



Rain Barrel Q&A Reference Sheet

Note: This information applies to rain barrels that were installed with the DIY Rain Barrel Diverter & Parts Kit by EarthMinded.

1. How do I keep mosquitos out of my rain barrel?

This rain barrel is a closed system, which will limit mosquitoes from entering the barrel. Changing the water level of your barrel by using the collected water can also prevent mosquitoes from finding the rain barrel as a suitable nursery. Additionally, tablets or bleach can be added to the rain barrel to kill insects and bacteria.

2. How can I keep natural debris out of my rain barrel?

The first step to limit debris from entering your rain barrel is to install gutter guards. Additionally, filters can be installed on the downspout to stop any debris from entering the rain barrel.

3. Do I need to clean my barrel?

Yes, all rain barrels will accumulate minimal debris in the form of pollen or sediment. We recommend to clean rain barrels with soap and water at least once a year (such as when you winterize it).

4. How do I keep algae from growing in my rain barrel?

Dark opaque barrels are unlikely to grow algae, since sunlight cannot penetrate it. White barrels will grow algae unless painted. Using the water out of your barrel will also prevent algal growth.

5. How do I paint my barrel?

See the City of Charleston's Stormwater Program's brochure "How to Paint my Rain Barrel." Barrels that are in full sun will receive UV damage over years. It is recommended to gloss (top coat) your barrels once a year if painted.

6. Should I elevate my rain barrel?

There are advantages to elevating a rain barrel, such as increasing the gravitational pressure of water flowing out of the barrel, but you need to consider all safety precautions when elevating a rain barrel. Rain barrels should be installed on a strong, stable, and level planar surface to minimize the chance of tipping. If using cinder blocks, it will take three.

7. Do I need to winterize my rain barrel?

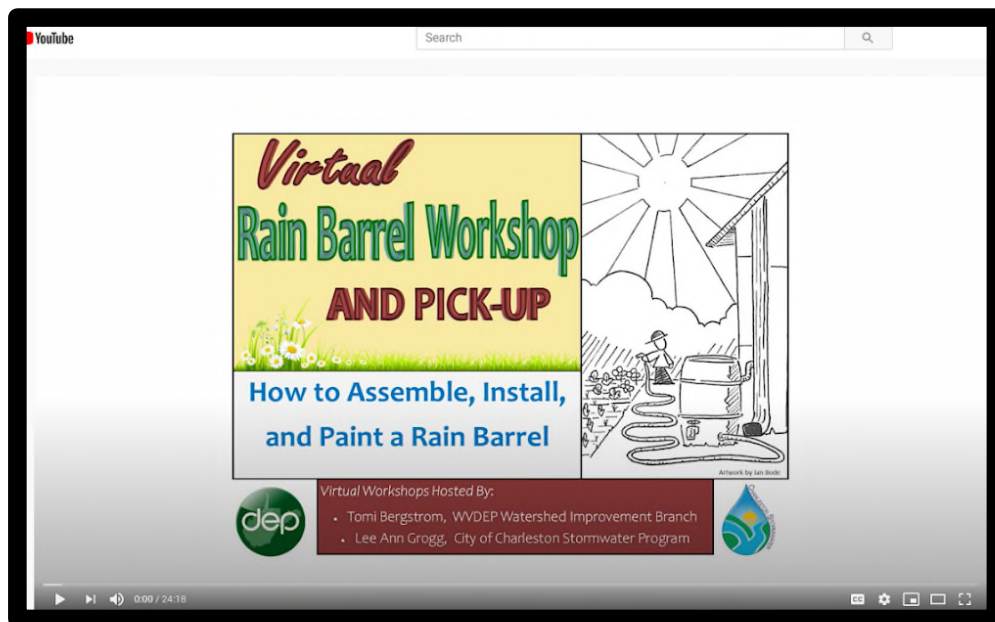
All residents of West Virginia should winterize their rain barrel. Winterizing will prolong any rain barrel system by preventing water from freezing and expanding or damaging vital components to the rain barrel system. To winterize, simply drain the barrel with the drain hose and disconnect from the downspout. Clean and dry the barrel. Store it indoor or at least out of UV light if possible.

8. What does the barrel do when it is full?

Once your barrel is full, water will be diverted to exit through your downspout.

Type the video link below into a web browser to see how to assemble, install, and paint your barrel. The video was created by WV DEP and the City of Charleston’s Stormwater Program in 2020.

Type this link into a web browser to watch: <https://youtu.be/LiuslQ-sA0c>



If you have additional questions, please contact the Watershed Improvement Branch.

WVDEP, Watershed Improvement Branch

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Website: <https://dep.wv.gov/WWE/watershed/WatershedImprovementBranch/Pages/default.aspx>

WV Department of Environmental Protection Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/depwv/>

WVDEP’s Watershed Improvement Branch Event Calendar: <http://bit.ly/2oc1jjM>



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