



2016 RAIN BARREL REBATE PROGRAM

Homeowner Guide

Rain barrels capture and store the rainwater running off your rooftop. The harvested rainwater can be used immediately or stored for later use to water your lawn or garden, fill ponds or fountains, wash your car or yard supplies.

Why does the District government provide rebates on rain barrels?

The District Department of Energy & Environment offers rebates on rain barrels because rainwater that flows off impervious surfaces, such as rooftops, driveways, and roads, carries pollutants into our rivers and streams. Rain barrels can capture rainwater and make it a usable resource, allowing it to seep back into the ground slowly and filter out pollutants, recharge the water table, and prevent stream erosion during heavy storms.

How much is the rebate?

Rebates are issued as a direct reimbursement to homeowners at a rate of \$2 per gallon captured. A 50-gallon rain barrel, for example, would yield a \$100 rebate after installation. Rain barrels must hold a minimum of 50 gallons. **The rebate maximum per property is \$1,000 and reimbursements cannot exceed the cost of the rain barrel (tax and shipping not included).**

Who is eligible for the rebate?

Homeowners of single-family homes and small (less than four units) multi-family properties in the District are eligible, including those who have already received a RiverSmart Homes grant rain barrel.



5 Steps to a Rain Barrel Rebate

- 1. Review** rebate materials on the web (doee.dc.gov/rainbarrelrebates) or request by email (sdavidson@allianceforthebay.org).
- 2. Assess** your site to determine the best location, volume, and type of barrel. Take *before photo(s)* of the location without the barrel.
- 3. Purchase** a barrel that meets *all* rain barrel criteria described on page 2. Rebate funding can only be applied to qualifying barrels.
- 4. Install** the barrel (yourself or hire recommended installer) and take *after photos* that show all required features.
- 5. Submit** your rebate application and documents to the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay. You will receive a rebate check at your home address within 2-6 weeks once the application is reviewed and approved.

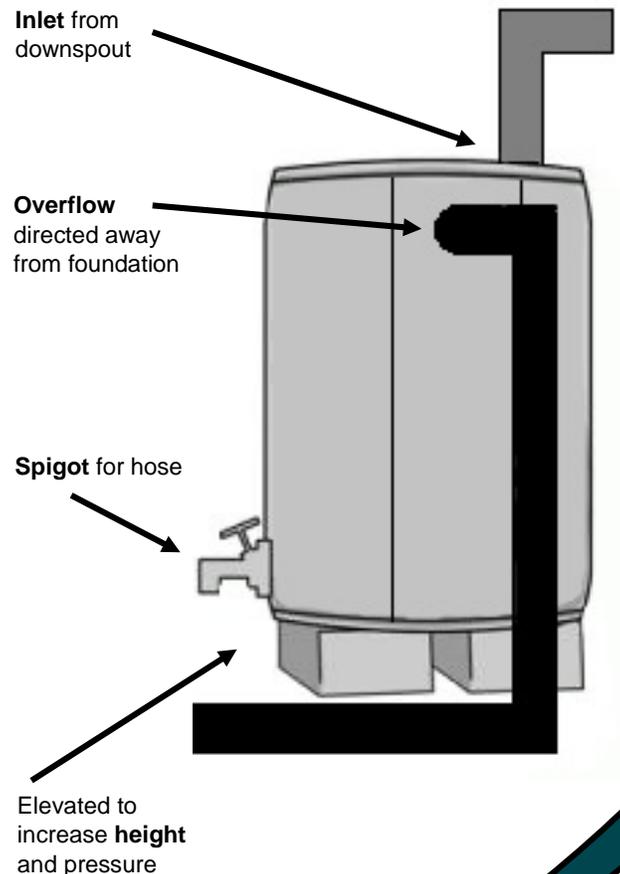
PLEASE DIRECT QUESTIONS TO:
Sarah Davidson at the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay
sdavidson@allianceforthebay.org . 202-817-9672
501 Sixth Street . Annapolis, MD 21403



Rain Barrel Criteria

Your rain barrel must meet *all* of the following criteria in order to be eligible for a rebate. Please make sure that these features are visible in your after photos to avoid a longer review process.

- **Volume:** The barrel must hold a minimum of 50 gallons. If the roof area draining to the barrel is more than 200 square feet (sf), we suggest adding 25 gallons of capacity for each additional 200 sf.
- **Inlet:** The barrel's inlet must be screened to prevent leaf debris and mosquito larvae from entering.
- **Overflow:** The overflow is the pipe near the top of the barrel that directs excess water away from the house once the barrel is full. It needs to be at least 2 inches in diameter.
- **Spigot:** The spigot must be within 3 inches of the bottom of the barrel.
- **Height:** Your barrel should be elevated to increase water pressure. We recommend placing it on cinder blocks. If you put a barrel on your deck or porch, it must be structurally sound (as determined by an engineer) to support a full barrel.
- **Material:** The barrel must be made of an opaque material that will not allow any sunlight through.
- **Downspout Filter:** This is not required, but highly recommended. Some barrels come with filters that prevent leaf litter and other debris from clogging the barrel and overflow. If yours does not, we recommend that you purchase a filter to add, such as the *Leaf Eater*, found on the Aquabarrel website (www.aquabarrel.com).



Building your own barrel?

Submit a design sketch and receipt for all parts purchased to Sarah Davidson at the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay (sdavidson@allianceforthebay.org). Reimbursement cannot exceed the cost of parts. To ensure your barrel meets the above criteria, please consider submitting the design before you begin building.

