

# Rainwater Barrels

Guadalupe County Groundwater Conservation District  
[www.gcgcd.org](http://www.gcgcd.org)



## What supplies do I need to build a Rainwater Barrel?

Although there are pre-assembled Rainwater Barrels available to purchase, the process of building one is enriching and straightforward. Building a Rainwater Barrel is a fun and rewarding project. Your chosen Barrel should be made of food-grade plastic and should never have contained harmful chemicals.

Aside from the **20-30 gallon barrel**, find a **caulking gun & sealant**, a **3/4" hose bib**, an **8" round piece of window screen**, a **2" PVC male adapter**, a **2" electric conduit nut**, and a **2" PVC street elbow**.



## How do I Assemble it?

Tools you'll need:

- an Electric Drill
- 1" hole saw paddle attachment
- 2 3/8" hole saw attachment
- 6" hole saw attachment

### 1- Thoroughly wash your barrel

### 2- Attach water outlet

- a. Use the 1" drill bit to drill a hole 4" above the bottom of the barrel
- b. Apply sealant around the hole, then insert the hose bib into the drilled hole

### 3- Create inlet and overflow pipe

- a. Use the 6" hole saw (or jig-saw) to cut a hole at the top of the barrel
- b. Use the 2 3/8" hole saw to cut a hole on the top side of the barrel.
- c. Through the hole you just made, insert the 2" PVC male adapter
- d. Inside the barrel, attach the 2" electrical nut to the 2" male adapter
- e. Use the sealant to glue the 2" PVC street elbow to the male adapter, facing down
- f. Seal around the top hole with the caulk gun and attach the 8" screen over the hole

After completion, make sure to put your new barrel in a spot where it can fill up! A place under a gutter or roof corner is ideal.

Make an effort to deep clean your Rainwater Barrel at least once a year to prevent the accumulation of any organic growth and keep the inlet and outlet from buildup. Monitor the screen, hose bib, and downspout for any sticks, leaves, or dirt, and clean them out if necessary.

Be sure to check the sealant for any leaks or cracks, and apply more caulking if necessary. These maintenance tips can help extend the use and life of your Rainwater Barrel, so make sure to care for it properly!

## How do I sustain the life of my Rainwater Barrel?



With proper care, a Rainwater Barrel can last up to 20 years!

## What can I do with my harvested water?



Although there are many uses for collected rainwater, sources strongly advise against drinking it.

Water your plants! Rainwater can be used for small garden drip irrigation.

Use collected water for livestock and pets.

Give water to the nearby wildlife. Use the rainwater in a bird bath!

You can prevent small-scale flooding in your gardens and surrounding your house by having one or more barrels. The water flow will be more controlled and help prevent waste of usable water.