



Rainwater Harvesting

Although we live in the Sonoran Desert, the use of centuries' old rainwater harvesting techniques can make the most out of the limited rainfall we receive.

Did you know that a ½ inch of rain that falls on the roof of a 1,500-square-foot home can equal 500 gallons of water? By capturing this rainwater instead of letting it run into the street, you will help to conserve our precious water resources and save money irrigating the plants in your yard.

To assess your potential for harvesting water it is helpful to spend some time outside observing what happens after a rain. Where is this water that is shed off the roof going? If it is falling onto the driveway instead of a planting bed, it could easily be redirected.

Rainwater can be harvested in different ways. One of the easiest to implement are called **passive techniques**, which direct water right into the soil for immediate beneficial use. This can be done by constructing basins, berms, swales, or shallow depressions. These contours in the landscape can be constructed before you design and install or after the fact. Make sure standing water disappears within a day and that you keep any water storage away from the foundation of buildings.

Another way to harvest rainwater is through catchments such as rain barrels or tanks. These **active techniques** direct water to these catchments through gutters on the roof of your house. To avoid a mosquito problem, be sure the barrels are sealed properly or use mosquito dunks.

Passive Water Harvesting Techniques	Active Water Harvesting Techniques
Infiltration basin Berm n' Basins French Drain Swale	Tanks Cisterns Barrels

Drawing a map of your property will help you assess your rainwater harvesting potential. Be sure to indicate with arrows the direction water flows off your roof and mark the high and low points of your property. Make note of where water tends to accumulate. Show the direction of water from any slopes in the yard. If you have a large slope, you can use berms to slow water down enough to soak into the soil.

Additional Links

- [Rainwater Harvesting Resources](#) (PDF)



Instead of letting rainwater erode your landscape capture it so it can benefit plants.



Rainwater is captured here in a depression in the landscape.



The rain running off this roof could easily be directed to a planting area.



The rain collected provides water to the surrounding plants.



To avoid a mosquito problem, be sure the barrels are sealed properly or use mosquito dunks when using rain barrels or tanks.



Slow water down by adding berms in a sloped landscape.

Be sure to visit the City of Chandler Water Conservation web pages for free landscape workshops, landscaping tips, rebates, frequently asked questions and more.

www.chandleraz.gov/water

City of Chandler
Water Conservation Office
conserve@chandleraz.gov
480-782-3580

