

# Shelton has Rain Barrels

## What is a rain barrel?

A **rain barrel** collects and stores rain-water from your roof to use for things like watering your garden. Water is diverted from your roof's downspout, where it would normally flow to the ground or a stormwater collection system, into the rain barrel for later use.

To determine the **amount of rain** that a roof is capable of catching, first find its surface area. The area is the length times the width. The **raincatch potential** per inch of rain is 0.6 gallons times the area

(in ft.<sup>2</sup>). So, if you have a 200 ft.<sup>2</sup> roof, for each inch of rain that falls you could collect **120 gallons** of water. The average annual rainfall for Shelton is **65.7 inches**. Rainwater used only for gardening can be stored in a pond.

You may purchase up to three rain barrels from the City at the **Civic Center** reception desk (525 W. Cota St.) during business hours. They are \$20.00 per barrel. Each one has a brass spigot near the bottom for gravity fed watering projects. **426-4491**



# Watershed News

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## What Goes Down the Storm Drain

Many problems and solutions related to **stormwater quantity** and **quality** are interrelated. For example, streambank erosion is a water quality problem that is quantity-based. Urbanization generally results in an **increase in surface runoff** during the rainy months, causing flooding and erosion problems readily recognizable. The increase in surface runoff is directly related to **increased impervious surfaces** that come with developments such as roads, parking lots, and rooftops. Impervious surfaces prevent runoff from soaking into the ground. In turn, flooding and erosion result in increased suspended solids, a **water quality** problem that can choke fish and ruin spawning habitat.

Another link between stormwater quantity and quality is that the more stormwater runs off impervious surfaces, the less

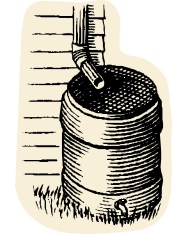
water there is to recharge ground water. This, in turn, can ultimately result in **decreased summer stream flows**. Low stream flows can hurt fish and wildlife, and less water can also mean **higher pollution** concentrations in the stream.

Testing of **stormwater** has found it to contain high concentrations of heavy metals, fecal coliform bacteria, silt, petroleum products, and nutrients. In the short term, these type of toxic **pollutants** can stress aquatic organisms, damage shellfish beds, and restrict water recreation. In the long term, accumulation of pollutants in receiving waters can create problems, sometimes impossible to reverse, such as eutrophication (excessive algae growth), groundwater contamination, and contaminated sediment.



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## Fats, Oil and Grease Update

The City of Shelton is developing an ordinance to regulate fats, oil and grease that are byproducts primarily of food and beverage establishments within the city limits. The purpose is to protect public health and preserve the condition of our sewer infrastructure.

One major feature of this code update will include the installation of grease interceptors at new developments and retrofitted devices at existing establishments. This action is intended to limit the potential for sewer line stoppages resulting in businesses flooding, residences flooding and overflows into public spaces. This action also prevents unnecessary discharges into Hammersley Inlet, Oakland Bay and the Puget Sound.

Grease, oils and fats aren't just bad for your arteries; they're also bad for your home's sewer

line. What many customers may not realize is that these "arteries" are under constant attack by greases, oils, fats from restaurants, apartment developments, and individual homes.

The source of the fats, oils and grease are cooking oils, shortening, butter and margarine, food scraps, and dairy products used to make your daily meals, also from washing pots and pans, and using a dishwasher or garbage disposal. Grease sticks to the insides of all of these items, and running hot water down the sink just pushes the grease a little further about 25 feet on average before it cools and sticks to the inside pipe walls.

Training opportunity-September 14, 2009. Come to the Civic Center (525 W. Cota St.) at 3:30 pm for a one hour training so we can minimize sewer damage from improper handling of fats, oil and grease.



**THERE IS ONLY ONE THING HARDER THAN LOOKING FOR A DEWDROP IN THE DEW, AND THAT IS FISHING FOR A CLAM IN THE CLAM CHOWDER.**  
- PROVERB, NEW ENGLAND

### Outdoor water conservation kits...Still available.

- Water your lawn and garden in the morning or evening when temperatures are cooler to minimize evaporation.
- Wash your fruits and vegetables in a pan of water instead of running water from the tap.
- When buying new appliances, consider those that offer cycle and load size adjustments. They're more water and energy efficient.

### What about Water? (excerpted from: "Toolbox for Sustainable City Living")

Of all human resources, water is the most critical for survival. Not only is water necessary for drinking, it is also crucial for growing food and sanitation. Sadly, water is abused and taken for granted. While water is abundant on the planet, only 2.5 % of that water is fresh (non-salt) water. Of that fresh water, 69.5 % is inaccessible for human use, locked in glaciers and permafrost. Nearly all of the remaining water is found in slowly recharging aquifers from which it is being used at an ever-increasing, non-sustainable rate. Additionally, each year, more and more water sources are being contaminated by agricultural and industrial pollutants, making them unfit for use.

In cities, in particular, water is given little regard. Most people presume that fresh water will always be available with a simple turn of the tap. Few are aware of the complexity of the **hydrological cycle** or the enormous amounts of energy needed to bring water to them. In a future of declining energy resources, it is questionable whether our current water delivery systems will be able to continue functioning. Weather patterns that change as a consequence of global climate change will cause some previously rainy climates to become drought-prone. It will become increasingly difficult to provide water to cities in these dry locations. Furthermore, disasters can cut off water supplies or make them undrinkable for extended periods of time. Autonomous communities would be wise to have a redundant sources for a need as basic as water. -Scott Kellogg and Stacy Pettigrew



Outdoor Conservation Kits available at 525 W. Cota St.- 432-5126