

# City of Santa Cruz Water Conservation RAIN BARREL PROGRAM



Not for drinking or indoor use



Prevent mosquito breeding



Prevent tipping and secure barrel lids

# Rain Barrel Uses and Safety

#### Safe Rain Barrel Use

- Maintain the screen to prevent mosquito breeding.
- Keep the lid sealed and child safe.
- Install strapping to prevent tipping.
- Do not concentrate flows onto erodible soil areas.
- Drain to a well vegetated, stable, non-eroding area.
- Direct overflow back to an under drain or safe dispersal area.
- Use caution when watering vegetables and other edibles.

## **Placing Your Rain Barrels**

- Consider the weight. A full 50 gallon rain barrel is 424 pounds.
- Place barrels at least 5' from Public Right of Way (ROW).
- Place barrels on a flat, well drained area, away from erodible soil areas.
- Place barrels on a stable base, such as on blocks, bricks, pea gravel, sand, or a level concrete surface.
- For slopes averaging 3:1 or gentler (horizontal distance to vertical rise), place the barrel at least 5' away from the edge of a natural break in slope (without a retaining wall).
- For steeper slopes, use retaining wall and terracing built with structural elements such as blocks as needed to create a flat, stable area. Consult with an engineer for your specific site requirements.

### **Maintenance and Cleaning**

- Keep your rain barrels clean of debris.
- Maintain the screens to prevent mosquito breeding.
- Clean your rain barrels yearly with non-toxic cleaner, such as vinegar.

#### **Local Information and Resources**

Santa Cruz County Health Services – Mosquito Prevention tips <a href="http://www.santacruzhealth.org/fightthebite/index.htm">http://www.santacruzhealth.org/fightthebite/index.htm</a>