



About Upcycle Products

Q: Why choose an Upcycle rain barrel?

A: The following features help this program support a sustainable product that conserves water and protects local water sources:

- “Upcycled” product made in the USA
- Composed of high quality, food-grade HDPE
- Designed for ease of use w/multiple connections
- Preassembled with brand new fittings
- Gravity-fed, no pump required
- Multiple rain barrels may be linked together
- Built in screen keeps out debris and mosquitos

Q: Does Upcycle offer a warranty for the rain barrels?

A: Yes, the rain barrels come with a one-year warranty on the material and workmanship.

Q: What does the term "Upcycle" mean?

A: Upcycle means to repurpose a discarded object to create a product of higher quality or value than the original.

Q: Are these barrels brand new?

A: No, Upcycle uses food-quality HDPE barrels that were previously used to ship food to the US from trade partners. The barrels may have scuff marks from shipping and handling, but each barrel is inspected to ensure the structural integrity of the barrel is not compromised. The barrels are then cleaned and outfitted with brand new fittings and screens. Although the barrel interior is cleaned with a pH-neutral soap, there may still be residual odors of the commodities originally shipped in the barrels, such as olives and pickles. The odors will dissipate, but until then, you may crave pizza when you're around your new rain barrel!

Ordering

Q: Do I need to be a resident to place an order?

A: No, it does not matter where you live in the OKC metro. You may place your order with any of the participating municipalities depending on which date(s) and pick-up location is more convenient for you.

Q: How do I purchase an item(s)?

A: You may order online with a debit/credit card, or include a check with a mail-in order form and mail it to Upcycle Products at P.O. Box 315, Channahon, IL 60410.

Q: Why does Upcycle request my shipping address during online checkout? Don't I have to pick up my purchase during the event?

A: Providing your shipping address to Upcycle is part of the normal ordering process when using a credit card online. Your order will not be shipped to your home. You will be required to pick it up during the event.

Q: Why does Upcycle request a phone number on the main order page?

A: Upcycle requests a phone number to provide event organizers a quick contact method should a resident neglect to pick up their order. The provided phone number will only be used to arrange a new pick-up time and will not be shared or used for any other purpose.

Q: Who do I call if I'm having trouble placing my order?

A: Please call Richard Fielding with Upcycle Products at (815) 735-9583.

Q: Can my order be shipped directly to me?

A: No, all orders must be picked up during your chosen event.

Q: Can I reserve a rain barrel online and pay for it during the event?

A: No, all products must be purchased before the event.

Picking Up Your Rain Barrel

Q: What if I am not able to pick up my order the day(s) of my chosen event?

A: We cannot guarantee holding your items for a later pick-up. You may have a friend or neighbor pick up your order for you as long as they have your name and order receipt.

Q: What can I do if I miss the order deadlines?

A: Multiple municipalities are participating in this regional event and you may place an order through one of their programs; however, you will be required to pick up your order at their facility during their scheduled event. Visit Upcycle's webpage to find information on the other municipal events.

Q: Will the rain barrel fit in my car? What are the dimensions of the rain barrel?

A: Yes, most 4-door sedans will be able to accommodate the rain barrel in either the back seat or front passenger seat. There may be some exceptions depending on the make and model of the car. The rain barrels are 55-gal, 38" H x 22" D.

Q: Will there be extra rain barrels available for purchase the day of the event?

A: No, each municipality will only receive products that were pre-ordered. No additional barrels or accessory items will be available during the event for purchase or exchange.

Rain Barrel Placement & Installation

Q: Does my Homeowner's Association (HOA) allow rain barrels?

A: COSWA recommends you check your HOA's Covenants and Bylaws for restrictions on placement, color, and design of any rain barrel before purchasing.

Q: How do I install my rain barrel?

A: Your Upcycle rain barrel comes with all the components needed to start collecting rainwater. Read the setup instructions prior to installation. Don't forget to attach a garden hose to the overflow fitting in the top section of the barrel so that when the barrel is full, the overflow can be diverted away from the foundation of your house and keep the barrel's water level below the screen.

Q: Where is the best place to put my rain barrel?

