



# Rain Barrel Program

## A Partnership Between:



## With Facilitation by:



## 2012 Rain Barrel Program Report

Administered and Written by: Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District

For: Partnering Municipalities

After the completion of our second season of the GreenSpot Rain Barrel Program, all of us involved would like to say Thank You! To Columbus Mayor Michael B. Coleman; to the Columbus Department of Utilities, Anita Musser, and staff; to the Franklin County Commissioners Paula Brooks, Marilyn Brown and John O'Grady for unincorporated Franklin County; to our municipal partners Canal Winchester, Gahanna, Hilliard, New Albany, Reynoldsburg, Upper Arlington, Westerville and Worthington; to the watershed groups Friends of Alum Creek and Tributaries (FACT) and Friends of the Lower Olentangy Watershed (FLOW), and Metro Parks whose volunteers and staff conducted workshops; and mostly to the households, who participated in the program.

### **Overview**

The City of Columbus has a variety of efforts organized to provide conservation and sustainability message and resources to residents and businesses. These programs include Get Green Columbus, Project Clean Streams, and GreenSpot initiatives. In 2011, a pilot rain barrel program was expanded through a partnership established by Mayor Michael B. Coleman with Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District, local watershed groups, and EarthMinded (a subsidiary of Greif, Inc.).

The rain barrel program began to take shape in 2009 as EarthMinded designed a new rain barrel- one that was easy to install, functional and attractive. The City of Columbus was given the opportunity to disperse free barrels to residents in one Columbus neighborhood to test the equipment and monitor results. The *RainStation* barrel proved to be both popular with residents and a great outreach tool for stormwater management. With support from the City of Columbus, Franklin Soil and Water administered the continuation of the rain barrel program, embarking on research and logistical development, leveraging further funding, and building a unique experience by working with partners to educate residents about stormwater and water conservation.



On June 29, 2011 the Columbus GreenSpot Backyard Conservation Program was launched by Mayor Michael B. Coleman, Councilmember Eileen Paley, Franklin Soil and Water Director Jennifer Fish, and representatives from Greif, Inc. (EarthMinded) and watershed groups at the Marion Franklin Community Recreation Center. The rain barrel program was branded using Mayor Coleman's successful public education tool, GreenSpot. The GreenSpot program encourages residents and businesses to go through an application process to commit to a series of behaviors and behavior changes to benefit the environment.

For 2012 we worked with Greif, Inc. (EarthMinded) on design features for an improved rain barrel. The new design features a planter lid, and a better seal to prevent and reduce mosquitoes. This offer exclusively available to participating municipal partner residents and GreenSpot members allowed for the purchase of one 45 gallon rain barrel per household at the discounted rate. Barrels were purchased in volume at a discount allowing savings to be passed along to residents (barrels valued at \$119 were sold at a cost of \$50). In order to obtain the barrel, residents had to attend one of 21 in-person rain barrel workshops. Workshops were led by local non-profit watershed groups which enabled them to reach potential members and provided the groups revenue to help carry out their mission. In addition, an online option was designed by Franklin Soil and Water to allow participants to watch a rain barrel installation video, observe a slide show discussing stormwater, water conservation, the benefits of rain barrels, and take a quiz allowing residents access to purchase a barrel through PayPal in lieu of attending a workshop. Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District's 2012 goal was to expand our partnership and outreach to communities within Franklin County. The program ran from the launch date of April 2, 2012 until November 2, 2012, allowing for seven months for residents to take part.

### ***Program Actions***

The following responsibilities were laid out for the program partners allowing for clear directive. As a pilot program for Franklin Soil and Water and partners, it was important to establish and maintain a framework and keep an open line of communication.

#### ***Municipal Partners provided:***

- Compensation to Franklin Soil and Water in the form of operational grants.
- Advertisement of the program and educational components through the Department of Public Utilities billing and summer newsletter, GreenSpot and Facebook pages, DPU webpage's, and municipal partner's webpages.
- Review and consultation on all outreach materials produced by partners.
- Receipt, including unloading, storage of rain barrel shipments at city facilities.

#### ***Franklin Soil and Water in cooperation with watershed groups provided:***

- Outreach and advertising avenues through watershed group websites, Facebook, and neighborhood networks.
- Workshop facilitator(s) attendance at a train-the-trainer session given by Franklin Soil and Water.
- Workshop facilitation including sign-off sheet/tracking, presentation, distribution of vouchers and barrels and return of unclaimed rain barrels to Franklin Soil and Water office.

#### ***Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District provided:***

- Matching program funds and procurement of rain barrels through conservation funds.
- Workshop scheduling and venue procurement.
- Educational and outreach materials with partner logos.
- Administrative needs including registration, material ordering and distribution, record keeping, reporting and progress tracking.
- Assistance on e-mail and phone calls with landowner questions and concerns.
- Funding to watershed groups for facilitation of workshops and training to members facilitating workshops.
- Development of a Web page complete with Web-based educational media, quiz, and registration ordering system that facilitated online, at-leisure workshops.
- Advertising through Franklin Soil and Water's Web site, newsletters, press releases, Facebook and bi-monthly updates to partners.
- Pick-up of rain barrels at city facilities, storage of barrels, and delivery to workshop venues.
- Facilitation of debriefing meeting with partners as a means of disseminating information on program needs and methods.
- Progress reports to the city and final 2012 program report.

