Non-Point Source (NPS) Pollution is caused by rainfall or snowmelt moving over and through the ground carrying human-made and natural pollutants with it. It eventually dumps into streams, rivers, lakes, reservoirs, wetlands, and our underground drinking water supply, affecting us and our natural resources.

Why Should I Care?

NPS pollution affects everyone. It may ruin your drinking water, kill fish and aquatic life at your favorite fishing spot, and pollute your child's favorite swimming hole. A rain barrel reduces the amount of NPS pollution that reaches our streams, which helps protect the water quality of the Delaware River.

Examples of NPS Pollution

- Excess fertilizer, pesticide, and stormwater runoff from residential & agricultural areas
- Excess nutrients and harmful bacteria from faulty septic systems, pet waste, & livestock
- Accelerated sediment runoff from construction sites, dirt and gravel roads, timber operations, and some farming practices
- Oil, salt, paint, heavy metals, other toxic chemicals from urban areas

Project Partners

Upper Macungie Township

Lehigh County Conservation District

Lehigh County Authority

Coca-Cola Refreshments

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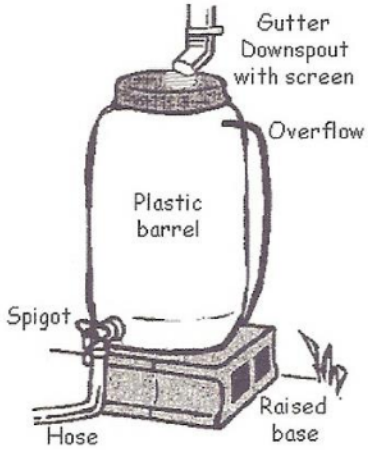
RAIN BARRELS

A Stormwater Solution to Non-Point Source Pollution

A rain barrel collects and stores rain water runoff from your roof that can be used to irrigate flowers, gardens, and lawns while conserving water and saving YOU money!

What is a rain barrel?

A **rain barrel** collects and stores rain water from your roof that would otherwise be diverted to storm drains, streams, and eventually the Delaware River. It conveniently sits under residential gutter downspouts from your home, garage, or shed.



BENEFITS

of Using a Rain Barrel

- Reduces non-point source pollution
- Conserves water to protect the environment, saves energy, and decreases runoff impact to streams and the Delaware River
- Saves money by collecting water and storing it for when you need it most, such as during periods of drought or peak summer months
- Provides FREE water for flowers, gardens, lawns, and car washing. ***Do not use water for drinking, cooking, or bathing***
- **YOU** can help protect water quality, aquatic species, drinking water quality, and recreation in the Delaware River Watershed!

Connecting Your Barrel to Your Downspout

Cut and remove a portion of your downspout to divert water from your roof into the barrel

Maintenance & Tips

- Secure the screen to prevent mosquitoes from entering and breeding in your barrel. *Note: You may see mosquitoes in your barrel from eggs flushed from your spouting.*
- Use mosquito dunks, which contain a non-toxic bacteria, to prevent mosquito growth.
- Remove algae with a mild solution of bleach and water.
- The best way to prevent mosquito breeding and algae is to use your water regularly.
- Disconnect the barrel during winter to avoid freezing and breaking the barrel and parts (you can turn the barrel upside or store it).
- Divert overflow to a grassy area away from your dwelling to allow water to infiltrate and replenish groundwater supply.
- Raise the barrel off the ground using blocks to increase water pressure so you can more easily drain the water for use.

Stormwater

Rain water runoff is typically collected in storm sewer systems and released directly into streams. This direct runoff can contribute to flooding in developed areas that contain a lot of impervious surfaces including roofs, sidewalks, and parking lots.

Runoff carries pollutants that decrease water quality, affecting the health of local waterways and drinking water. These issues are of particular importance in highly developed areas as more impervious surfaces cause more runoff during a rain or snow event.

When you collect rain water that would otherwise enter the storm sewer system, you are helping to minimize the amount of stormwater that will directly run off into streams.

A rain barrel helps homeowners start thinking about water conservation. Rain barrels conserve water, control runoff, and can provide an idea of the large amounts of stormwater that runs off of impervious surfaces.

1 inch of rain on a 1,000 square foot roof yields 623 gallons of water. Calculate your roof yield by multiplying the square footage of your roof by 623 and divide by 1,000.