A: Choose a downspout on your house that is closest to the plants you water the most. If you want to put your rain barrel around the corner from where the gutter is located, Upcycle also offers flex hoses that will connect to your downspout and then wrap around the corner to direct the water into the barrel. If you choose to set up a drip irrigation hose, remember that Upcycle's rain barrels operate by gravity so be sure you install the barrel so the water can run downhill.

Q: Do I need to elevate my rain barrel?

A: Elevating your rain barrel isn't required for it to function; however, these barrels rely on gravity to drain the stored water, so extra height will help increase the head pressure. For every foot of height you add to your rain barrel stand, you'll gain 0.43 psi of head pressure. From a practical standpoint, the extra height will also make it easier to access the spigot at the base of the barrel as well. If you do choose to elevate your rain barrel, be sure to install on a solid, level foundation that will support ~600 lbs.

Q: My home does not have a gutter system. Can I still use a rain barrel?

A: Yes! You can still reap the benefits of owning a rain barrel without gutters. Walk around your home during a rain event and observe where rain water drips from your roof line. Remember the area where you see the most drainage and place your rain barrel under that spot. Adding a "rain chain" under the roof crease in that location will help to divert the rain directly into your rain barrel.

Q: Will COSWA assist with the installation of my new rain barrel?

A: No, each homeowner will be responsible for installing their new rain barrel.

Q: What do I need to know about maintaining my rain barrel?

A: Upcycle's rain barrels require very little maintenance. Keep the lid locked and the screen clear of debris. If the stored water begins to develop a foul smell, you may want to drain and clean the inside with a brush and fresh water. To clean the screen, simply remove the lid, carefully lift the dirty screen out and clean. Place the screen back onto the lid and screw back into place. If your screen is damaged, use the existing screen as a template and cut yourself a new one using a similar material which may be available at your local hardware store.

Q: How do I winterize my rain barrel?

A: You do not need to remove the fittings for winter. Upcycle uses plastic fittings because brass and steel do not interface well with plastic barrels. These items expand and contract at a different rate, which is the major cause of other manufacturer's barrels leaking in a short period of time. The only thing you need to do to prepare for the winter season is to drain all the water out of the barrel, remove all hoses and the linking fitting cap, and open the ball valve. Winterizing your rain barrel is very important in order to maintain the warranty. If the barrel fills with water and freezes, the barrel will crack and void Upcycle's one year warranty.

Q: What about mosquitos?

A: Upcycle's rain barrels are equipped with a mosquito-proof screen that prevents mosquitos from entering the top of the barrel. If a garden hose is properly attached to the overflow fitting to keep the water level below the screen, and the supplied components are installed in their proper positions, you will not have to worry about mosquitos.

Q: What are effective ways to prevent algae/mold growth in rain barrels?

A: Despite the appearance and scent, algae found in rain barrels are typically not harmful and the added nutrients may be beneficial to your soil and plants. However, here are a few options homeowners may use to help prevent algae growth in rain barrels:

- Upcycle rain barrels are made of food-grade HDPE that have natural UV inhibitors that will prevent sunlight from entering the barrel and encouraging algae growth.
- The simplest method is to regularly use and/or drain your barrel. Stagnant water promotes algal growth.
- Algae growth depends on sunlight, so install your rain barrel on the side of your home that receives the least amount of sun.
- In addition to sunlight, algae also needs nutrients to grow so keeping your home's gutters free of leaves and debris will cut off the nutrient supply to the rain barrel.
- Vinegar or bleach may be used in small amounts to stifle algae growth. Add 1 cup of vinegar to a full rain barrel or add 1/8 tsp of regular, unscented, liquid household bleach for each gallon of water in the rain barrel, stir, and let it stand for a day or two before using the water.
- Clean your rain barrel and attachments once per year with an eco-friendly cleansing agent.

Q: What if I do not use all of the stored rainwater after a storm?

A: If you are having trouble using your rainwater, you may attach a hose to your barrel's ball valve and extend it to your planting bed for drip irrigation. We recommend you manually open up the holes on the hose with a knife or scissors after you decide where you want the water to drip out. Then through trial-and-error, you can determine to what degree the ball valve should be left open to provide enough pressure in the hose.