

## ADVANTAGES OF A RAIN BARREL

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ADAPTED FROM INDIAN RIVER COUNTY EXTENSION MATERIAL

- ◆ Lawn and garden irrigation make up nearly 40% of total household water use in the summer. A rain barrel collects water and stores it for when you need it most - during periods of drought - to water plants, wash your car, etc. It provides an ample supply of free "soft water" that contains no chlorine, lime, or calcium.
- ◆ A rain barrel will save most homeowners about 1,300 gallons of water during the peak summer months. Saving water not only helps the environment but also money and energy. Diverting water from storm drains also decreases the impact of runoff to canals and other water bodies in Miami-Dade County
- ◆ Use your rain barrel in areas where you may not have access to a spigot. Keep your compost pile moist to promote the decomposition process throughout the year. Make a "compost tea" by putting some compost in an old pillowcase or pantyhose and put in the barrel. Add a bag of water-soluble fertilizer in the barrel and you have 50 gallons of fertilizer at a time rather than mixing a gallon at a time.
- ◆ Connecting a soaker hose to your barrel is a great way to water shallow-rooted plants. It takes about 8 to 10 hours to empty a barrel this way.
- ◆ Watering plants with warm water in a barrel reduces shock and damping off of transplants.
- ◆ Collecting rainwater in a barrel directs moisture away from building foundations.
- ◆ A full barrel will provide water to 240 square feet of garden space - the equivalent of a 1 cm rain shower.