



### Why use a rain barrel?

- The water is free, which **saves you money** on your monthly water bill.
- It **decreases the amount** of drinkable, treated water used for outdoor watering.
- It **reduces the energy used** to pump and treat drinking water and the demand on water treatment facilities.
- Rainwater is soft and non-chlorinated, which can **stimulate plant growth** and make soil healthier.
- It's an easy way to **conserve water** one of our most precious resources, and protect the environment.

For more information please visit  
[www.stalbert.ca/rain-barrels](http://www.stalbert.ca/rain-barrels)  
or call 780-459-1735.

THE CITY OF  
**st. Albert**

City of St. Albert Office of Environment  
**Green by nature**



THE CITY OF  
**st. Albert**

**Save Water,  
Save Money.**

*Catch water from your roof! Use a rain barrel.*

Since 2006, the City of St. Albert's Rain Barrel program has sold rain barrels to St. Albert residents at a subsidized price, and will continue the practice this year.

## How do I set up my rain barrel?

### Select a suitable site

- Locate a downspout that is most convenient for barrel placement, avoiding locations where gas or water meters are present.
- Place your rain barrel below the downspout, and ensure positive drainage is a minimum of five feet away from the house foundation.
- To maximize water pressure and stability, while also leaving adequate space to fill your watering can, raise your barrel 12 – 16 inches using a smooth level surface, such as bricks or cement blocks.

### Connect downspout to rain barrel

- Remove existing downspout clamp and elbow.
- Cut the downspout approximately 12 inches above the rain barrel or just enough that, once the elbow is reinserted, the downspout can be redirected into the top of the rain barrel.
- Reinsert the elbow. If the elbow doesn't reach the top of the rain barrel, an extension of the downspout may need to be added.

Different variations for connecting your downspout to rain barrel exist, depending on the location of the downspout. This method is only appropriate if drainage in the area is not a problem (See diagram 1 below).

If drainage is a problem in the location you have chosen, you have several options:

- Adjust the landscaping to provide positive drainage, directing water away from the foundation wall.
- Starting in 2010, rain barrels sold by the City come equipped with an overflow hose bib that you can attach to a hose for overflow control or to link several rain barrels together. Make sure to extend the discharge pipe away from the house foundation.
- If your barrel does not have this device, a hole can be added by drilling and then attaching an overflow fitting from the plumbing section of your local home and garden store (diagram 2).
- You can also install a downspout diverter, which directs the water into the rain barrel until it is full. Once the rain barrel is full, the water is diverted back into the downspout. Downspout diverter kits can be purchased at select home and garden stores. (diagram 3). Contact the Office of Environment at 780-459-1735 for more information.

• If you are not going to install an overflow device or downspout diverter, please ensure you maintain positive drainage from the foundation wall.

**Remember:** several rain barrels can be connected using either of these methods (diagrams 2 and 3).

## How do I maintain my rain barrel?

- Clean the lid screen opening regularly, as debris from your roof and surrounding shrubs and trees can clog the screen and cause water to spill over the lid of the barrel.
- In the fall, before the temperatures dip below 0°C, drain the rain barrel and leave the valve open. Then, turn it upside down and move it away from the downspout, or store it in a covered location. Ice in the barrel will cause cracks in the spout or hose bib.
- During the winter, when the barrel isn't in use, replace the downspout extension to direct water away from the foundation wall.

## Safety Reminders

- ✓ Ensure children refrain from playing on or inside the barrel.
- ✓ Keep the lid on the barrel at all times to keep out insects, pets and wildlife.

