



**IPSWICH RIVER  
WATERSHED  
ASSOCIATION**

*Connecting  
Communities from  
Source to Sea*

The Ipswich River Watershed serves as the voice of the Ipswich River. Through outreach, education, monitoring, and advocacy, we seek to connect the people, communities, and ecosystems integral to a healthy watershed.

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# Keeping Water Local at Riverbend

## Demonstration Project #5: *Rainwater Harvesting*

One way to reduce runoff is to harvest the water from roofs and other surfaces, and store it for later use. This approach has been used widely throughout history, and is just as applicable today to keep water local, and save it for a non-rainy day. Homescale storage containers can be as simple as a rain barrel attached to a drainspout, or as complex as an engineered cistern with pumps. The storage options range from 50 gallons to tens of thousands of gallons.

A roof is a miniature watershed – the area on which rain falls and then flows to an outlet “stream” into the collection device. The larger the collection area is, the greater is the potential to capture and store this water. Even a relatively small roof can generate sufficient water to make harvesting it worthwhile. A one-inch rainfall on 1000 square foot area of roof, directed to a roof drain, generates 623 gallons of water.

As our project calls for several drainage demonstrations including a partial green roof, we decided to use a medium scale rainwater harvesting device that is larger than a rain barrel and includes a pump to allow it to be used more effectively for watering, but smaller than many rainwater storage cisterns and devices. Rainwater Recovery Inc. provided a 200-gallon storage device, which is also fitted with a filter to screen out debris that may be washed off the roof, as well as a pump, which allows it to be used in the same way as a typical outdoor water faucet on a house. The system is very easy to install, and requires little maintenance. It is important to remove the pump and pressure controller each fall, and store them indoors in an area that is not subject to freezing.



*Rainwater Recovery, Inc. provided a 200-gallon cistern that collects rainwater from a downspout for use on the property.*

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