

Rain Barrel & Cistern Rebate Guide

Value of Rain Barrels and Cisterns

When it rains, stormwater flows from roofs, sidewalks and other urban surfaces onto city streets, picking up pollution and trash along the way. Water that enters the stormwater system flows untreated directly into our creeks, rivers, bays, beaches and, ultimately, the ocean. Instead of letting this rainwater flow off of your property, you can collect it in rain barrels and cisterns (also referred to as rain tanks) for usage onsite. Collecting rainwater from your roof before it washes across the landscape and storing it in rain tanks can provide the following benefits:

- Rainwater that you collect during the rainy season can be used to irrigate your plants, reducing the need to use potable municipal water for irrigation and contributing to water conservation efforts.
- Keeping rainwater onsite helps protect water quality with our local waterways by reducing the volume of stormwater and pollutant flows to our storm drains, creeks, bays, and beaches.
- Collecting rainwater in a rain tank can help reduce flooding around your property and neighborhood.



Receive up to **\$800** per property for purchasing and installing rain barrels & cisterns!

Photo courtesy of CatchingH2O

Available Rebates

Rebates are available for rain barrels/cisterns at a rate of \$1.50 per gallon of storage capacity

- The cost of delivery/shipping of the rain barrel/cistern to the property is eligible to be rebated.
- The total rebate per property/unit will not exceed \$800.
- The rebated rain barrel/cistern must have a capacity of at least 45 gallons and cannot exceed 5,000 gallons.

Eligibility

- ✓ City of San Diego Public Utilities Department residential water service customers. Renters are eligible for a rebate.
- ✓ Individual units within multi-family residential buildings are eligible. If your HOA pays your water bill please have a board member sign your application.
- ✓ Homeowners Association (HOA) can apply to purchase rain barrels/cisterns for their community. One application per community is required to be filled out. Each account number being rebated must be included with your application.

How to Apply

1. Visit **WasteNoWater.org** to review program information and access the rebate application.
2. **Take one clear pre-installation photo** of where you plan to install your rain barrel.
3. **Purchase and install rain barrel(s) or cistern(s)** that meet the specifications in the previous "Requirements" section below.
4. **Take at least two clear post-installation photos** of each new barrel or cistern from different directions, showing downspout connections, secured lid and overflow.
5. **Submit** the Rain Barrel and Downspout Redirect Application (https://qrco.de/rain_rebate) and upload your supporting documentation.
 - ✓ "Pre" and "post" installation photos (see Steps 2 and 4).
 - ✓ Paid invoices or sales receipts (must show price of each rain barrel, store name, purchase date and payment method).
6. **Submit a W-9** form online or by mail to the City to receive your rebate funds.
 - ✓ Online: <https://www.sandiego.gov/w9> via Adobe Sign.
 - ✓ By mail (may take additional processing time):

City of San Diego Public Utilities Department
Attn: Rain Harvesting Rebate Program
525 B Street, Suite 400
San Diego, CA 92101

7. You can also request a hard copy application by calling **619-533-4126** or downloading and printing an application from wastenowater.org.

Required Documents

- Paid invoice(s) or sales receipt(s) showing the price of each rain barrel or cistern, store name, purchase date, and payment method.
- Before and after photos.
- W-9 for IRS reporting.
- Application (online or mail-in).
- Water bill account number.
- If applying for a rebate for shipping or delivery, applicants must provide paid invoice(s) or sales receipt(s) showing the cost of delivery, vendor or retailer name, purchase date, and payment method. Only shipping or delivery by the rain barrel/cistern vendor or retailer is eligible for a rebate.

Requirements

Rebate amount will not exceed the purchase price of the barrel/cistern or delivery/shipping as indicated on the purchase receipt. The rebate check will be sent to the individual listed in the rebate application approximately 6-8 weeks after the application is deemed complete and processed.

- Before installing rain barrel(s) or cistern(s), take 1 clear photograph of where you plan to install your rain barrel or cistern. After installing rain barrel(s) or cistern(s), take at least 2

clear photographs of each new barrel or cistern, showing downspout connections, secured lid, and overflow pipe (include photos taken from at least 2 directions). Submit these photos with your application for a rebate.