### ***Benefits***

The primary benefit of this effort was that residents were actively engaged in stormwater education. By making a conscious decision to purchase and install a rain barrel, they were more likely to be open and receptive to learning more about other actions they can take to protect water quality and conserve water. This opportunity was recognized and capitalized on by requiring some form of participation in a workshop, in person or online. This directly supported existing partnering community initiatives and stormwater permit requirements.

The program used existing watershed organizations and local government partnerships as a ready-made opportunity to reach a large number of residents over a short period of time. This was a straightforward partnership for the reason that each partner had a common end goal; water conservation and stormwater outreach. Residents benefited through savings with the purchase of the discounted barrel, savings in their water bill, and education on stormwater problems and solutions would be a secondary benefit and overall purpose of the program.

This effort provided repeated conservation messages to increase knowledge retention. Residents received consistent educational messages twice (once through GreenSpot, once through rain barrel workshops – in-person and at-leisure).

A diverse audience was reached by distributing materials and hosting workshops at city libraries evenly distributed throughout the county, and at-leisure workshops on the internet, ensuring easy access to the program for all its residents.

Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District benefited by meeting its goal of having an active and effective backyard conservation program and a strong, ongoing relationship with watershed groups and local government. This reduced effort duplication and, funding costs, and improved communication and coordination between local organizations working toward similar objectives.

The GreenSpot Rain Barrel Program benefited watershed groups by building on their previous experience with education and rain barrel use and allowed exposure to the watershed group name and membership drive. The program also provided reimbursement funds to the groups for facilitating workshops allowing them resources to continue outreach to local residents.

### ***Results 2012***

The 2012 GreenSpot Rain Barrel Program for rain barrels was a tremendous success. The stormwater and water conservation message was received very well by the community and interest provoked throughout central Ohio in continuing the program into the future. Throughout the program, the outlined partners came together to reach for a common goal of educating households on stormwater, water conservation, and problems and solutions associated with these topics.

Franklin Soil and Water was able to develop a framework that will produce efficient use of time and resources and aid in leveraging resources and partners, including additional grassroots groups and civic associations, MS4 municipalities, and the inclusion of the water-minded business community within the model in subsequent years. The hours for the pilot, including research and development, program management and administration, and outreach, established a foundation for future program development and marketing.

### ***Barrel Distribution and Education Numbers***

Franklin Soil and Water and partners were successful in dispensing **964 rain barrels** (translates to number of households) at a reduced rate through the combination of 12 in-person workshops (97 barrels) and online at-leisure workshops (867 barrels) (*Appendix A with map*). There were 9 workshops that had to be cancelled due to lack of registration. The conservation and stormwater educational message reached additional numbers of residents (approximately 75-100 additional) during the 9 in-person workshops, where it was reported by watershed groups that households included a guest to participate at workshops.



## ***Outreach and Education***

In order to get the program and conservation minded message out, a multitude of media was produced for residents to utilize. Franklin Soil and Water with the help of partners was successful in producing:

- One Website, GreenSpotRainBarrels.org, as a platform for the program.
- One slide show for in-person workshop and one slide show tailored for online at-leisure with updated and enhanced graphics for 2012.
- One stormwater and water conservation quiz for use for the at-leisure workshop. This online option offered a one-of-a-kind experience, potentially the first in the country, that offered educational components paired with an incentive-based examination on what the user learned.
- One in-person workshop registration form with branding and logos for online and mailer use.
- One handout on rain barrels with branding and logos, reinforcing the conservation and stormwater message, for use at in-person and at-leisure workshops.
- One “Frequently Asked Questions” flier describing the details and requirements of the program. The flier was made available online.
- One poster with branding, logos, and QRC code for smart phone savvy consumer use, detailing the program and highlighting the benefits of the educational components for NPDES permit use. The poster was displayed at the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission’s Center for Energy & Environment Summit on Sustainability & the Environment and at EcoSummit that both occurred in October of 2012.
- One flier with branding and logos for distribution to Columbus Metro Libraries detailing the basics of the online at-leisure workshop.
- “All Sides with Ann Fisher” radio spot aired twice; first live on April 16<sup>th</sup> and second as a rerun on June 25<sup>th</sup>, highlighting the GreenSpot Rain Barrel Program.
- The City of Columbus Get Green 2011 Year in Review highlighted an article about the GreenSpot Rain Barrel Program.
- The City of Columbus Department of Utilities Summer “Utility Update” detailing both the water conservation and stormwater message and the GreenSpot Backyard Conservation Program for rain barrels were mailed throughout the course of the billing cycle.
- WHERE ELSE WAS THIS ADVERTISED??? I THOUGHT OTHER MUNICIPALE PARTNERS PLACED IT ON THERE WEBSITES< ETC??? Blendon Township, Sharon Township – newsletters, Westerville Parks Page, What did other partners do to get the word out?? How can this be better tracked???
- Municipal partners, and watershed groups FACT and FLOW advertised workshops on their websites as well as sent targeted emails and mailings, in conjunction with our office advertisements and targeted emails.
- Participants of the program received a calendar reminder from Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District, discussing the importance of emptying rain barrels for maximum conservation-stormwater benefit and to control any mosquito concerns, as well as to remind participants to disconnect barrels during colder months to avoid freezing and potential cracking.
- Press releases were sent to all major media outlets (*Appendix B & C*).
- Targeted emails and phone calls were made to civic associations, neighborhood liaisons, home owners associations, nonprofit organizations, community garden groups and local This Week community newspapers about the GreenSpot Rain Barrel program.
- Online targeted advertisement through the Columbus Dispatch Digital network from June 6 – June 11, 2012, including the digital network partners of The Columbus Dispatch.com, 10tv.com, ONN, Alive!, 97.1 The Fan, This Week Community Newspapers, TheBag, Columbus Parent, Fronteras, Capital Style, EasyColumbus.com, Central Ohio Home & Garden, and OH Get It.

