

April 2003

Environmental



NCCE – Onslow County Center
Onslow County Multipurpose
Complex
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Jacksonville, NC 28540
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<http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/onslow>

Yippee! Spring at last!!!!

Although southeastern North Carolina hasn't had anywhere near the bad weather that has plagued other areas of the US this winter, it is still nice to have the days getting longer, the trees beginning to flower and leaf, the birds chattering like mad, and all the other signs of spring. Of course, it's also time to get outside and take a good look around your yard!

What's going on in YOUR yard? Have you been thinking of adding a garden? What type? Herb? Butterfly? Annuals? Perennials? Shade? Moisture lovers or those that can tolerate damp areas?

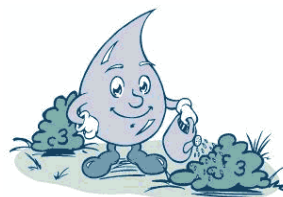
Don't be intimidated by all the choices; instead, consider it a benefit: No matter what type of area it is, there is likely SOMETHING that will do well there! Whether neatly manicured or left wild-looking, just be sure to group plants according to their basic needs: light, water, and nutrients. For ease of care, it's also a good idea to plant the high-water demand plants in a naturally damp area or close to the water supply (no sense in dragging the hose all around!).

To save on potable water usage AND help reduce stormwater runoff, consider adding a cistern or rain barrel to your yard. These are easily adapted to homes with gutters and downspouts. The water can also be used to replenish decorative ponds.

Build your own rain barrel!

Pre-made rain barrels and cisterns can be purchased from numerous sources; however, you can also make your own:

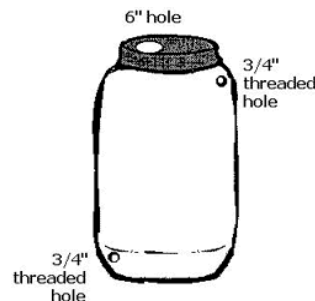
- Use water wisely by watering your garden with free water collected from your roof.



- Rain water is great for plants.

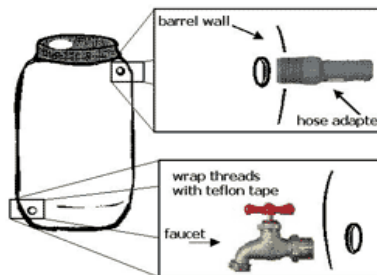
Be sure to use a food grade quality recycled barrel (55-gallons is a common size). Most recycled barrels need to be cleaned before first use.

- Connect a soaker hose to your barrel. This is a convenient way to make use of the collected water.



- Install an overflow at the top. This is an important feature. A full barrel has the potential to spill additional water over the top and may cause localized erosion.

Direct the overflow line to an area where the water will be beneficial.

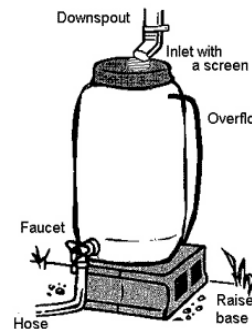


- Do not use collected water for drinking, cooking or bathing.

- Keep the lid secure so children or animals cannot fall into the barrel.

- Elevate the rain barrel slightly to make access to the spigot easier.

- The screened louver vent will prevent mosquitoes from breeding in your barrel.



Source: <http://www.cityofbremerton.com/PAGES/rainbarrel.html>

Planters and foliage placed around the rain barrels will help them blend in with the rest of the landscape. The barrels can also be placed in the ground; however, a sump pump would be needed to access the water, and a high watertable could cause the barrels to pop out of the ground.

Pesticide collection day: Onslow

The NC Department of Agriculture has arranged a pesticide collection day for April 16, 2003 at the Onslow County Multipurpose Complex, 4024 Richlands Hwy., Jacksonville from 10 am – 2 pm. Items brought in MUST be labeled products in ORIGINAL CONTAINERS. This event is for pesticides, fungicides, and herbicides; NOT for paint, paint thinners, and associated materials. If you have any questions concerning what you want to bring in, contact Mark Rinehardt or Jeff Morton at 910-455-5873.

Contact your local Cooperative Extension offices to learn if there is a pesticide collection day scheduled for your area.

Earth Day: April 22, 2003

Are you planning anything special for Earth Day? You can list your event on the Internet at <http://www.earthday.net/signup/event.asp>.

Visit Earth Day Network's 2003 "Water for Life" campaign at:
<http://www.earthday.net/goals/water/earthday.asp>

For more information on the "Water for Life" toolkit, email: olaughlin@earthday.net

Stormwater BMP Training

A Stormwater BMP Training workshop will be held on April 22 & 23 at the NC Cooperative Extension offices in New Hanover County (6206 Oleander Dr.). Selected topics include wet ponds, stormwater wetlands, bio-retention areas, rain gardens, sand filters, and a review of NPDES phase I and phase II. Professional Engineers earn 10 PDHs for completion of the workshop. Landscape Architects and Planners may appeal to their respective board to obtain professional education credits. To register or for further information, contact Gretchen Steelman (919-515-6780) or email her at:

gusteelm@unity.ncsu.edu

Website information:

<http://www.bae.ncsu.edu/programs/extension/workshops/stormwater-wilm/index.html>

Constructed Wetlands Workshop

The *Fourth National Workshop on Constructed Wetlands/BMPs for Nutrient Reduction and Coastal Water Protection* will be held at the Riverfront Hilton, Wilmington, NC on June 23-25. Contact Dr. Frank Humenik (919-515-6767) for further information.

Website information and online registration:

http://www.cals.ncsu.edu/waste_mgt/workshop.htm

Sincerely,

Diana M.C. Rashash
Extension Area Specialized Agent
Natural Resources-Environmental Education



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