



Rain barrels have been a part of intelligent rainwater management for thousands of years. As a Best Management Practices component, rain barrels provide an extremely cost-effective rainwater storage and distribution solution .

Are Rain Barrels Feasible at my Residence?

Rain barrels are appropriate where the following site characteristics are present:

- Roof areas with downspouts are required.
- A level, firm surface for support of the rain barrel(s) is required. Rain barrels should only be elevated with solid construction materials and kept away from retaining walls as a full 55-gallon rain barrel will weigh over 400 pounds.
- An area where the captured water can be used is required to be present within a reasonable distance from the rain barrel(s).
- Design of an appropriate area for overflow from the barrel is necessary. For sites within, immediately adjacent to, or discharging to an environmentally sensitive area, see the LID Manual for applicable criteria.

How Many Rain Barrels Do I Need?

The number of rain barrels required to capture runoff from a given roof or impervious area is shown in the following table.

Roof or Impervious Area (sq. ft.)	Number of 55 Gallon Rain Barrels*
500 - 1000	4
1,001 - 1,500	8
1,501 - 2,000	10
2,001 - 2,500**	14

For more information, contact
Long Beach Development Services at
(562) 570.5237 or www.lbds.info



Design Criteria and Considerations

When installing a rain barrel, the following criteria should be adhered to unless otherwise permitted by the City of Long Beach. The owner should check all boxes that will be complied with.

- Screens are present on all rain barrel inlets to remove debris and larger particles as the water enters the barrel. Removable child-resistant covers and mosquito screening are in place.
- Barrel is child safe: access is child-proof and the barrel is properly sited and anchored on a stable surface to prevent barrel from tipping over. Remember – each rain barrel weighs approximately 400 pounds when full!
- Above-ground barrels are not located on uneven or sloped surfaces; if installed on a sloped surface, the base where the barrel is installed has been leveled using appropriate construction materials prior to installation.
- Installed rain barrels have not been placed on elevated platforms, decks or porches without consulting local building code officials.

Operations and Maintenance

Once a rain barrel is installed, the following criteria should be adhered to. The owner should check all boxes that will be complied with.

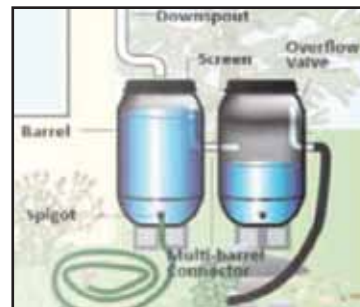
- Rain barrel components will be inspected 4 times annually and following major storm events. Screens, spigots, downspouts, and leaders will be repaired or replaced as needed.
- Rain barrels will be cleaned as necessary to prevent algae growth and the breeding of vectors. Cleaning should always take place on a permeable surface. If vectors are breeding in a rain barrel, the barrel will be drained immediately.
- During dry periods, spigot drains will be left open when barrel is not in use.

Owner Certification

“As the owner of the project property, I hereby certify that the above information is true, accurate, and complete, to the best of my knowledge.”

Owner Signature: _____ Date: _____

- Dispersion areas will be maintained to remove trash and debris, loose vegetation. Areas of bare soil should be rehabilitated to minimize erosion.
- Overflow outlet is provided and designed to disperse overflow onsite and through stable vegetated areas where erosion or suspension of sediment is minimized.
- Dispersion is directed so as not to knowingly cause geotechnical hazards related to slope stability or triggering expansive (clayey) soil movement. Overflow dispersion will take place at least 3 feet away from public sidewalks, at least 5 feet away from property lines and foundations, and at least 10 feet from building foundations.
- Rain barrels are opaque and dark in color to prevent UV light penetration and discourage algae growth. Barrel placement allows easy access for regular maintenance.



Rain Barrel Setup

- Where possible, effective energy dissipation and uniform flow spreading methods will be used to prevent erosion and aid dispersion.
- If adequate mosquito control is not in place and well-maintained, rain barrels will be emptied as necessary to prevent standing water from remaining in a barrel for more than 3 days, thereby preventing vectors from breeding. If vector breeding occurs as a result of contained storm water or inadequately maintained BMPs, I understand that the City of Long Beach Department of Health and Human Services, Bureau of Environmental Health, has the ability to fine site owners for violating the California Health and Safety Code (Section 2060 – 2067).
- Rain gutters will be inspected and cleaned at least twice annually.

* Or equivalent capture using larger rain barrels.

** Projects adding roof or impervious areas in excess of 2,500 sq. ft. shall add 3 rain barrels per every 500 sq. ft. of additional area.