## Online Education

The online educational option allows the user a unique experience to learn about water utility savings and storm water benefits rain barrels provide. Once the slide show conclude, the user is prompted to take and pass a short quiz, before payment for a discounted barrel.

For more information on the program please go to:



[www.GreenSpotRainBarrels.org](http://www.GreenSpotRainBarrels.org)

## Storm Water Impairments (3/6)



Excessive runoff generally enters storm drains in the streets, picking up pollutants along its path. The polluted runoff flows to the nearest stream.

### **Online Program Trends**

During the 2011 program online search trends for rain barrels were recorded with the intention of creating a baseline and facilitating the placement of Columbus in the top ranking of searches for rain barrels. Columbus ranked second for online searches in metro areas behind Portland in 2011. Unfortunately for the 2012 season Columbus fell out of the top ten search rankings, with Seattle, Chicago, Atlanta, Philadelphia, and Washington DC rounding off the top five. Trends reveal that interest in rain barrels peaked within the Columbus metro area in 2010 with a sharp decline in 2012. This same trend holds true throughout Ohio and even top ranking metro areas across the country with peak interest occurring in 2009 throughout the U.S.

With updates to the online program, GreenSpot Rain Barrel website and presentation for the 2012 season, Franklin Soil and Water employed the use of Google Analytics to track an overview of the audience participating in the online program (*Appendix C*). The webpage engaged 7,672 visitors over the course of the season, 6,850 of which came out of Ohio, 95% of which fell within the Columbus Metro area, and 730 visits from 49 of 50 States. The remaining 92 visitors to the webpage come from nations abroad, with Canada, the United Kingdom, Japan, India and Australia rounding off the top five countries to visit the GreenSpot Program.

One of the trends tracked under site usage was the use of technology to access this program. Mobile devices were used approximately 6% of the time. Approximately 80% of mobile use was through an Apple iPhone or Apple product. For consideration in the future with web upgrades for the program, it is noted that under browsers and operating systems used for accessing this program, that Internet Explorer was used the most (39%). Past design of the site was not always accessible using this noted browser.

### **Customer comments**

A majority of feedback about the program by residents was positive. Participants expressed an appreciation for the opportunity to have access to low-cost rain barrels and that this was a community wide effort to expand awareness of the value of our water resources.

Complaints that were received included:

- Difficulty understanding how to access the website.
- Inability to purchase rain barrels if they were not in a participating community.
- Leaky faucet on the rain barrel and warped lids.
- Security concerns with providing credit card information through PayPal.

Franklin Soil and Water worked with residents to resolve complaints when possible. In a few cases, individuals came into the Franklin Soil and Water office and staff assisted them in viewing the presentation and taking the quiz online or assisted with registration and other concerns. Greif, Inc.

