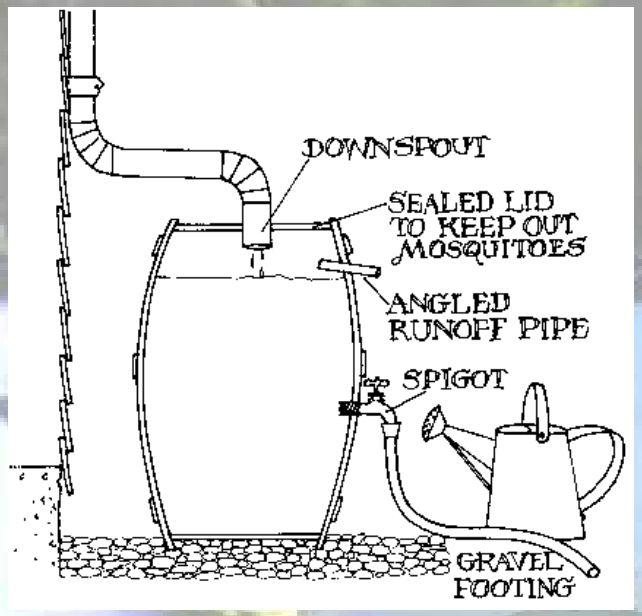
Rain Water Collection Historical Facts:

- Some of the oldest evidence of roof catchment systems date back to Roman times. Roman villas and even whole cities were designed to take advantage of rain water as the principal water source for drinking and domestic purposes since at least 2000 B.C.
- In Israel, tanks for storing runoff from hillsides for both domestic and argicultural purposes have allowed housing and farming in areas with as little as 100mm (4 inches) of rain per year.
- The ealiest known evidence of the use of the technology in Africa comes from northern Egypt, where tanks have been used for at least 2000 years - with many still operational today.
- The technology also has a long history in Asia, where rainwater collection practices have been traced back 2000 years in Thailand.
- Around the third century in India, people collected water in clay jugs and were punished if they did not do so!
- The world's largest rainwater tank is probably the Yerebatan Sarayi in Istanbul, Turkey. This was constructed during the rule of Caesar Justinian (A.D. 527-565). It measures 140m (460 ft.) by 70m (230 ft.)and has a capacity of 80,000 (21 million gallons) cubic meters.

References: American Rainwater Association;
Capital Regional District, Victoria, BC

Make Your Own Rain Barrel



Rain Barrels

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LSPA

Devoted to the Environmental Quality of the Lake Sunapee Watershed

Why Use One? Rain barrels provide a way to collect (via gutters & downspouts) and store rainwater from your roof. Rain barrels can help reduce your water needs while helping to reduce the impacts of stormwater runoff. The stored water can be used for watering gardens or other landscape features or for washing autos, pets, etc.

How it Works

A valve near the bottom connects to a garden hose. The barrel can also be elevated so that a watering bucket could be filled from the valve. A 1/4 inch rainfall on a 15' X 24' roof surface will fill a 55 gallon barrel.

Overflow from the barrel can be directed (from an outlet pipe near the top) to an area for infiltration into the soil and to replenish groundwater supplies.

In a rain barrel installation where overflow runoff may present a problem, an infiltration measure such as a drywell (a shallow, stone-filled hole) will serve to infiltrate some of the excess. Dry-wells should ideally be sited down-slope and/or away from basement foundations.

When to Use and Maintain

Rain barrels can be used spring through fall (freeze-up should be avoided). If water is stored in warm weather for long periods of time without fresh input, stagnation and/or algal growth may occur. Draining the water out slowly will diminish the problem. The barrel may need a wash out at the end of the season and can simply be turned upside down for the winter.

Where to Find One

Rain barrels are usually available through NH County Conservation Districts and through some municipalities. Many are available through internet websites and rain barrel kits (you supply the barrel) are also available. Alternately, a barrel, some tools, a little know - how and a trip to the hardware store can result in a custom, functioning rain barrel.

Benefits of Rain Barrels:

- ◊ Conserve Water
- ◊ Reduce electrical usage (avoided pump usage)
- ◊ Reduce impacts of stormwater runoff
- ◊ Replenish groundwater (if used with dry-well or rain garden)
- ◊ Chlorine-free water maintains healthy soil microbes (chlorine is used in most municipal water supplies)

Multiple barrels can be connected together for increased storage.

Rain Barrel using a Chain