



Raritan River Rain Barrel Rebate Program

Rebates of **up to \$200** to install rain barrels at your home!



What is a rain barrel?

A rain barrel collects and stores rainwater from a roof. It prevents the rainwater from becoming stormwater runoff that picks up pollutants and carries them into storm drains, streets, or streams. Rain barrels allow you to store and conserve water while at the same time, help to keep our rivers and reservoirs clean.

Why are the NJ Water Supply Authority and the Regional Center Partnership offering rebates on rain barrels?

Because there are so many rooftops, driveways, and roads in Somerville, Bridgewater and Raritan, this area is a concern for water quality. Programs here can make a difference in reducing pollution and easing stream erosion caused by heavy stormwater. The Regional Center Partnership administers the Raritan River Rain Barrel Rebate Program with a grant funded by the NJ Water Supply Authority.

To receive the rebate:

Purchase and install a rain barrel at your residence in Somerville, Bridgewater or Raritan that meets all criteria listed below.

Obtain a rebate application form from www.regionalcenterpartnership.org, your municipal clerk's office, or the county administration office.

Submit the rebate application with a copy of your purchase receipt and post-installation photo to New Jersey Water Supply Authority. Maximum 2 rebates per property.

Installation inspections will be conducted by NJWSA staff prior to rebate issuance.

To qualify for the rebate, your barrel should have the following features:

- **Volume:** Minimum of 40 gallons
\$50 rebate for rain barrels that hold 40-70 gallons
\$100 rebate for rain barrels that hold more than 70 gallons
- **Mosquito prevention:** Your barrel should have a closed top or a screen with holes no larger than a window screen
- **Overflow:** to direct water away from the foundation or have an automatic diversion system on your downspout
- **Spigot:** to access water no higher than 3" from the bottom of the barrel
- **Purchase date:** If you are in the Peters Brook Watershed, you must have purchased your rain barrel after July 1, 2011. If you are outside the Peters Brook, your barrel must have been purchased after January 1, 2014
- Barrel must be made of a **sturdy material** and installed on a **solid, level base**
- **Homeowners must pledge to maintain their rain barrel for at least 2 years**



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Rain Barrel Purchase Information

Location eligibility: must be on a **residential** property in Somerville, Bridgewater or Raritan. Contact the New Jersey Water Supply Authority Watershed Protection Programs at 908-685-0315, extension 234 or e-mail rainbarrel@raritanbasin.org if you are unsure if you are eligible. If you are not the homeowner, or if you live in a townhouse/condo/apartment, make sure that you obtain written permission from your landlord or homeowners' association.

When choosing the right location for your rain barrel, keep a few things in mind:

- Place it where it will do the most good! Look at where your downspout goes, if it goes directly to the street or storm drain, placing a rain barrel here will provide a greater water quality benefit.
- Place it where you need it! (near your garden, lawn, etc.): Choose an area where the water from your rain barrel can easily be used with a soaker hose or watering can.



Where do I get a rain barrel?

- ◆ Attend a NJWSA or a Rutgers "Build a Rain Barrel" workshop. See website for dates and cost information: http://water.rutgers.edu/Stormwater_Management/rainbarrels.html
- ◆ Visit your local hardware or garden supply store, or search online for "rain barrels". Make sure that barrels have all of the required features; contact NJWSA if you have questions regarding barrel eligibility at 908-685-0315 x234 or rainbarrel@raritanbasin.org.
- ◆ Build your own barrel to meet the above criteria. Contact NJWSA for technical assistance.

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Rain Barrel Installation Considerations & Tips

Installing your rain barrel will vary slightly from model to model. If you purchase a rain barrel, it may come with installation directions. This rebate program requires that your barrel be installed on a **solid, level surface**.

Tip: While the base does not need to be elevated, a raised platform will allow you to use a watering can and the spigot will be easier to access.



"I believe in recycling and I enjoy recycling. I have three rain barrels at home. One helps me collect runoff water that helps me keep my basement drier. Two are near my greenhouse at the back of the yard. I collect the rain water that runs off the greenhouse and these barrels give me the water I need to water my plants in the yard where there is no water source. Recycling and reusing rain water saves me money and saves a valuable natural resource."
-Jay, Somerville, NJ

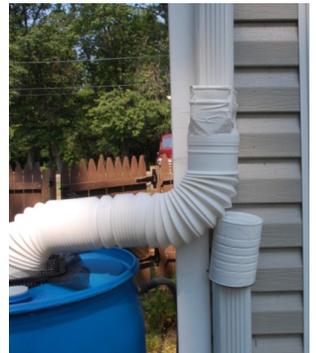
Determine where the overflow from your rain barrel will be directed. If your barrel does not have an automatic diversion system, you will have an overflow (see photo left). Attaching a hose (at least 10 feet in length) will **direct water away from your foundation** when your barrel fills, and will prevent mosquitos from using this as an entryway into your rain barrel.



You will need to cut your downspout. If you have a diverter, follow those directions. If your barrel will be raised, build the base first to determine the appropriate height.

You can cut the downspout just above the barrel (see photo right) and use a small section of flexible hose or a downspout elbow, or replace the entire downspout with a flexible hose (bottom right).

Use a hacksaw or saber saw to cut the downspout pipe, and use a piece of cardboard or flashing to protect siding or other house materials. Use downspout screws to attach the elbow or flexible hose to the downspout. Keep the cut portion for reinstallation in the winter.



Visit http://www.raritanbasin.org/rain_barrel.html for more installation information. If you have any questions or concerns about installation, e-mail NJWSA at rainbarrel@raritanbasin.org or call 908-685-0315 x234.

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Rain Barrel Owner's Guide

During the season (late March/early April to late October)

- Empty your rain barrel regularly—do not let water sit for more than 1 week after a rain storm.
- Empty your barrel before major storms (a quarter inch of rain will fill most rain barrels).
- Keep your gutters clean
- Check your barrel for leaks or clogs.

End of the season (late October)

- Empty and rinse your rain barrel (use vinegar or other non-toxic agent), scrubbing is recommended.
- Disconnect your rain barrel from the downspout, and either re-attach your original downspout, or use a flexible hose to reach the ground or splash pad. [Frozen water can lead to cracks in your barrel.]
- Store the barrel upside down, or inside a shed or basement. Reconnect your barrel in late March.



Use Your Barrel to:

- ◆ Water garden plants
- ◆ Water your lawn
- ◆ Wash the car or dog
- ◆ Rinse muddy boots or sandy beach

Benefits of Rain Barrels

- Reduce the flow of rain water that carries pollutants to streams
- Reduce water consumption
- Naturally soft water, without chemicals for your plants



Tips & Troubleshooting

- NEVER use your rain barrel for drinking water. If you use your collected rainwater for growing fruits, vegetables or herbs, remember to rinse them with tap water before you eat them.
- If mosquito concerns arise, use a small amount of dish soap or vegetable oil in the barrel.
- If algae growth occurs, add a cap full of liquid bleach to a full barrel (this will not harm plants).
- Avoid collecting rainwater from roofs that have been treated with moss killer recently (up to 3 months).
- Plan to use with soaker hoses and water cans. There is not enough flow (pressure) to use a sprinkler or spray nozzle.
- Repurposed food-grade barrels can be painted! Sand with a fine sandpaper, and use a plastic primer (spray paint). Barrels can be decorated using acrylic paint. A clear coat of polyurethane will keep paint from fading or chipping when exposed to outdoor weather.

