



GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE in New Jersey



PRACTICES

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE PRACTICE: RAIN BARREL

Rain Barrels are generally 55-gallon barrels that are placed under a gutter's downspout, which are used to collect rainwater from roofs.

HOW IT WORKS:

Rainwater that falls on a roof flows into gutters, and then enters the rain barrel through the downspout where it is stored for later use. Approximately 500 gallons of that rainwater can come off of an 800-square-foot roof in a one-inch rain storm, so every gallon of that rainwater that can be captured in rain barrels is a gallon of rainwater that does not flow into a storm drain or a stream. This can make a difference in the long-term maintenance of storm sewer systems; it can also make a difference in the amount of runoff that enters nearby streams. In addition, because water captured in rain barrels can be used to irrigate gardens and lawns, it can add up to significant savings on water bills.

CONSIDERATIONS:

A number of pollutants can be deposited on roofs through air deposition, bird droppings and chemicals used to treat roof tiles; therefore, it is important to never consume water collected in rain barrels or use it to wash anything that will later be consumed. Water collected in rain barrels is perfect, however, for water gardens and lawns and for rinsing garden tools. Finally, because mosquitoes need standing water to breed, it is important to always keep your rain barrel covered.

