

# WaterWatch



## Legalities of Harvesting Rainwater

Since 2010, harvesting small amounts of rainwater has been legal in the state of Utah. Before this time, someone wanting to collect rainwater on their property had to file for a water right with the State of Utah Department of Water Resources. This was costly and unattainable for most households.

Senate Bill 32 spells out the limitations and the process involved in legally capturing rainwater for irrigation. A property owner may capture water above ground in covered containers or below ground in an underground collection basin.

Above ground collection is limited to two containers no larger than 100 gallons each. Below ground, water can be collected in a single tank that is no larger than 2,500 gallons.

In addition to setting up the collection system, homeowners are asked to register their system with the state. You can do this at <http://waterrights.utah.gov/forms/rainwater.asp>. You will be asked to provide the following information: name, telephone, address, storage

size and email address. This allows you to print a registration certificate to keep for your records. The process is quick and free.

Before installing a collection system, you may want to consider the costs and benefits. A 100-gallon rain barrel may cost you anywhere from \$170-250. Currently, the City's usage charge for water is \$0.58 per 1,000 gallons. At this rate, you would have to fill your 100-gallon rain barrel 3,000 times to recoup your costs. That would take more than ten years to pay for itself for a home with a roof area of 2,000 square feet.



## Dumpster Etiquette

Many businesses and other organizations in the City use dumpsters to control their solid waste disposal. These dumpsters can be sources of pollution if not properly maintained. If rain is allowed to flow through a dumpster, it can be a source of bacteria and other contaminants that can later be discharged into stormwater flows.

There are several common issues that should be addressed regularly to prevent pollution. First, dumpsters should be in good repair. Broken lids can allow water to flow through. Dumpster plugs should also be checked. If your dumpster has a broken lid or is missing a drain plug, contact your waste removal contractor to request that they repair or replace the dumpster.

Second, the area around a dumpster can often become littered with debris of any type. Cleaning up the area around the dumpster should be a regular chore.

Third, dumpsters should be surrounded by barriers that limit access. These barriers should also protect the dumpster from impacts. It is common to see fences and bollards placed

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*If you wouldn't drink it, don't dump it!*

**Stormwater Hotline:**

**801-229-7577**

City of Orem Public Works

1450 W 550 North

Orem, UT 84057

801-229-7500

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around dumpsters to limit potential damage.

Fourth, overfilling must be addressed by dumpster owners is overfilling. This results in a pathway for water to flow through and they also result in costly overage fees. Businesses rent dumpsters and pay for them based on the volume of litter in the dumpster. Every time a dumpster is filled to the point that the lids won't close, the business is charged extra.

Fifth, businesses should limit access by keeping gates closed and keeping lids down. They may opt to lock their dumpsters. Unfortunately, some people through

ignorance or through disregard of others' property use business dumpsters for their own personal use. If you have a large item that does not fit in your garbage can, take care of it yourself by taking it to the North Pointe Solid Waste facility at 2000 West 200 South in Lindon. If you can't do that, check with the business before you put your old mattress or furniture in their dumpster.



## What Do I Do with Old Paint?

So you finished a home improvement project and you have some leftover paint. You have an inch left in a pint can and 3/4 of a gallon left in another. What should you do with it?

Here are four suggestions:

1. Donate usable amounts to Habitat for Humanity. There is ReStore located at 340 S Orem Blvd. They will also accept other leftover building supplies as well as fixtures and furniture.
2. Save the paint for the next Household Hazardous Waste collection day. The Utah County Health Department sponsors



these events annually, usually in April. Visit their website for details (<http://www.utahcountyonline.org/Dept/Health/hhw>).

3. Purchase a paint hardener. This is a product available at home improvement stores. Add this to your leftover paint and it will dry out and harden. At this point, you can throw the dry paint out with your regular garbage.
4. For a very small amount of paint, you may choose to simply leave the can open in a well ventilated area until the paint dries.