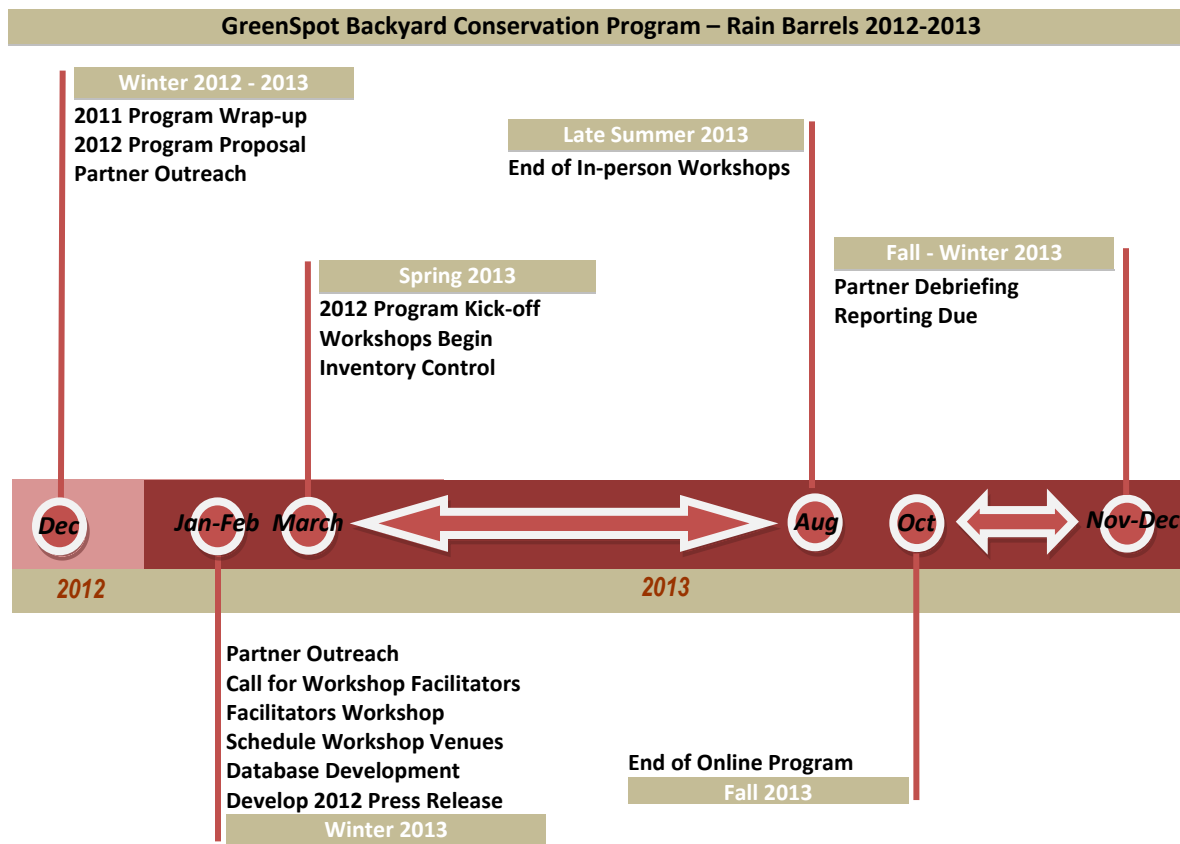
(EarthMinded) was contacted and came to our office with new replacement faucets to exchange on the rain barrels that had issues. The design team at EarthMinded worked with our office to solve the problem with warped lids. They adjusted shipping methods and manufacturing equipment to compensate and prevent future warping of the lids. Otherwise Franklin Soil and Water staff tried to provide an understanding of the complaints expressed and patiently explained the purpose and limitations of the program, as well as intentions to make improvements where we could for 2013.

**Future Work and Considerations**

Now that a framework and baseline have been established it is essential that partners understand how to move forward smoothly in the future. After the completion of the program in November there was a discussion with partners on what could be improved upon and simplified as we move forward for the 2013 season. The following was discussed for consideration:

**Program Roll Out**

The 2013 GreenSpot Rain Barrel Program for rain barrels will begin early in the season, April 2013, as our early roll out in 2012 was successful. The program will remain active until fall of 2013, to allow for roughly 6 to 7 months of participation. Many outdoor and gardening enthusiasts begin their outdoor activities early in the spring and are wrapping up activities before the first frost. A program schedule can be seen below.



**Delivery of Barrels to Department of Utilities (DPU)**

- DPU will continue receiving and unloading of shipments of barrels at the Fairwood facility given that the DPU is notified at least two days in advance of the delivery and given a time of delivery by the shipper. The City of Columbus has the right to refuse delivery of barrels without prior contact. This delivery system change as Franklin Soil and Water develops better storage options.

### ***Inventory Control***

- Franklin Soil and Water has agreed to improve upon a database for rain barrel inventory and management of outgoing barrels. This database will also tie into the program's mapping component, taking care to track addresses and zip codes.
- Franklin Soil and Water recommends that the program *continue* the one barrel per household policy to ensure that: inventory and storage can be better controlled; program costs stay relatively low; resale of barrels does not become a problem; we do not undercut local rain barrel distributors, and; we maximize the delivery of an educational message. It will be made clear that those household who have participated within the program over the last two years will *not* be eligible to purchase additional barrels in order to reach a new set of residents with the stormwater message.

### ***Marketing and Outreach***

- It was noted in 2011 that gardening groups, sustainability groups, and church green teams will be approached to partner with the program for workshop facilitation and as a target audience, and this is still relevant for 2012.
- Project partners will explore methods to reach out to economically disadvantaged communities, with the possibility of partnership with Habitat for Humanity and the Greater Linden Development Corporation.
- Going forward to 2013, efforts will be made to work with additional media outlets.
- Efforts will be made to update all outreach materials to include additional partner logos and updates to educational message.
- There is a notable correlation between media and outreach efforts and the numbers of participants that took part in both the online and in-person workshop. Google Analytics will continue to be utilized in the future program to continue to track any relationship between the two.

