Portland
Water
District

From Sebago Lake to Casco Bay

INSTRUCTIONS

- **Your rain barrel** must be placed on a surface that is flat and level. Use a spade to flatten the area for the bottom of the barrel. If you are placing it on the ground you may need to turn the spigot sideways to connect a garden hose.
- **If you are planning to use drip irrigation** or have a garden that is level or slightly uphill from the barrel it will be necessary to raise the barrel off of the ground. By raising the barrel 2 feet off of the ground, you will be able to easily fill a watering can or use gravity to water your plants.
- **A full rain barrel** will weigh around 400 pounds. A good base can be made of cinder blocks, landscaping blocks, or a well built wooden box or platform.
- **Some assembly is necessary.** Inside each barrel you will find a stainless steel screen, a 4-foot section of hose, and a 90-degree angle PVC connector. The screen easily sets inside the 3" hole on the top of the barrel. The elbow fittings threaded end screws into the tapped hole on the side of the barrel and should be faced downward. The 4' section of hose connects to the other unthreaded end creating the overflow. This drains excess rainwater away from the house or back into the drywell at the bottom of the downspout. If you are wanting to drain rainwater further away from the foundation, the 1.5 inch sump pump tubing can be purchased at most hardware stores.
- **Your gutters and downspout** should be clean of debris and in good working condition. By adding a leaf-catching screen at the top of the downspout, you can prevent extra buildup of debris on the top of the barrel.
- **Never use water** collected in these rain barrels for drinking or cooking. Although these are food-grade barrels, they are for non-potable uses only, such as: watering your garden and house plants, washing the car, doing the laundry, or rinsing your hair like some of our grandmothers may have done.

- **To maintain the tight connection** on the spigot at the bottom of the barrel, please refrain from excessive lifting, bumping, or moving the barrel by the spigot. If you are setting the barrel on the ground, the brass spigot can be turned to the side to attach a hose. Turning the brass spigot should not create a leak. If it does, adjust the tightness of the spigot by removing the lid of the barrel and tightening the nut on the inside of the barrel.
- **The stainless steel screened inlet** prevents insects from breeding in your barrel and stops leaves, twigs, and rodents from getting in the barrel. Pollen and debris may clog your screen. It can easily be lifted out and cleaned. For added protection, you can place a 4"x4" piece of screen or netting over the overflow tube before you attach it to the PVC elbow on the barrel.
- **Mosquitoes** require a minimum of 6-9 days in standing water to become adults. Pick one of the prevention methods that suites you best: 1. Purchase "Mosquito Dunks" at most garden or hardware stores. Mosquito Dunks are a biological mosquito larvacide that kills mosquito and black fly larvae before they hatch. Mosquito Dunks will not affect fish, plants, people or wildlife. One dunk treats 100 sq. ft of water surface for up to 30 days. Break the Mosquito Dunk small pieces and add a piece to your barrel. 2. Add a couple drops of dish soap to the rain barrel to stop the mosquitoes from laying eggs in the water. Dish soap will not harm plants and will actually help the soil soak up the water. 3. Adding a few drops of Olive Oil or cooking oil will also work. 4. Use the water collected once per week and rinse out the barrel. 5. Keep goldfish inside your barrel to feed on the larvae.
- **The lid of the rain barrel** may be unscrewed for easy access to clean the barrel or for quickly filling garden cans or buckets.

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IMPORTANT

- **Winter Instructions.** Freezing rainwater will crack or damage the barrel. Drain the barrel before freezing weather. Remove the lid and turn it upside down to totally drain the barrel. The barrel should be stored upside down if you are storing it outside.

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