

# Rain Barrel Maintenance

## Checklist

✓	Frequency	RiverSides barrel (octagonal)	Hydra barrel (rectangular)
	Every Rain Period	Drain your barrel within 7 days of every big rain event onto a permeable surface that can absorb the water like a lawn, garden, or pond.	Drain your barrel within 7 days of every big rain event onto a permeable surface that can absorb the water like a lawn, garden, or pond.
	Monthly	Pull out the filter cylinder and invert the filter sock. Remove the debris and reinsert the sock, make sure it is secure.	Remove the debris from the filter screen.
	Seasonally-Spring	Twist your diverter dial to 'collect' water, close the spigot.	Switch the y-diverter dial to its original 'collect' position, leading the water into the barrel, close the spigot.
	Bi-Annually: Spring/Fall	-Clean your roof gutters of debris in the spring and fall.  -Inspect the downspout leading to your barrel. Make sure it is firmly connected to your gutters, the side of your house, and barrel.	-Clean your roof gutters of debris in the spring and fall.  -Inspect the downspout leading to your barrel. Make sure it is firmly connected to your gutters, the side of your house, and barrel.
	Seasonally-Winter	Drain the barrel, keep the spigot open, and turn the diverter dial to 'bypass' water into the overflow pipe.	Drain the barrel, keep the spigot open, and switch the y-diverter dial to opposite side.

### Tips:

- Direct your barrel's overflow to a rocky area on your lawn, decreasing the water's speed and letting it drain evenly to reduce standing water.
- Always check weather forecasts in advance and adjust your barrel maintenance, collection, and draining schedule accordingly.

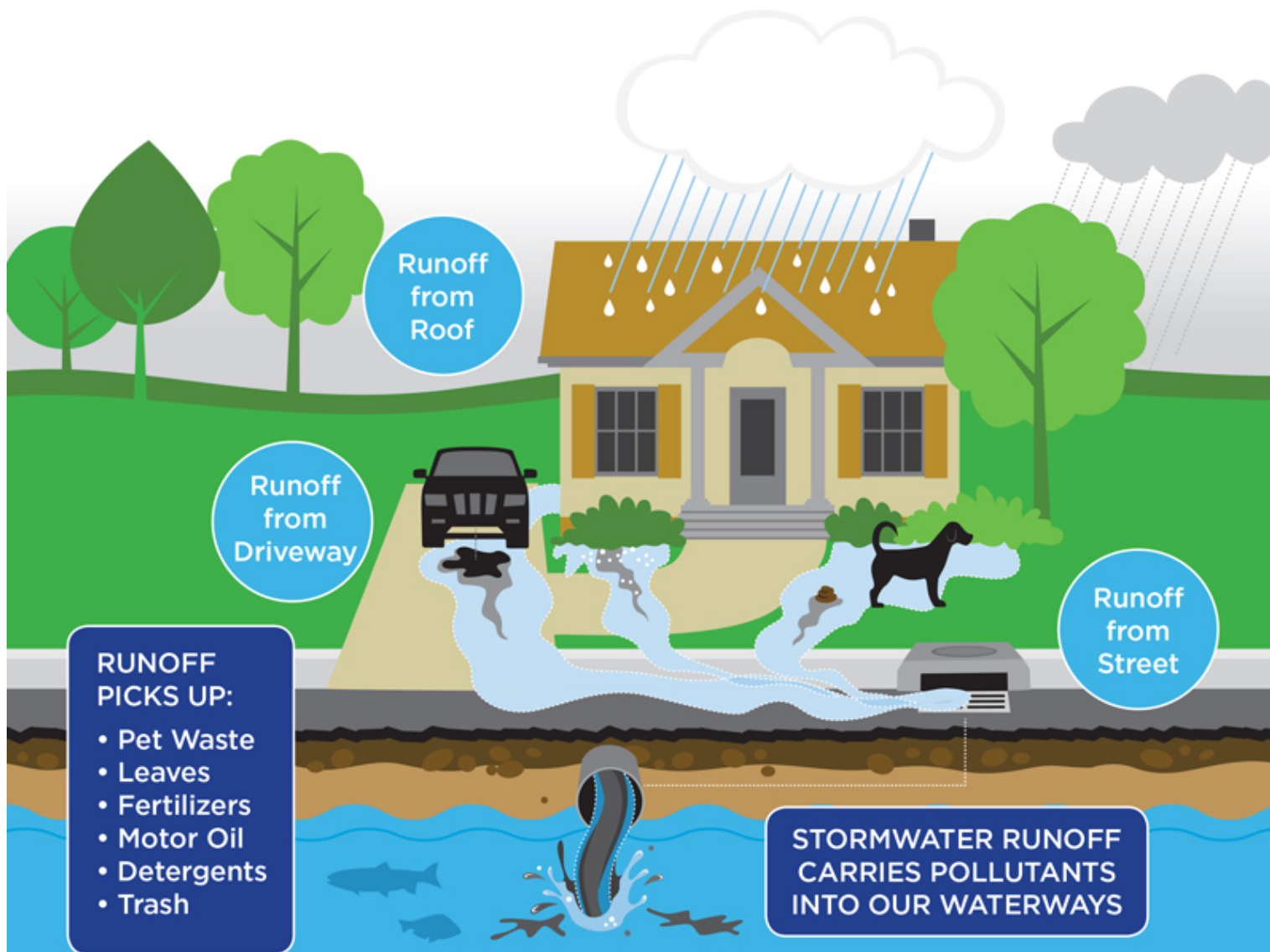
### Glossary:

- **Diverter Box:** A box on the side of your barrel that filters and adjusts the flow of water in or out of your barrel.
- **Downspout:** The pipe leading water from your roof gutter to the ground.
- **Permeable:** A material that liquid can pass through.
- **Spigot:** The small faucet at the bottom of the barrel
- **Splash Pad:** A mat put on the ground under a downspout to guide the flow of water.



For more information visit RiverSmart Homes at: [doee.dc.gov/service/riversmart-home](http://doee.dc.gov/service/riversmart-home) or contact Erin O'Grady with the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay: [eogrady@allianceforthebay.org](mailto:eogrady@allianceforthebay.org) • (202)-905-4945





**Stormwater Facts:**

- Only about **5% of water** that hits your property infiltrates into the ground. The water flowing off takes pollutants into the storm drain and directly into our waterways
- **46% of land** in DC is covered by hard surfaces that rain cannot penetrate
- Rain gardens allow **30% more water** to soak into the ground than a conventional lawn
- Rain barrels can save up to **1,300 gallons** of water during peak summer months
- About **17 million** people live in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, and stormwater runoff is the fastest growing source of Bay pollution

**Tips:**

- Use a broom to clean your driveway, not water
- Always pick up pet poop
- Use less fertilizer, if at all
- Don't dump waste, oil, or soapy water in a storm drain
- Keep leaves, grass litter, and trash out of the storm drain

**Resources:**

- [stormwater.allianceforthebay.org](http://stormwater.allianceforthebay.org)
- [epa.gov](http://epa.gov)
- [chesapeakebay.net](http://chesapeakebay.net)

**Managing stormwater runoff can help bring cleaner water faster!**

Diagram provided by RVAH2O