### ***Workshops***

- Consideration will be made for targeted workshops in conjunction with outreach to additional municipal partners.
- Franklin Soil and Water will ask that participants are registered 5 days in advance to allow for processing. Franklin Soil and Water reserves the right to cancel workshops if they do not meet a participant threshold per workshop location. In the case of cancelations, facilitators and registrants will be notified 3 to 4 days in advance. Franklin Soil and Water will work closely with watershed groups to ensure that the groups assist in marketing workshops to garner participant numbers to avoid these circumstances.
- For the program year 2012, a „voucher system“ was developed for in-person workshops to be handed out to participants who may have been missing from the sign-in sheet and registration or payment was not received before the workshop date. This system will be continued and potentially expanded with targeted workshops. The voucher system will not be advertised for the program.
- As previously discussed, outreach to additional groups for inclusion of workshop facilitation will be made available.
- Facilitators asked about what to do in cases of workshop no-shows and extra barrels. Consideration will be given to this concern.
- Registration materials will be provided to facilitators complete with a sign-in sheet for participants to check off before the workshop, initial after the workshop and before exchange of a barrel.
- Notification to registrants on confirmation of registration to workshops was sent by email and/or by phone.



### ***Web site***

- The Web site, ColumbusRainBarrels.org, did undergo revision with clear and concise language, the addition of outreach materials, an update to the slide show educational message and quiz contents, and the addition of interactive graphics for a more dynamic experience. Continued revisions may be made to the 2013 web site to improve upon the system and outreach.
- Development of an online mapping component is still in consideration, so that residents can visualize the impact of the program. Franklin Soil and Water is in the process of exploring several systems in conjunction with other program areas that would aid in tracking the impacts of these programs, including the GreenSpot Rain Barrel program.

### ***Customer Service***

- Franklin Soil and Water will continue kept track of complaints and compliments.
- Franklin Soil and Water will work with participants of the program to ensure their satisfaction, offering replacement parts when necessary.
- A survey email has be developed for participants of the program to gauge satisfaction, to determine if the barrels were installed, and gauge interest in installation of additional BMP's in the future. Survey will reach participants across multiple years.

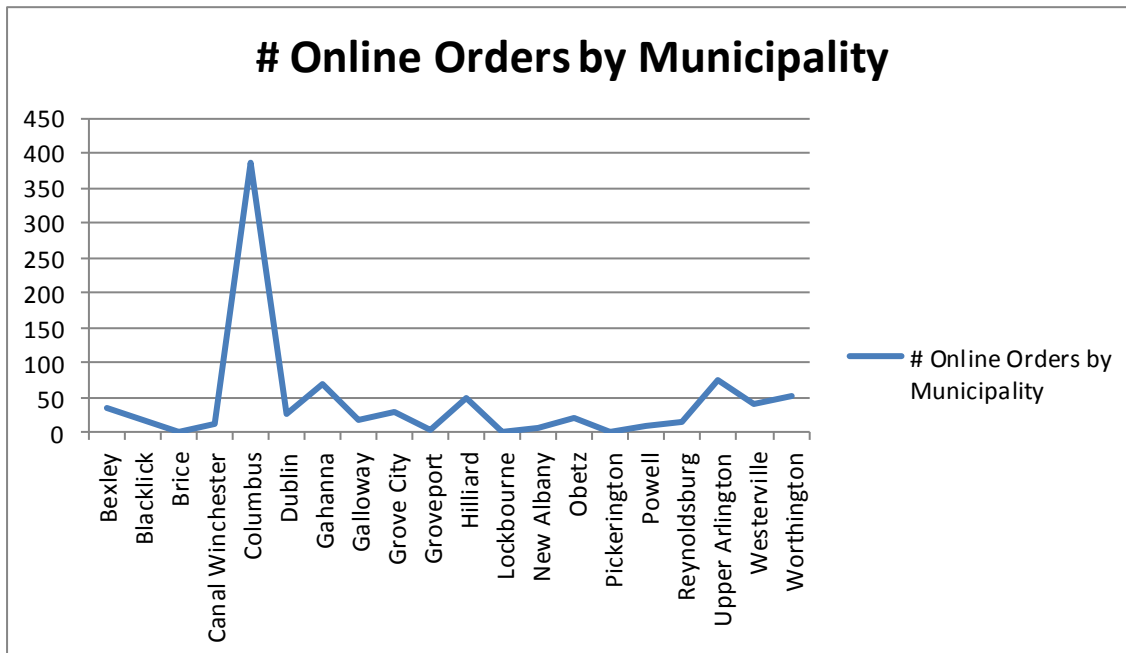
### ***Continued Program Strengthening and Broadening the Impact***

- In regards to future program needs, Franklin Soil and Water will continue with the commitment of strengthening the program through sustained research and partnership building and collaboration. Educational components for outreach will continue to be clarified in the manner and method they are delivered. The GreenSpot Rain Barrel Program has the potential to be expanded with new concepts that build on the rain barrel as a “gateway BMP” such as rain gardens and other green infrastructure. Throughout the continued program cycle Franklin Soil and Water expects to build on these program concepts to produce a proposal that will take the existing program into the next step from “gateway” BMP to residential green infrastructure; moving from education to tangible water quality solutions.

