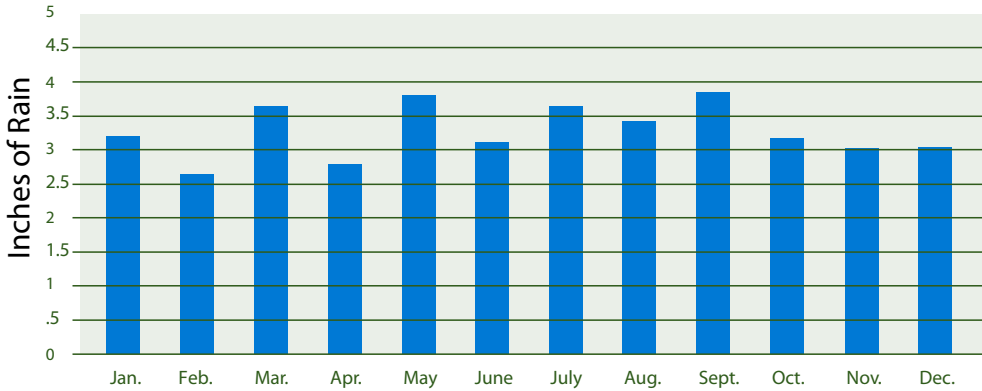


### Monthly Average Rainfall for Washington, DC

This figures chart how many inches of rain DC gets throughout the year. It is essential to drain the rain barrel after each rainfall. Your 130 gallon rain barrel will fill up in as little as a half an inch of rainfall.



# Maintaining Your RiverSmart Rain Barrel



To ensure years of easy, convenient rain barrel ownership, this handbook outlines simple monthly maintenance practices.



## Thank You

For more information on maintaining your RiverSmart RainBarrel, or for more information on the RiverSmart Homes program please visit: [www.ddoe.dc.gov/riversmarthomes](http://www.ddoe.dc.gov/riversmarthomes) or call: 202.535.2252



# After each rain, it's time to drain.

## 1. Draining Your Rain Barrel

A full rain barrel doesn't help our rivers so it's important to remember this:

*After each rain, it's time to drain.*

How often? See the Rain Barrel Draining Guide on the last page of this booklet to determine how many times a month you will need to drain your rain barrel.

Do it right:

- Always drain to a soft surface – a lawn, garden or pond.
- Always ensure your run-off flow stays in your yard.
- Prevent erosion from the flow by directing it to a splash pad or rocky surface.

## 2. Irrigating with Your Rain Barrel

There are two hose connections on your rain barrel. Insert the brass 3/4" drain valve into one of these.

-Top connection – Most convenient if you are filling a watering can or bucket directly from the barrel. One rain barrel fills 100 watering cans.

- Bottom connection – Gives maximum pressure for a garden hose connection. It takes about two hours to drain the rain barrel with a standard garden hose. A soaker hose is slower but ideal for gently watering lawns or gardens.



### Annual Checklist

- ✓ check that your lower overflow connection directs water to a naturalized or permeable surface
- ✗ don't direct overflow to a driveway, laneway, street gutter or sidewalk
- ✗ don't allow draining or overflows to create mosquito breeding habitat (pools)
- ✓ ensure that the RiverSafe filter sock is secure and hole-free to keep your rain barrel mosquito-proof
- ✓ clean roof gutters twice a year to reduce debris that could clog the filter
- ✓ inspect downspouts leading to your rain barrel

✓ keep overflows and drainage on your property

## 3. Seasonal and Monthly Routine

Monthly – Clean your filter system



Remove debris from the mesh screen



Pull out the filter cylinder



Invert the RiverSafe filter sock; clean with a hose



Reinsert the filter cylinder

Winter – Switch to "By-pass" for winter flows



Remove the hose connection



Open the drain valve



Clean and re-insert the filter cylinder



Turn the valve to "By-pass"

Spring – Switch to "Collect" for April showers



Inspect the filters



Check the downspout connections



Turn the valve to "Collect"



Close the drain valve