

HARVESTED RAINWATER SYSTEMS

Harvested rainwater systems collect rainwater from specially treated roof surfaces and sends it through a series of diverters (to flush-out larger contaminants) and treatment/disinfection processes (to purify the water), then into an approved tank (cistern) from which the water can be drawn when needed. The treated water should be tested every six months by an analytical testing lab to be sure there are no harmful contaminants. Harvested rainwater used only for irrigation purposes does not require treatment as elaborate as what is needed for water intended for use in drinking, bathing, and laundering.

The City of Beaverton has adopted the 2008 Oregon State Plumbing Code Appendix M for Harvested Rainwater Systems. While the standards are strict, they are intended to provide an opportunity for citizens to safely collect and re-use rainwater for drinking, bathing, laundering, and irrigation applications.

Nothing is intended to regulate the collection of rainwater into buckets or barrels as many people do for small scale use in gardening. The harvested rainwater regulations are intended to be used when the system is collecting rainwater for use as potable (drinking) water, in large quantities (5000 gallons or more), or where the system is connected to a building's plumbing system.

The "Harvested Rainwater" system shall meet the requirements of Appendix M of the 2008 Oregon State plumbing Code, which can be found on the Web at:

www.cbs.state.or.us/external/bcd/programs/plumbing/2008_opsc/Appendices/Appendix_M.pdf

Or you can contact the City's Building Division at (503) 526-2403 for more information.

The Appendix and corresponding regulations pertain to systems that collect rainwater for use in a potable (drinking) water system and have a lot of requirements for the safety of the users. Please also see alternatives for systems that are used only for landscape irrigation. The alternatives are less stringent because the harvested rainwater is not intended for human consumption.

Alternative to Appendix M for Irrigation Purposes Only

The stringent regulations for rainwater harvesting systems are intended to protect users from health and safety hazards where the water is to be used for potable (drinking) water, including uses for bathing or laundering. The potential for health and safety hazards where the rainwater is to be used only for landscape irrigation is minimal and, therefore, all of the regulations in Appendix M are not necessary. As authorized under Section 106 of the Building Division Administrative Policy Section 105, an alternate method is approved as follows:

Rainwater Harvesting Systems used only for landscape irrigation are required to meet the requirements of Appendix "M" except for Sections:

- M1.1 to M1.2
- M4.1 to M4.5
- M9.2 to M9.6

Rainwater Harvesting Systems used only for landscape irrigation are also required to meet the following:

- There shall be no connections to the building's plumbing system.
- All hose bibs or outlets giving access to the rainwater shall be clearly marked with a permanent sign in one-inch block letters "CAUTION NON-POTABLE WATER, DO NOT DRINK".