**Appendix A: Workshop Results**



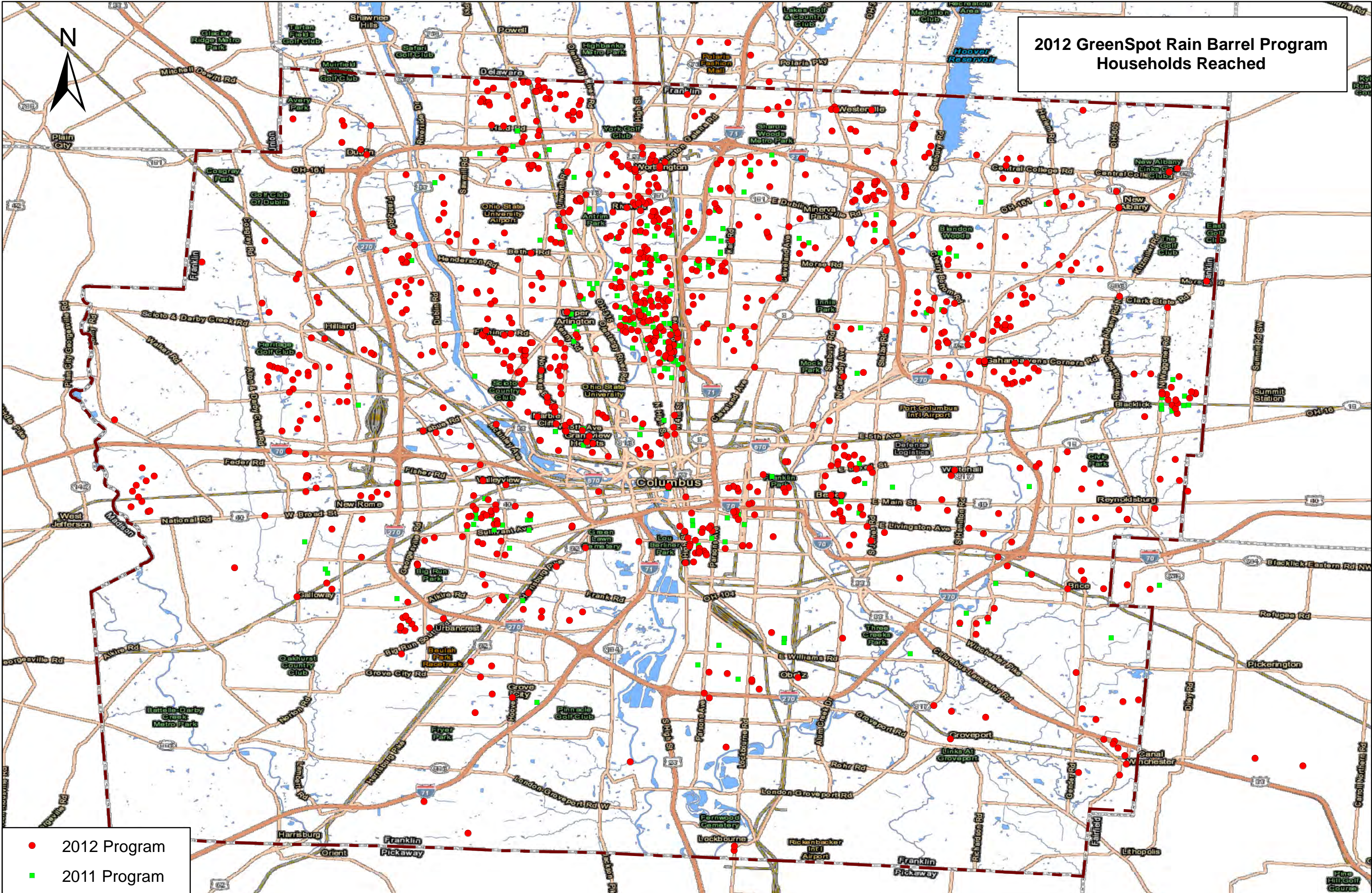
**129 Households Reached**



**867 Households Reached**



# 2012 GreenSpot Rain Barrel Program Households Reached



- 2012 Program
- 2011 Program



## **Appendix B: Public Relations and Outreach**

[“All Sides with Ann Fisher”](#)

WOSU Talk Radio Show, Featuring Ryan Pilewski

Discussion on GreenSpot Rain Barrel Program and the Benefits of Rain Barrels

Aired on 04/16/12 and 06/26/12

GreenSpot Program Flash Link Targeted Advertising

*The Columbus Dispatch Digital Network Advertising*

Ran from 6/4/2012 to 6/11/12

[City of Columbus Department of Utilities](#)

[Get Green Columbus](#)

