



## THE GREAT AMERICAN RAIN BARREL

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Waltham, MA—January,2023**

## Record Flooding and Drought — Weather Whiplash Events

During the summer of 2022, all New England was experiencing drought conditions for the first time in more than seven years, with 40% in the extreme drought category. Boston which normally relies on 3.27 inches of rain in July, got only 0.62 inches, according to the National Weather Service. Some experts are calling droughts like this *flash droughts*.

Droughts create challenges for local water supply by reducing surface water storage and the recharge of groundwater supplies, including private wells. Rivers are running low and many streams have gone dry or become a series of disconnected puddles. Lawns are crunch, vegetation is shriveling, and groundwater levels are plummeting.

Severe droughts can make both rainfall and flash flooding more severe, creating *weather whiplash events*. The quick and heavy rainstorms that we have experienced this Fall make it impossible for the water to penetrate into the soil which has become rock hard. The rainwater ends up as runoff.

According to the EPA, rain barrels can save the average homeowner 1300 gallons of water. Rain barrels decrease runoff and allows water to seep back into the ground slowly, thereby reducing the amount of polluted water that runs into rivers and streams which ultimately conserves bodies of water.

Educating and encouraging local residents to use a rain barrel is one of the many ways homeowners can be part of the solution.

*“We encourage homeowners to use rain barrels because they help the city manage its water resources by reducing runoff, lowering municipal water demands, saving energy at treatment plants, and improving residential stormwater management. Rain barrels also help residents to reduce water bills. Both the community and the homeowner win on this one.” Sarah Kelly, Recycling Coordinator*

**Rain Barrels Can Help Conserve Water and Protect the Environment**



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- By reducing runoff and non-point source pollution. Rain barrels capture rainwater from the roof that would otherwise become runoff. Stormwater runoff picks up pollutants such as soil, lawn fertilizers, pesticides, trash, animal waste, road salts, chemicals, etc. and transports them to waterways. These pollutants impair waterways and can harm aquatic life and human health.
- Stormwater is precipitation, including both rain and snow, that flows across the land.
- During severe drought, rain barrels can provide an additional source of water
- Reduces erosion and flooding: Increased amounts of stormwater runoff increases erosion and flooding. Capturing some of the water will reduce velocity and peak flows.
- Saves drinking water resources and money. According to the US EPA, 30% of daily water use is used outdoors. Using the rain barrel's stored water around the landscape saves water resources and reduces the amount of water purchased from municipal sources.

To find out more about the barrels and to participate in The Great American Rain Barrel Program, please visit: [www.greatamericanrainbarrel.com/community/](http://www.greatamericanrainbarrel.com/community/) and select your town. Barrels are offered for \$89,. Barrels will be available for pick up on Saturday April 8<sup>th</sup> 9:00-11:00am at the Wlatham DPW 165 Lexington St. Deadline for purchase is March 26<sup>th</sup>, Midnight.

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### About the Great American Rain Barrel

The Great American Rain Barrel is a local food importing company that has been repurposing shipping drums into Rain Barrels since 1988. The Great American Rain Barrel Co. has been an approved vendor by the MASS DEP since 2010.

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