

Rainwater Tanks

More and more households in urban areas are realising what many people in rural areas have known for a long time – that rainwater tanks can provide a renewable supply of natural, and clear water.

Bundaberg Regional Council
PO Box 3130
BUNDABERG QLD 4670
1300 883 699
www.bundabergrc.qld.gov.au

Council hours
8.15am to 4.45pm
Monday to Friday

Fact Sheets available:

1. Water Cycle
2. Water Treatment
3. What I need to know about Wastewater
4. Wastewater Treatment
5. Water Pollution
6. Water Recycling
7. Water Efficiency
8. How to read your Water Meter
9. Water Meter Home Accuracy Check
10. Drip Water your Garden and save
11. Important things to know about drip watering
12. Water Audit for the Household
13. Rainwater Tanks
14. Pool Maintenance

Booklets available:

1. You Can Take Control
2. Create Your Own Water Wise Garden

Additional fact sheets from WaterWise Queensland can also be obtained through you Local Council.

ANOTHER
BUNDABERG REGIONAL
COUNCIL
PUBLIC AWARENESS INITIATIVE



HOW SAFE IS RAINWATER TO DRINK?

Provided the rainwater is from a well maintained system, is clear and has little taste or smell, it should be quite safe to drink.

For those at risk of infections or if the water quality is in doubt, it is recommended you boil the water for at least one minute before drinking it or using it for cooking.

Collecting rainwater for drinking and cooking is not recommended in areas affected by airborne pollution from heavy traffic and industrial activities, or agricultural crop dusting or spraying.

Micro-organisms may be present in rainwater collected in domestic tanks, but provided the systems are well maintained, the risk of harmful organisms being present is low.

THE RAINWATER TANK

The provision of good quality water depends on correct design and installation, followed by sensible maintenance of the rainwater tank and catchment area. The collection of rainwater involves 'low maintenance, but not no maintenance.'

Before buying and installing a rainwater tank, it is advisable to check with your local council to see whether health, building, plumbing or planning regulations applies in the area. This is important if you reside in a reticulated water supply area.

Rainwater tanks are produced in a wide range of materials, all of which are suitable, provided the tank has been manufactured specifically for rainwater collection. The choice depends on your requirements and finances.

Select the appropriate size tank for your needs, consider the cost, whether it is for total or supplementary supply, the amount and pattern of rainfall, roof area and how the water will be used.

Bundaberg Regional Council
PO Box 3130
BUNDABERG QLD 4670
1300 883 699
www.bundabergrc.qld.gov.au

Council hours
8.15am to 4.45pm
Monday to Friday

Fact Sheets available:

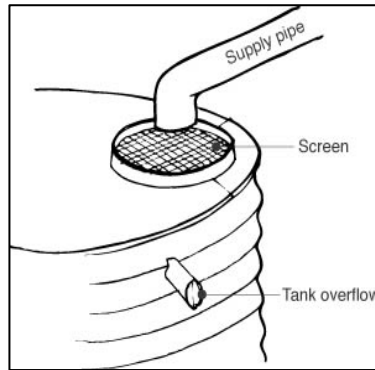
1. Water Cycle
2. Water Treatment
3. What I need to know about Wastewater
4. Wastewater Treatment
5. Water Pollution
6. Water Recycling
7. Water Efficiency
8. How to read your Water Meter
9. Water Meter Home Accuracy Check
10. Drip Water your Garden and save
11. Important things to know about drip watering
12. Water Audit for the Household
13. Rainwater Tanks
14. Pool Maintenance

Booklets available:

1. You Can Take Control
2. Create Your Own Water Wise Garden

Additional fact sheets from WaterWise Queensland can also be obtained through you Local Council.

ANOTHER
BUNDABERG REGIONAL
COUNCIL
PUBLIC AWARENESS INITIATIVE



Once installed, the tank should be covered and all inspection and access points tightly sealed. It is very important that the inlet and overflow each have a cover, strainer or screen to keep out leaves, debris, animal, bird droppings, and insects, especially mosquitos.

Roofs naturally will collect contaminants and airborne pollution, so installation of a first flush device to divert the first portion of roof run-off is also recommended.

THE ROOF CATCHMENT

Rainwater can be collected from most types of roofs, except those painted with lead-based paint (including primers) or coated with bitumen-based materials.

Chemically treated timbers or lead flashing should not be used in roof catchments and rainwater should not be collected from parts of the roofs incorporating flues from wood burners.

Overflows or discharge pipes from roof-mounted appliances such as evaporative air conditioners or hot water systems should not discharge onto the roof catchment or associated gutters.

MAINTAINING RAINWATER QUALITY

Ensuring the quality of rainwater collected requires sensible maintenance of your rainwater tank and roof catchment. The following simple steps can be taken to help improve rainwater quality.

- Regularly inspect and clean gutters, roof catchments and tank screens.
- Remove overhead branches.
- Consider installing gutter screens or guards.
- Ensure your tank does not become a mosquito-breeding site by preventing access and cleaning screens regularly.
- Examine your tank for accumulation of sludge every two to three years and remove by siphon or by emptying the tank.
- If you suspect tank water is contaminated it can be disinfected using 40 millilitres of liquid sodium hypochlorite (12.5 percent available chlorine) or seven grams of granular calcium hypochlorite per 1000 litres of water.