- The manufacturer's installation and maintenance instructions must be followed.
- Rain barrels and cisterns must incorporate the following elements:
 - Be a minimum of 45 gallons and maximum of 5,000 gallons.
 - Be connected to a rain gutter downspout.
 - Not block emergency access routes around the home.
 - Openings must be protected from pests, unintentional entry by humans, and tampering. Barrels/cisterns must have a secure lid (for example, a lid secured by screws or clips, a threaded lid, or similar). All open inlets and outlets must be screened with at least 1/16 inch screen or other equivalent method to prevent mosquito entry and breeding.
 - Must be designated by the manufacturer for storage of rainwater or potable water. Food grade barrels and IBC totes that have been converted for use as a rain barrel are eligible provided they meet the conditions of these guidelines.
 - To reduce algal growth and protect the barrel/cistern from degradation, the barrel/cistern must be constructed of opaque, UV resistant materials (e.g. heavily tinted plastic, metal barrel/cistern with lining, concrete, etc.) or must be protected by specially constructed sun barriers (e.g. installed under a shed, shade structure etc.).
 - Overflow from the barrel/cistern must be directed away from buildings and/or adjacent properties. Routing overflow to a vegetated area, swale, or rain garden where overflow can soak into the soil is preferred.
- Barrels/cisterns shall be labeled "NONPOTABLE RAINWATER – DO NOT DRINK." A sticker for purposes of marking the barrel/cistern will be mailed to the individual listed in the rebate application after the rebate is processed.
- Rain barrels/cisterns must not be connected to the potable water irrigation system. Water from the rain barrel/cistern must be distributed through a hose or bucket only and must not be connected to a spray or overhead irrigation system.
- Used barrels/cisterns are eligible provided that they meet the conditions of these guidelines and documentation of purchase (e.g. receipt showing barrel/cistern name, capacity, and price) is provided.
- Only barrels and cistern systems that are used to collect rainwater from roofs for non-potable outdoor use are eligible. Barrels and cistern systems that collect rainwater from other surfaces (e.g. driveways) or are intended to provide rainwater for potable use are not eligible.
- Rain barrel/cisterns must be maintained for a minimum of three years upon receipt of rebate. A post-installation inspection may be conducted by City staff.
- Customers must submit and agree to the online application agreement before a rebate is provided.

What Does Not Qualify for a Rebate?

- Barrels and cisterns purchased prior to January 1, 2018
- Labor, fuel, or tools costs.
- Costs associated with fixtures or components used to install rain barrels or cisterns.
- Homemade rain barrels and cisterns that do not meet the program guidelines above.
- Taxes, fees, or tariffs associated with the purchase of rebate-related devices or work performed.
- Copper materials (including downspouts) are not allowed due to potential leaching concerns.
- Cisterns with capacity over 5,000 gallons do not qualify for the rebate.
- Underground cisterns do not qualify for the rebate.

Other Important Information

By participating in the program, you are agreeing to respond to minimal requests for information about your project for purposes of program reporting and agreeing to allow the City to reference your project in outreach materials. Program participant names will not be made public nor associated with the site addresses.

Your rebate may be taxable and the City may send you a 1099 at the end of the calendar year. Please consult with a tax advisor if you have questions regarding any potential tax implications of your rebate.

Funding for rebates is available through the City of San Diego Public Utilities Department and Stormwater Department, and will be distributed on a first come, first served basis until exhausted. This program is subject to change without prior notification.

Additional indoor and outdoor water conservation rebates, including rebates for rain barrels and cisterns, are offered by Metropolitan Water District of Southern California. Visit socialwatersmart.com for more information and to determine if you are eligible.

Contact

If you have questions after reading these guidelines, please call **619-533-4126** or e-mail **waterconservationrebates@sandiego.gov**. Include your project reference number if you have one.

Find more information and other available rebates to help prevent water waste at WasteNoWater.org