

Collecting, Storing, and Using Rainwater on Home Landscapes

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WEST LINN ? Clair Klock, a resource conservationist for the Clackamas County Soil and Water Conservation District and a board member of the American Rainwater Catchment Systems Association, will talk about Rainwater Harvesting on Thursday, March 10, 2011 from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the West Linn Public Library, 1595 Burns Street in West Linn. Here is an opportunity to learn about the benefits, viability and setup of rainwater harvesting at your own home. This presentation is the third in the [Sustainability Lecture Series](#) co-sponsored by the West Linn Sustainability Advisory Board and the West Linn Public Library.

Klock, a specialist in rural conservation, became interested in rainwater harvesting after witnessing the 400-foot well of a cattle ranch in southern Clackamas County go dry. The owners dug to depths of 600 and 900 feet, but eventually got rid of the cattle due to an insufficient water supply. A light bulb went off in Klock's head: rainwater harvesting would have been a sustainable solution.

For West Linn homeowners, the city's average annual rainfall of 45 inches means that about 55,000 gallons of rain falls off the roof of a 2,000 square foot house each year. So it is a relatively easy process to set up a rain collection system with even a small 50-gallon tank placed by the garage. During the dry season that cistern can be connected to a drip irrigation system and used for outdoor landscaping.

According to Clair Klock, rainwater harvesting, is about "getting ahead of the curve" in an environment where water supply is finite, population is growing and prices are bound to increase. Rhetorically he asks, "Does it make sense for us to use seventy-five percent of our potable water for outdoor irrigation?" Not if we are to live more sustainably.

On his own farm, Klock has installed two rainwater collection systems, a 50-gallon tank and a 3,000 underground unit. He expects to reduce potable water use at his nursery by at least 80 percent over previous years.

For information about upcoming programs in the Sustainability Lecture Series, visit <http://westlinnoregon.gov/library/sustainability-lecture-series>.

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