



KEEP
GREATER
MILWAUKEE
BEAUTIFUL

RAIN BARREL INSTALLATION AND MAINTENANCE POINTERS

- The downspout from your gutter should be adjusted so that the end is just above the barrel and rainwater pours into the opening; the downspout does not get physically *connected* to the barrel
- The overflow spigot (the one on the top of the barrel) should be left open at all times.
- Connect a garden hose or other flexible pipe to the overflow spigot and aim it away from your home's foundation.
- Turn the barrel upside down during winter months; otherwise freezing water will expand and could damage the barrel.
- During winter, either connect your downspout to a hose or pipe to drain away from your home or reconnect back into the sewer connection (City of Milwaukee only). (During winter days when the temperature is above freezing, there will be some melt-water draining from your roof.)
- Keep an eye on the weather report and drain the barrel ahead of time if a storm is forecast.
- Elevate the barrel at least one foot for increased water pressure. Cinder blocks are an inexpensive option for accomplishing this.
- If you choose to paint your barrel, acrylic paint is recommended. Stickers are another easy way to personalize a rain barrel.
- It is a good idea to periodically clear the top of the barrel of debris such as leaves and to inspect that the screen is intact
- Barrels are retrofitted from used food barrels and may have some residual scent initially. You can clean them with a little dishwashing soap, or add lemon peels

for a natural, fresh scent. Don't leave them in there for more than a couple of days at a time or else they will attract bacterial growth.

Downspout should be configured to aim rainwater into opening at top of barrel



Overflow spigot and overflow hose

Note that barrel is elevated

Primary spigot for water use. Attach garden hose here.

For more information contact
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