Rainwater Harvesting Facts

- The worldwide demand for clean water exceeds the supply, and the gap is growing. Harvested rainwater can help fill the gap.
- Harvested rain reduces stormwater runoff.
- Rainwater from a well-designed, installed and maintained system delivers potable water that exceeds the EPA drinking water standards.
- Decentralized rainwater harvesting relieves aging centralized water infrastructure by decreasing demand.
- Rainwater’s low mineral content can reduce appliance and fixture maintenance costs.
- Rainwater is superior to chlorinated water for horticulture.
- Rainwater is a valuable industrial resource.
- One inch of rain collected from a 1,000-sq. ft. roof is over 600 gallons.
- Annual rainfall of 10 inches falling on a 10,000-sq.ft. roof yields over 60,000 gallons. Thirty inches per year yields over 180,000 gallons.

ARCSA History

The American Rainwater Catchment Systems Association was founded in 1994 by a small group of visionaries who recognized the great potential of reviving the ancient practice of rainwater harvesting. The 2003 ARCSA conference in Seattle was the first of now-annual gatherings that foster common interests, develop standards and codes, discuss regulations, facilitate legislation, evaluate obstacles, and present opportunities to advance this worthy cause.

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The mission of the American Rainwater Catchment Systems Association is to promote sustainable rainwater harvesting practices to help solve potable, non-potable, stormwater and energy challenges throughout the world. Join us to help educate decision makers, regulators, tradesmen, students, corporate leaders and homeowners about the benefits of fully utilizing this untapped resource.

School, Makali, Sierra Leone. 20,000-liter rainwater storage for 90-inch annual rainfall. www.RainBank.info; submitted by Ken Blair.

Carpenter Hill Elementary School, Buda, TX. 106,000 gallons of rainwater storage; photo by HarveyJack, whyo.

Residential garden, Atlanta, GA. 3,150 gallons of rainwater with battery-powered pump supplies 1,800-sq. ft. garden. www.therainsaver.com; submitted by Steve Williams.

Bullitt Center, Seattle, WA. The greenest commercial building in the world, with a 56,000-gallon cistern designed for potable use. www.bullittcenter.org; credit Miller Hull Partnership.


Austin, TX. Elegant fence is also an aqueduct, carrying rainwater overhead to cistern. www.loop-d.net, submitted by Christy Seals.