

## Conserving Water: Recycling Rain for Your Garden

In last month's newsletter, we talked briefly about the thirsty lawns and plants of summertime. This is the time of year with the least amount of rainfall, and yet our gardens need the most water. For many of us, water conservation is an issue both ecologically and financially.

As mentioned last month, one way to conserve water is to cut the amount of water used in half. This may quicken summer dormancy, though. Invest in a timer and measurement system to keep track of water usage. Another way to conserve is to water in the early morning, when the temperatures are cooler. This will give your plants and soil a chance to absorb more of the moisture before the heat of the day causes it to evaporate.



Another method of conserving and recycling water is to use a rain-catching system. During the rainy times of year, we can channel the water that normally flows from the roof, through the gutters and back into our lawns and driveways, diverting it into storage tanks called cisterns or rain barrels. During the dry summer months, we can recycle the water back into our gardens. To get an idea of just how much water can be collected, one inch of rain falling on 1000 square feet of roof accumulates 623 gallons of rainwater.

There are methods of building your own rainwater collection system, or you can purchase rain barrels from local sources. The King County website ([www.kingcounty.gov](http://www.kingcounty.gov)) lists tips and resources for installing a rainwater collection system.

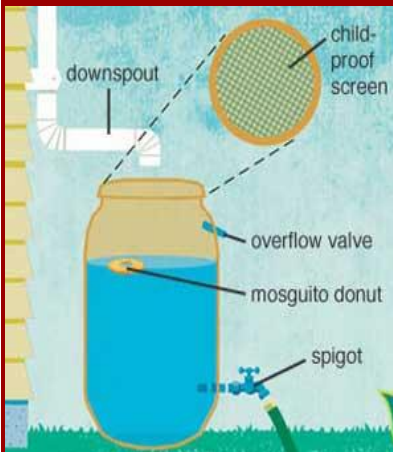
Other simple methods of conserving water can really make a difference if practiced daily. Turn off faucets while brushing teeth, make sure you have a full load of laundry before washing, fix leaky taps and pipes, and install low flow fixtures.

Let's all do our part!

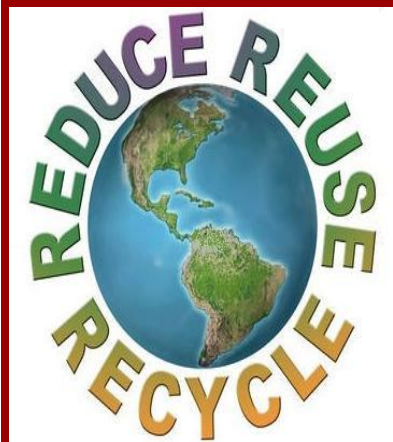


In summer, the song sings  
itself.

*William Carlos Williams*



An example of a rainwater  
collection system.



Let's all do our part!

### What's Growing On? New & Noteworthy

- Through Aug, 7<sup>th</sup>, Jefferson Landscaping is collecting non-perishable food and monetary donations for the Northwest Harvest's 2<sup>nd</sup> annual food drive. If you would like to help us fight hunger, just leave your donation on your doorstep in a bag marked *NW Harvest*, and our crews will pick it up on their service days.
- We do outdoor lighting! If you're hosting a summer party, give us a call for a free demonstration. We will leave the lights with you for up to a week.

### Rainwater Collection Tips

- Don't drink the rainwater! Water collected and stored is non-potable and should never be used as drinking water unless treated.
- Keep tight, locking lids on rain barrels to keep out kids, pets, and algae.
- If you're purchasing used barrels, make sure to find out what they were previously used for. Do not use barrels that were used to store toxic or poisonous substances.