# Rain Barrel Maintenance

## Checklist

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>RiverSides rain barrel (octagonal)</th>
<th>Hydra rain barrel (rectangular)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Every Rain Period: Water</td>
<td>- Use the water from the barrel on a permeable surface like a lawn or garden. Direct the overflow to a rocky area to decrease the water's speed and drain it evenly.</td>
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</tbody>
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| Monthly: Remove Filter Debris | - Pull filter cylinder from the diverter box.  
- Invert the filter sock, remove the debris.  
- Reinsert sock and cylinder into the box. | - Remove debris from the filter screen.                                                        |
| Seasonally-Spring: Transition barrel to collect | - Twist the diverter dial to 'collect' water.  
- Close the spigot.                                                                 | - Switch the y-diverter dial to the 'collect' position  
- Close the spigot.                                                                 |
| Bi-Annually-Spring/Fall: Gutter Maintenance |                                                                                                  | - Clean roof gutters  
- Inspect the downspout leading to the barrel. Make sure the connection is secure.        |
| Seasonally-Winter: Transition barrel to bypass | - Drain the barrel & keep the spigot open  
- Turn the diverter dial to 'bypass' | - Drain the barrel & keep the spigot open  
- Switch the y-diverter dial to the 'divert' position |

## Tips:
- **Hydra Y-Diverter**: The side the toggle sits on indicates where the water will flow. If it sits on the right side, water will flow through the right leg.
- **Barrels shift over time**: As they fill and empty, the ground settles. Re-level the ground under the barrel every spring.
- **Using Water**: Drain your barrel so water does not sit in it longer than a couple weeks. Long-term sitting water can put pressure on your barrel’s spigot.

## Glossary:
- **Diverter Box**: The box on the side of the RiverSides barrel that filters and adjusts the flow of water.
- **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.

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For more information visit RiverSmart Homes at: doee.dc.gov/service/riversmart-home  
or contact Erin O’Grady with the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay:  
eogrady@allianceforthebay.org  •  (202)-905-4945
Managing stormwater runoff can help bring cleaner water faster!

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.
- 43% 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 18 million people live in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. 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.
- Keep oils, grass litter, and trash out of the storm drain.

Resources:
- stormwater.allianceforthebay.org
- epa.gov
- chesapeakebay.net