

# **RECYCLE THE RAIN**

City of Cranbrook Water Barrel Rebate Program:

*The rebate is available on a first come, first served basis until funds are exhausted. To ensure you don't miss out apply early. Households are limited to one rain barrel rebate per year.*

## **What is a Rain Barrel?**

Easy to install and usually inexpensive, rain barrels are an excellent way to conserve Cranbrook's drinking water supply. Rain barrels collect rainwater from buildings and rooftops to be used at later times. This water can be used for outdoor irrigation, reducing the need to use treated water from the tap.

## **Why Collect Rainwater?**

- Rainwater is naturally soft and devoid of minerals, making it better for plants and soil.
- You'll have your own water source in times of drought or water restrictions.
- Water conservation reduces your utility bill cost
- Helps to supplement your outdoor water use, reducing strain on the reservoir when demand is highest, and supply is lowest.
- Reduces the volume of storm water run-off, preventing erosion and preserving creek health.

Rain water is not treated; therefore, it is non-potable. Do not use this water to drink or cook with.

## **Where Can I Buy One?**

Rain barrels can be purchased at most local home or garden stores.

With a variety of sizes and styles to choose from, below is a guide of what to look for when purchasing a rain barrel:

- A screen or mesh to keep mosquitos out and filter off any debris.
- Drain or spigot at the top for overflowing
- Drain or spigot at the bottom for draining

- B.P.A.-free material. Bisphenol-A is an environmental contaminant and is present in some plastics.

### **How to Use a Rain Barrel**

- Position the rain barrel on sturdy, level ground in front of a downspout close to the area you want to water.
- To increase the water pressure, you may use a rain barrel stand. A stand elevates the rain barrel, making it easier to access the spigot.
- Connect your downspouts directly to the rain barrel, or install a downspout diverter.
- If desired, attach a hose to your rain barrel to hand water plants or to direct water to trees and shrubs.
- You may also connect several rain barrels together using pieces of garden hose.
- Ensure the overflow water is directed away from your home to reduce pooling water that could impact your home's foundation.
- Rainwater is non-potable and should not be used for drinking, washing fruits or vegetables, or cooking.
- Rainwater can be used for watering your shrubs, landscaping, flowerbeds and ornamental gardens.
- Using collected rainwater on vegetable gardens or edible food crops should be done at your discretion. The runoff collected from roof tops may contain contaminants and currently there are no national or provincial guidelines in place for rain barrel water treatment.

### **Preparing your Rain Barrel for Winter**

Rain barrels can be damaged by water freezing and expanding, this may result in split hoses, damaged spigots, and even burst barrels.

How to prepare your rain barrel for winter:

- **Drain it!** Open spigots or hoses and let the water drain out, then turn the barrel over to drain any remaining water.
- **Clean it!** Debris left in the barrel may cause mold or fungus growth.
- **Store it!** Storing it inside a garage or shed is recommended. If you store it outdoors, turn it upside down to prevent any water from accumulating.