Choosing the Right Rain Barrel and Installation Site

There are many options for size, shape, volume and placement of a rain barrel. Here are six factors to keep in mind when choosing a rain barrel and selecting the right location for installation.

- **Need for Water**

Where do you plan to water your lawn, wash your car, or maintain your vegetable garden? Attach the rain barrel to a downspout close to areas where water is frequently needed.

- **Ease of Use**

The barrel should be at a higher elevation than the areas where the water will be used so that a garden hose (or soaker hose) can be used to empty it. If the barrel is below where the water is needed, then the water will have to be carried or pumped. The barrel can be propped up on bricks or cinder blocks to slightly increase water pressure.

- **Available Space**

Rain barrels come in many different shapes and sizes. The rain barrels that have been approved for the rain barrel rebate range in height from 2.5 feet to almost 6 feet and can be up to 2.5 feet wide. Do not place the barrel where it will be obstructing a walkway, basement entrance, or within 18 inches of electric and gas meters. Be sure the surface is level so the barrel will be stable when full.

- **Runoff volume**

If possible, try to maximize the amount captured by the rain barrel by placing it under the downspout that receives the most water on your property.

- **Overflow**

In most cases, the rain barrel will not be large enough to capture *all* of the water from a downspout, and it will fill up quickly during a heavy rainstorm. Your rain barrel should have an automatic overflow mechanism that diverts water back into the downspout when the barrel is full, or to an overflow pipe that drains away from your home. Many barrels are equipped with overflow ports or diverter boxes. It's important that the diameter of the overflow pipe be at least as wide as the inlet pipe so that once the barrel is full, excess water can exit the barrel at the same rate it enters the barrel. If this is not the case, it may back up and leak out near your foundation.

- **Accessibility & Maintenance**

Many rain barrels have filters that capture leaves and debris from the roof. If yours does not, it is a good idea to add one. The filter will need to be regularly emptied when it is full, to prevent clogging. Be sure to place the barrel in such a way that there is easy access to the filter to maintain its

Questions?

Contact Sarah Davidson at the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay

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Pre-Approved Rain Barrels

There are many rain barrels on the market, but not all of them are well designed. The following barrels are eligible for the rain barrel rebate. These barrels are usually carried at local hardware stores or can be ordered online (websites are listed). Your options are not limited to these examples, but the barrel you select does need to meet all required criteria outlined on page 2.



Manufacturer: RainGrid
Model: RiverSides Rain Barrel
Volume: 132 gallons
Dimensions: 51" x 27"
Website: www.raingrid.com



Manufacturer: Aquabarrel
Model: Aquabarrel Abe
Volume: 80 gallons
Dimensions: 52" x 28"
Website: www.aquabarrel.com



Manufacturer: StormWorks
Model: Hydra
Volume: 116 gallons
Dimensions: 54" x 47.81" x 18.3"
Website: www.stormworkspgh.com



Manufacturer: Bushman
Model: Slimline Rain Tank
Volume: 130 gallons
Dimensions: 50" x 49" x 17"
Website: www.bushmanusa.com



Manufacturer: Bushman
Model: Slimline Rain Tank
Volume: 265 gallons
Dimensions: 64" x 59" x 25"
Website: www.bushmanusa.com



Manufacturer: Rainwater HOG
Model: Rainwater HOG
Volume: 51 gallons
Dimensions: 71" x 20" x 9.5"
Website: www.rainwaterhod.com

Have a larger rainwater harvester in mind?

If the barrel criteria outlined on page 2 are met, larger cisterns are eligible for coverage. Please email Sarah Davidson at the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay (sdavidson@allianceforthebay.org) with details before purchasing to determine if the rebate can be applied to your specific cistern.

Homeowner Resources

Helpful recommendations, related to the most commonly requested information, are listed below. For additional assistance on your rebate project, please contact the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay.

- **Installation:** We have assembled a list of local contractors with rain barrel installation experience, available by request. Please note that you will be expected to pay for this service out-of-pocket and may be required to have all necessary rain barrel parts purchased and present on your property prior to scheduling an installation.
- **Pumps:** In most cases, raising the barrel with cinder blocks will generate enough pressure for your water-use needs. There may be specific situations, however, when a pump is required for moving water to the desired location in your yard. Several small pumps are available to choose between, including solar-powered pumps. A few examples can be found on the Aquabarrel website (www.aquabarrel.com).
- **Local Sources:** Many local hardware stores carry rain barrels or can special order them and have them delivered within a few days. We are currently working with local sources to carry barrels that meet our criteria. If you are unable to find the barrel you want at a local store, check the internet. Most rain barrels are available to order online.

Get in Touch!

Please don't hesitate to contact us with additional questions or concerns. We welcome your feedback and would appreciate hearing about your experience as a participant in the RiverSmart Rain Barrel Rebate Program.

Program Contact

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501 Sixth Street
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Web
www.allianceforthebay.org/riversmartrainbarrels

Frequently Asked Questions:

Q: Why get a rain barrel through the rebate program instead of the RiverSmart Homes (RSH) grant program?

A: Although the RSH rain barrel grant program provides a barrel and an assigned contractor to install it for you, the rebate program provides homeowners with more flexibility in terms of timeline and barrel type. Specifically, it offers an opportunity to:

1. Select a barrel other than those provided by RSH or build your own;
2. Avoid long wait times associated with the RSH grant rain barrel program;
3. Choose your own installer from the list of recommended installers; and
4. Install a rain barrel yourself.

Q: I already bought and installed my own rain barrel. Can I get rebate funding retroactively?

A: Yes, provided that your barrel meets all program requirements and your receipt is no more than one year old.

