

Discounted Rain Barrels Available

A single inch of rain falling on 1,000 square feet of roof can yield nearly 600 gallons of water. The City of Valparaiso is encouraging residents to take advantage of this free water source and protect local waterways at the same time by using rain barrels. A rain barrel collects and stores rainwater from rooftops that would otherwise be lost to runoff and diverted to storm drains and streams, carrying any pollutants it picks up along the way to creeks and rivers.

“Using rainwater for your lawn, trees and flower garden is great for your plants and it’s free,” said Mingyan Zhou, of the City’s Engineering Department. Zhou serves as the Valparaiso’s Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Coordinator. To use the water for vegetable gardens, it is recommended to get the water tested first because some roof materials can leach out contaminants.

The City is working with Upcycle Products to provide residents with a reduced rate, starting at \$32.50 for 55-gallon rain barrels made from recycled food-grade materials. The barrels have a screw-on lid with one-inch holes, screen mesh to keep out debris and mosquitoes, an overflow male hose connection, a drain valve and a connection to attach hosing or additional barrels.

To learn more about the advantages of rain barrels and how to purchase your own at a discounted rate, visit tinyurl.com/ValpoRain, Valpo.us/MS4, or contact Mingyan Zhou at MS4@valpo.us.