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DEP Joins with Local Elected Officials to Kick Off 2018 Rain Barrel Giveaway Program



Distribution events will be held for homeowners in Brooklyn, Queens, and Staten Island

Rain Barrels Collect Precipitation, Reduce Water Bills and Improve Health of Local Waterways

Photos of 2017 Events are Available on [DEP's Flickr Page](#)

The New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) on Saturday will join with State Senator Roxanne Persaud, Council Member I. Daneek Miller, Assembly Member Alicia Hyndman, State Senator Leroy Comrie, and Council Member Debi Rose to kick off the 2018 Rain Barrel Giveaway Program.

Distribution events will be held at three separate locations for homeowners in Brooklyn, Queens, and Staten Island. The 60-gallon rain barrels are easy to install and connect directly to a property owner's downspout to capture and store the stormwater that falls on the rooftop. The water collected in the rain barrel can then be used to water lawns and gardens, or for other outdoor chores. Rain barrels can help reduce a homeowner's water bill as watering lawns and gardens can account for up to 40 percent of an average household's water use during the summer months. They also help to reduce the amount of stormwater that enters the City's sewer system, which helps to protect the health of numerous local waterways. Last year, DEP distributed approximately 7,500 rain barrels to New York City homeowners.

"For homeowners looking to save both water and money, rain barrels offer an environmentally-friendly way to do both while also promoting sustainability and conservation," said **DEP Commissioner Vincent Sapienza**. "Additionally, collecting the stormwater that falls on your home's roof during rain events eases the pressure placed on the city's sewer infrastructure, thereby reducing localized street flooding and improving the health of numerous local waterways. I'd like to

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thank all of our participating elected officials for partnering with DEP on these giveaway events.”

“Without water we cannot live; we must take steps to protect water and the environment by practicing conservation. I proud to continue to collaborate with DEP’s Rain Barrel Giveaway Program,” said **State Senator Roxanne Persaud**. “This initiative is part of New York City’s Green Infrastructure Plan, this mean the constituents in the 19th senatorial district are actively involved in the conserving and preserving water. I would like to do all I can to expand the Rain Barrel Giveaway Program.”

“The value of the Rain Barrel Giveaway Program cannot be overstated to Southeast Queens homeowners who typically suffer costly flood damage during heavy rain storms,” said **Council Member I. Daneek Miller**. “This popular tool is recognized by my constituents for both its mitigation and water conservation benefits, which in turn help them save money. I thank Department of Environmental Protection Acting Commissioner Sapienza for inviting me to co-sponsor the kickoff for this season’s distribution.”

“The Rain Barrel Giveaway is great community program highlighting simple ways to make our homes more sustainable,” said **Assemblywoman Alicia Hyndman**. “These environmental initiatives help homeowners save money on their water bills and create a greener Southeast Queens.”

“I commend Commissioner Sapienza for partnering with local elected leaders to continue the rain barrel program,” said **Senator Leroy Comrie**. “Rain barrels provide tremendous help to our environment by encouraging gardening, conserving water, and reducing erosion. With Earth Day coming up, I encourage everyone to practice environmental stewardship by participating in a rain barrel giveaway this spring.”

“Using a rain barrel to capture excess storm water can not only cut down your water bill, but also protect our waterways from excess stormwater,” said **Councilwoman Debi Rose**. “I’m happy to make these available to my constituents every spring, and I encourage my constituents to take advantage of this free opportunity this weekend.”

Saturday’s events will be held at the following locations:

- 1222 East 96th St, Canarsie, Brooklyn
- Roy Wilkins Park, 177-01 Baisley Blvd., St. Albans, Queens
- Snug Harbor Cultural Center, 1000 Richmond Terrace, Livingston, Staten Island

DEP’s Rain Barrel Giveaway Program is part of New York City’s Green Infrastructure Plan that aims to capture stormwater before it can ever enter the sewer system and thereby reduce combined sewer overflows into local waterways. DEP has committed to invest \$2.4 billion in green infrastructure projects as well as other source controls, such as rain barrels, to significantly reduce combined sewer overflows by 2030.

The rain barrel program also builds upon DEP’s efforts to conserve water as part of a \$1 billion initiative to ensure clean, reliable, and safe drinking water for more than nine million New Yorkers for decades to come. As part of this initiative, DEP has begun a project to repair leaks in the Delaware Aqueduct that supplies roughly half of the city’s daily drinking water. In order to complete these repairs to the Aqueduct, the tunnel must be temporarily shut down in 2022. Ahead of the planned shutdown, DEP aims to reduce citywide water consumption by five percent.

In addition to encouraging homeowners to conserve water, DEP is installing activation buttons on spray showers at 400 playgrounds around the city that will save 1.5 million gallons of water a day during the summer months. Work is also underway to install new, high efficiency fixtures in the bathrooms of 500 City schools to reduce water consumption by nearly 4 million gallons each school day.

And, DEP has partnered with hotels, restaurants and hospitals across the city to reduce water use at these facilities by five percent annually.

Installation of rain barrels is easy and they require little maintenance. Each homeowner who received a rain barrel on Saturday was provided with an installation kit and instructions. Rain barrels should only be used for non-potable purposes, such as gardening, and must be disconnected from the downspout during the winter months to avoid freezing.

DEP manages New York City's water supply, providing approximately 1 billion gallons of high quality drinking water each day to more than 9 million residents, including 8.5 million in New York City. The water is delivered from a watershed that extends more than 125 miles from the city, comprising 19 reservoirs and three controlled lakes. Approximately 7,000 miles of water mains, tunnels and aqueducts bring water to homes and businesses throughout the five boroughs, and 7,500 miles of sewer lines and 96 pump stations take wastewater to 14 in-city treatment plants. DEP has nearly 6,000 employees, including almost 1,000 in the upstate watershed. In addition, DEP has a robust capital program, with a planned \$18.9 billion in investments over the next 10 years that will create up to 3,000 construction-related jobs per year. For more information, visit nyc.gov/dep, like us on [Facebook](#), or follow us on [Twitter](#).

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