



April 1, 2015

Subject: HB 15-1259, Residential Rain Barrels

Dear Senator Michael Merrifield, michael.merrifield.senate@state.co.us
Representative Daneya Esgar, daneya.esgar.house@state.co.us
Representative Jessie Danielson, jessie.danielson.house@state.co.us

On behalf of the American Rainwater Catchment Systems Association, congratulations for the Colorado House passing this bill; ARCSEA hopes that the Senate also passes it at a wide margin and with bipartisan support. Our national, rainwater-harvesting organization would like to formally add its name to supporters of this legislation.

The mission of ARCSEA is to promote sustainable rainwater harvesting practices to help solve potable, non-potable, stormwater and energy challenges throughout the world. ARCSEA is the national leader in fostering the training and installation of rain harvesting systems, in disseminating educational programs, and in developing standards and codes for the safe use of harvested rainwater.

ARCSEA strongly supports the Colorado legislation, HB15-1259, Residential Rain Barrels, which aims to help Colorado citizens and their communities to better prepare for more sustainable water management practices at a time of climate impact uncertainty, vis-à-vis reliable rainfall, snowpack and melt runoff, on water resources. The bill allowing residential use of up to two rain barrels with a combined rainwater storage capacity of up to 110 gallons for outdoor irrigation use, replacing potable water, is an outstanding first step in allowing citizens pro-active management of their water use and supplies which can reduce stress on municipal water suppliers and our limited water supply.

By harvesting rainwater from roofs, not only does the property owner obtain an onsite water resource for irrigation, rain harvesting has secondary benefits:

- Reduces onsite flooding, such as keeping water out of basements;
- Reduces water pollution by keeping this water onsite for use instead of flowing offsite with potential pollutions into surface water bodies;
- Builds greater water awareness, and pro-active management and use in your constituents, increasing knowledge and understanding about sustainable water management and use, which can only help Coloradans deal with the real water challenges facing your state, as well as citizens in the surrounding western states. This onsite harvesting strategy helps folks visualize water and how it cycles

- through the landscape, including how much rain one can harvest from roofs, how much landscapes use, and how much potable water can be reduced; and
- Engage the public in ways to become more water self-reliant.

ARCOSA staff and members often field questions about water quality, safety and vector control. Through its members' expertise - years of practice and installations, equipment design and training - we at ARCOSA can unequivocally say that rainwater harvesting is a safe practice with proper installation and regular maintenance. When following these proper protocols, the rainwater is of high quality and safe to use, avoids vector issues, keeps out animals, and is sealed and secured to prevent accidental falling in or systems failing. A recently published national standard developed largely by ARCOSA members - ARCOSA/ASPE/ANSI Standard 63 - details safe design and installation rainwater harvesting protocols. A similar standard for stormwater is imminent.

Rainwater harvesting has many virtues:

- Rainwater is an underutilized economic resource that should be converted into jobs;
- Rainwater harvesting has been practiced widely throughout the world for millennia to meet potable and non-potable needs;
- Harvesting rainwater makes good use of what could otherwise become polluting stormwater;

Given these benefits, ARCOSA urges the Colorado Senate to pass HB 15-1259 to enable Colorado citizens to begin harnessing the potential of rainwater harvesting.

I would welcome a conversation if you have any questions.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Crawford". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

David Crawford, President
American Rainwater Catchment Systems Association

CC: Drew Beckwith, Western Resources Advocates
Theresa Conley, Conservation Colorado