[Community Events Calendar for Franklin County, Ohio](#)

**\*Outreach does not include Facebook announcements from Franklin Soil and Water and partners.**

## Appendix C: Program and Outreach Materials



City of Columbus GreenSpot members are invited to buy a discounted rain barrel for only \$45 while supplies last (limit one per household, Columbus residents only)

Not a member yet? Join today at [www.ColumbusGreenSpot.org](http://www.ColumbusGreenSpot.org)

Next, you'll need to either attend a rain barrel workshop by signing up using the registration form on the opposite side of this document OR pass a quiz online at [www.ColumbusRainBarrels.org](http://www.ColumbusRainBarrels.org)

For questions call our friends at Franklin Soil and Water at 614.486.8613



### Registration Limit one per household

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address (Columbus residents only): \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Workshop:** In order to obtain your rain barrel, you must attend a workshop on one of the dates below. Choose ONE. Rain barrels will be distributed to participants at the conclusion of each event.

- July 14, 6:30PM, Eastpointe Christian Church, 745 N. Waggoner Rd
- July 16, 10:30AM, Hilltop Library, 511 S. Hague Ave.
- July 21, 6:30PM, Blendon Woods Melts Park, Sycamore Shelter, 4265 E. Dublin-Grammelle Rd.
- July 26, 6:30PM, Wheelstone Library, 3909 N. High St.
- July 28, 6:30PM, Southeast Library, 3940 S. Hamilton Rd.
- July 30, 10:30AM, Big Walnut Shelter House, 5000 E. Livingston
- August 4, 6:30PM, Karl Road Library, 5590 Karl Rd.
- August 6, 10:30AM, Northern Light Library, 4293 Cleveland Ave.
- August 11, 6:30PM, South High Library, 3540 S. High St.
- August 13, 10:30AM, Northside Library, 1423 N. High St.
- August 18, 6:30PM, Shepard Library, 790 N. Nelson Rd.
- August 20, 10:30AM, Driving Park Library, 1566 E. Livingston Ave.
- August 25, 6:30PM, Wheelstone Library, 3909 N. High St.
- September 1, 6:30PM, Northwest Library, 2280 Hard Rd.

Payment:  Cash  Check (made payable to Franklin Soil and Water)

Submit your payment of \$45 and complete registration to:  
 Franklin Soil and Water  
 1328 Dublin Rd., Suite 101  
 Columbus, OH 43215

Don't forget to register as a GreenSpot at [www.ColumbusGreenSpot.org](http://www.ColumbusGreenSpot.org)  
 Questions? Call 614.486.8613



Registration Form available online, at Franklin Soil & Water office (mailer), & printed for libraries distribution.

### Why rain barrels?

You may be wondering why the City of Columbus would sponsor a program to provide you with a low cost rain barrel. Read on to find out!



When it rains, water from roofs, driveways, sidewalks, and roads is directed to storm drain inlets and travels unfiltered and untreated, straight to the nearest stream or river. As it travels towards the stream, this rain "runoff" often picks up pesticides, excess nutrients from fertilizers and pet waste, oil, and fluids from leaking cars. These pollutants create a harmful environment for animals and people.

The amount of runoff itself can be a problem because the stream is not able to accommodate the extra water its receiving. The sudden surge and velocity of the runoff to the stream causes soil to erode away along the stream bank. Erosion causes muddiness, or sedimentation, in the stream which harms wildlife, and can cause homeowners to lose land and property along an eroded stream bank.



The City of Columbus and Backyard Conservation Program partners have come together to offer low cost rain barrels to help ease the problems associated with rain runoff. Homeowners, renters, and building managers can reduce runoff by using a rain barrel to capture rainwater from gutters. This stored water can then be used later for outdoor chores, saving money on tap water utility charges.




### For Consideration

- Tools are available locally to borrow, so there is no need to buy expensive power tools for installation. Find more information on the tool library: [www.stromtoolshub.org/toollibrary.htm](http://www.stromtoolshub.org/toollibrary.htm)
- Always place your barrel up to two feet on blocks or bricks so that a wheelbarrow or bucket can be placed under the spigot. Even after placing the barrel on a base, water pressure will be too low to operate a sprinkler. However, you can attach a soaker hose to gradually water your plants and empty the barrel.
- With more than one rain barrel, you can connect them together in order to store more water or you could place one at each of your downspouts. While our program cannot offer a household more than one rain barrel, they are becoming popular and have become easier to find as a result. Most large home improvement and garden stores now sell rain barrels. They can also be found at specialty stores and can be ordered online. Visit Franklin Soil and Water's web site for a list of vendors: [www.franklinsoilwater.org](http://www.franklinsoilwater.org).
- Do not use collected water for drinking, cooking, or bathing. If rain water has been used on the roof, let a few rain events bypass the barrel before collecting water.
- Keep the lid secure to children, animals, and mosquitoes cannot get into the barrel.
- Use the water in your barrel within one week so that it is empty before the next rainfall and to control mosquito breeding cycles. The use of mosquito dunks can also help alleviate problems associated with mosquito breeding, coliforms.
- Empty your barrel and store it in the garage or basement each fall to prevent it from splinting when the water freezes in the winter. This is a good time to give it a thorough cleaning to remove any accumulated debris and algae.



