping to reduce the severity of basement flooding caused by sewer back-up.
- Saving money on your water bill by providing free rainwater for lawn and garden use.

### Anything that Holds Water

Rain barrels can be made out of a variety of different materials ranging from trashcans, whiskey barrels, and container gardens to whatever else you can think of that will hold a large amount of water. You can also custom-