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DEP Joins State Senator Andrew Lanza, Council Member Joe Borelli, Borough President James Oddo, and Assemblyman Ron Castorina to Distribute Rain Barrels to Homeowners in Staten Island



Rain Barrels Collect Precipitation, Reduce Residential Water Bills and Help to Protect the Health of Numerous Local Waterways, including Lemon Creek, Mill Creek, Arbutus Creek, Richmond Creek, the Arthur Kill, Great Kills Harbor and Prince's Bay

Photos of the Event are Available on [DEP's Flickr Page](#)

The New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) on Saturday joined State Senator Andrew Lanza, Council Member Joe Borelli, Borough President James Oddo, and Assemblyman Ron Castorina, Jr., to distribute rain barrels to approximately 320 homeowners on the South Shore of 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, including Lemon Creek, Mill Creek, Arbutus Creek, Richmond Creek, the Arthur Kill, Great Kills Harbor and Prince's Bay. Last year, DEP distributed a record-setting 11,111 rain barrels to New York City homeowners. Saturday's event was held at Blue Heron Park in Annadale and the rain barrels were provided free of charge.

"Rain barrels are an environmentally-friendly way to promote sustainability while

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also allowing homeowners to save both water and money,” said **DEP Acting 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, which reduces street flooding and helps improve the health of numerous Staten Island waterways. I’d like to thank State Senator Andrew Lanza, Council Member Joe Borelli, Borough President James Oddo, and Assemblyman Ron Castorina, Jr., for partnering with DEP on this giveaway event.”

“Using barrels to capture rainwater creates a more sustainable city by alleviating the burden that excess storm runoff has on our sewer system, decreasing floods and reducing the demand on drinking water during hot summer days,” said **State Senator Andrew Lanza**. “Further, since most households devote almost 40% of their water to their lawns and gardens, rain barrels save residents money by allowing them to store rainwater for future use outdoors. I appreciate the shared effort from DEP, Borough President James Oddo, Assembly Member Ron Castorina, Jr., and Council Member Joe Borelli that made this event a success.”

“Our annual rain barrel giveaway at Blue Heron Park is always popular with constituents and over the last few years we’ve been able to distribute nearly 1,000 rain barrels to south shore residents free of charge. I thank Commissioner Sapienza and the Department of Environmental Protection for giving us this opportunity to promote water conservation and sustainability practices in our community,” said **Council Member Joe Borelli**.

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 \$20.7 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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