

Hillsborough County Extension Service  
5339 South County Road 579  
Seffner, Florida 33584-3334

Telephone: (813) 744-5519  
S.C. 541-5772  
FAX: (813) 744-5776

## How to Make A Rain Barrel

### **Tools:**

Electric or Hand Drill  
15/16-inch Drill Bit  
Sabre or Hand Saw

### **Supplies:**

55-gallon Plastic Drum (See “Barrels & Drums” in the Yellow Pages)  
3/4-inch male-thread spigot (with slant head)  
PVC Cement



**Directions:** Be sure to only use barrels that have carried food products!

1. Drill 15/16-inch hole at the first even part of the barrel – about 6 to 8 inches from the barrel bottom.
2. Screw 3/4-inch spigot about half-way into the hole – it will be a very snug fit.
3. Apply the PVC cement to the exposed threads and finish screwing spigot into the drum.
4. If using a downspout, use a sabre saw to cut a hole in the lid so that downspout fits snugly. Caulking can be applied where the downspout meets the barrel top.
5. Other options: If you house does not have downspouts, use an open lid barrel. Drill large screws or bolt into the drum, below the threads. Place a small-mesh screen over the top, with screen edges overlapping the screws. Place a bungie cord around the barrel, below the screws, to hold the screen in place.
6. Elevate barrel on two to three sets of concrete block laying on their sides. This will allow easy access to the spigot and provide more water pressure.
7. You may want to add an overflow downspout at the top of the barrel—or a second spigot—so that you can direct the overflow into a specific part of your yard.

### **NOTE: Barrels come in many sizes, shapes and colors**

- < A 55-gallon barrel can fill up with a 1/2-inch rainfall, depending on the size of your roof.
- < White drums seem to disintegrate more quickly in the sun.
- < Barrels either have removable lids or are “sealed,” with two small openings. It is easier to clean out debris with removable lid barrels. The “sealed” barrels have a flat bottom and may be more stable.

# Water-Wise Information

Research shows that plants—including lawn grasses—do best when they receive  $\frac{3}{4}$  to 1 inch of water per watering event. Check to see how long each zone of your sprinkler system needs to run to apply  $\frac{3}{4}$  to 1 inch of water and then set the timer clock accordingly. Hose-end sprinklers should also be checked to see how long they need to run.



## **Sprinkler Restrictions--Good for the environment and for your yard!**

The sprinkler system restrictions were established to comply with the water shortage issues we are currently experiencing. Lawns will survive with a weekly watering if they receive the correct amount of water ( $\frac{3}{4}$  to 1 inch) per application. Many common ornamental landscape plants, once they are established, can exist on rainfall, except during times of drought.

Please contact your water department for specific watering restriction dates and times.

These restrictions apply whether you use potable water from a municipality, county or private water supplier or if you use a well or lake as your source of water.

**Remember, there are many times of the year when your lawn won't need watering even once a week. During the winter months, lawns become dormant and may need watering every ten days, or not at all. During the summer, rainfall may meet all of your lawns watering needs.**

**Let your lawn and landscape plants tell you when they need water!**

**Watch for these signs**

- , Grass blades fold
- , Plants stay wilted after sunset

## **Average Monthly Rainfall (in inches) for Hillsborough County**

Data supplied by the Southwest Florida Water Management District.

January	2.28	July	7.74
February	3.06	August	7.56
March	3.54	September	6.00
April	1.97	October	2.10
May	3.54	November	2.03
June	6.87	December	1.97

**Year Total: 48.67 inches**