

# RIDEAU VALLEY CONSERVATION FOUNDATION NEWS RELEASE

## RAINBARRELEST WATERSHED IN ONTARIO

October 16, 2013 — Rainbarrels are beautiful because they...

- store and distribute clean, chemical-free water at no cost
- reduce erosion and sediment loading in local streams/lakes by reducing runoff from your property
- promote infiltration of water into the ground to replenish our groundwater supply
- decrease your water bill if your drinking water is metered

It only makes sense to save and use what Mother Nature gives us rather than making the expensive municipal drinking water system or your private well work hard to produce water for gardening.

### **CAPTURING RAINWATER**

In the past two years, the Rideau Valley Conservation Foundation and our local partners have sold 870 barrels at four partnered sales in the watershed. The Foundation and the local partners each earned some money for community activities. In addition to that, we know that each barrel captures 220 L of rainwater per storm event which is then used by the householder in the garden (infiltrating the water into the ground). During each storm event, our 870 barrels capture about 191,000 L of rainwater and stop it from running directly into the surrounding watercourses (a good thing).

If we assume six storms per growing season, it means that a total of 1.1 million L of rainwater is diverted from a nasty career of direct runoff into a much more honorable role of producing flowers, vegetables and kitchen herbs. If we further add the hundreds of other rain barrels sold by other groups in the Rideau Valley, it is reasonable to imagine literally millions more litres of potentially damaging runoff being diverted from the Rideau system for use in beautiful gardens every year. This is indeed a very good thing.

### **WINTERIZING YOUR RAINBARREL**

Now that Thanksgiving's past and the outdoor furniture is cleaned up (using rainbarrel water) and safely tucked away for another season, it's time to "winterize" your trusty old rain barrel for longer life and better performance in four easy steps:

- disconnect the eavestrough downspout from the barrel (don't forget to reconnect a downspout extension to funnel water away from house foundations)
- empty and rinse the rain barrel
- keep the screen, the valves and the hose together in one box
- store the barrel upside down either outside or in your garage or basement.

If you don't have a rainbarrel yet, especially at the cottage, you can pick them up very inexpensively at one of the Conservation Foundation's rain barrel sales in late spring 2014. Get on our email list and watch your inbox for upcoming dates, locations and times.

We're working hard to make the Rideau Valley the rainbarrelest watershed in all of Ontario! Just one more step in the movement to make our property and our families more resilient in the face of climate change, uncertain weather and the water conservation challenges ahead.

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