Rain barrels are usually plastic containers including a lid, spigot, overflow system and a diverter to take water away from the house and into the barrel to be used at a later time.



Handout available through workshop and online for program participants.








## Rain Barrel Program

**Its Not Too Late! Prepare For Next Spring!**

Residents of the City of Columbus who sign up as a GreenSpot member are invited to buy a discounted rain barrel for only \$45.00.

Limit of one rain barrel per household. Program Ends October 31st.

Not a GreenSpot member yet? Join today at [www.ColumbusGreenSpot.org](http://www.ColumbusGreenSpot.org)

Next, you'll need to watch an installation video and slide show discussing the benefits of rain barrels, and take a short quiz online at:

[www.ColumbusRainBarrels.org](http://www.ColumbusRainBarrels.org)



For questions call Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District at 614.486.9613



Outreach Poster to Libraries

Thank you for participating in the GreenSpot Rain Barrel Program!

To get the most out of your rain barrel and to reduce mosquitoes, please empty your rain barrel every four to six days. If you do notice mosquitoes, add a portion of Mosquito Dunk, which is safe for plants, pets and people. Mosquito Dunk is available at most hardware stores.

Use this card as a calendar reminder to empty your rain barrel and disconnect it before freezing occurs.



If you have questions, please contact Franklin Soil and Water at 614.486.9613 or go to [GreenSpotRainBarrels.org](http://GreenSpotRainBarrels.org) for more information on maintaining your rain barrel.

Reminder Postcard





### Water Reuse and Conservation

**Protecting Our Water Supply**

When rain falls on land, it either soaks into the ground or becomes runoff flowing into streams, lakes and rivers. The Columbus Department of Public Utilities (CDPU) has found surface water sources—Hoover Reservoir on Big Walnut Creek, Griggs and D'Shiglasnow Reservoirs on the Scioto River—as well as ground water collected in wells located in southern Franklin County.

**Reduced runoff is the biggest threat to water quality.** Run water through your yard, pavement, rooftops and streets carrying pollutants into storm drains that empty into nearby rivers or into our sewer system. Disturbance from every day activities including the use of pesticides, fertilizers and soap, as well as yard waste, pet waste, oil and grease.

Did you know that you can save money on your water bill and help protect the quality of our source water just by making a few changes in your gardening practices?

**Reuse Rain Water**

Collect stormwater in a rain barrel for later use. Place a downspout, rain barrel collect some of the water that runs off your roof, storing it for later use. Attach a soaker hose to water garden plants or fill a watering can to use on potted plants.



**Garden with Native Plants**

Native plants have an extensive root system that absorbs moisture from deep in the soil. This means that once established, they require very little water. Because they have adapted to local soil and climate conditions, native plants thrive without fertilizers.

The deep roots break up clay soil increasing its ability to soak in stormwater, slowing the flow and filtering pollutants before they enter our watersheds. All this adds up to less time and money spent on landscaping and cleaner streams and lakes.

**Columbus GreenSpot Backyard Conservation Program**

City of Columbus GreenSpot members are invited to buy discounted rain barrels while supplies last (limit one per household). Columbus residents only. Not yet a member? It's easy to join at [www.ColumbusGreenSpot.org](http://www.ColumbusGreenSpot.org). Member can attend a rain barrel workshop in person or take a quiz online. More information, registration and the online quiz can be found at [www.ColumbusRainBarrels.org](http://www.ColumbusRainBarrels.org). For questions, call Franklin Soil and Water at 486-9613.



Join Columbus Public Utilities on Facebook for conservation tips and updates.

City Of Columbus Department of Utilities Billing Statement Insert on Program



# Online Program Visits- Google Analytics

City	Visits
1. Columbus	4,667
2. New Albany	492
3. Dublin	300
4. Powell	279
5. Hilliard	221
6. Westerville	203
7. Reynoldsburg	149
8. Grove City	88
9. Galloway	63
10. Pickerington	37
11. Cleveland	29
12. Lewis Center	29
13. Delaware	24
14. Cincinnati	18
15. Marysville	18
16. Newark	17
17. Blacklick	16
18. Northwood	16
19. Pataskala	15
20. Canal Winches	13
21. Akron	11
22. Dayton	11
23. Lancaster	11
24. Tallmadge	11
25. Strongsville	10



Region	Visits
1. Ohio	6,850
2. Michigan	91
3. Illinois	90
4. New York	75
5. Pennsylvania	39
6. California	32
7. Texas	32
8. Florida	30
9. Indiana	28
10. Georgia	24



Country / Territory	Visits
1. United States	7,580
2. Canada	21
3. United Kingdom	7
4. Japan	7
5. India	5
6. Australia	4
7. Malaysia	4
8. New Zealand	4
9. (not set)	4
10. China	3

