

Rain Barrels Catching On Fast

Barry Chenkin may not be able to squeeze water out of rock, but he can pump it from his new rock-shaped rain barrel. It's just one of dozens of new shapes in which roof runoff can be captured.

When Chenkin first heard about the idea of rain barrels, they made sense. He saw an opportunity to start an internet supply house for rain barrels. He also applied for patents on several designs of his own.

Chenkin's Aquabarrel.com website offers not only complete systems, but also a do-it-yourself kit (\$31.69) that contains a shut-off valve, three-piece hose assembly, overflow port, and downspout adapter. It's designed to fit standard barrels. Different kits are available for different barrel styles.

"It costs a lot to ship a 55-gal. barrel," says Chenkin. "You can usually find one locally for less than \$40. With our kit, you have everything else you need without searching out separate components at different suppliers."

For complete rain barrel systems, you can go as big as a 3,000-gal. Water Pillow (\$4,200) or as small as the 40-gal. Rock (\$175). You can go in between with the Rainwater Hog (\$350), a 71-in. by 20-in. by 9 1/2-in. tank that holds 50 gal. and can be used alone or in series (a 36-cell unit sells for \$9,212.57). The RainBox (\$375) holds 75 gal. and can be connected in series. You even can get the Nino (\$199), a 55-gal. rain barrel that has plants growing from a basin in the top.

The Rainwater Hog can stand vertically or alongside a wall (\$35 for vertical wall kit) or be laid horizontally under a deck or front porch. It was developed in Australia.

Chenkin also ships bulk parts with a licensing agreement for people who want to set up a local dealership.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Aquabarrel, 554 North Frederick Ave., Mail Box No. 122, Gaithersburg, Md. 20877 (ph 301 253-8855; www.aquabarrel.com).



Barry Chenkin's rain collectors include a water pillow (left) and the Rainwater Hog, which can stand vertically or be laid flat under a deck or front porch.



Chenkin's Aquabarrel.com website offers complete systems and do-it-yourself kits. Note rock-shaped rain barrel (right).



Concealed Rainwater "Barrels"

These rainwater "barrels" are hard to spot. They're concealed in patio seating, plant stands or under the deck.

"Second Rain water containers double as landscape building blocks that each hold about 40 gal. of rainwater," says Scott Gear, Second Rain, Inc. "They can be incorporated into virtually any design to create seating, pillars, walls and more."

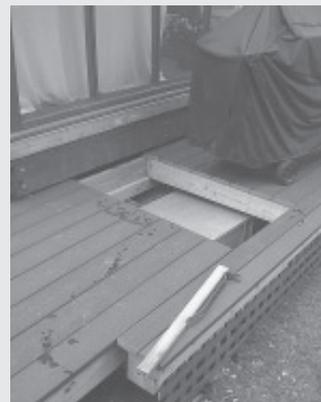
Each 2 by 2 by 2-ft. square box holds a 2-ply, 8 mill, form-fitted liner. The UV-protected box panels are made from 98 percent recycled premium grade high-density polyethylene. They're available in cedar, chestnut, redwood and gray colors.

Boxes can be hooked up in series and equipped with pumps, hoses and hose reels as well as other accessories. Included in the

\$269 price is all fittings, adapters, shut-off valves and tubing to attach to another unit or collection point, as well as to a garden hose. Framework made from recycled plastic lumber is also available for customized seating combinations.

"Most of the systems are installed with a gauge somewhere near them to monitor water levels in the box," says Gear. "We make a float-type gauge for a 240-gal. storage system placed beneath a deck. The system also has a retractable hose reel and a pump tied to a switch, all stored beneath a deck with removable floor panels."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Second Rain, Inc., 8727 Airport Rd., Middleton, Wis. 53562 (ph 608 836-8448; info@second-rain.com; www.second-rain.com).



Second Rain water "barrels" are designed to be concealed under patio seating in plant stands or under decks.

Apron Box Handles Both Manure And Forage

You can haul silage in the morning and spread manure in the afternoon with this 2-in-1 box from the Parma Company.

"The beauty of it is that you can use it all year long, hauling manure in the spring and winter and forage or feed the rest of the year," says Roger Blaylock, Parma general manager.

The 22.2 cubic yard box has a live floor with a heavy-duty apron chain and a self-contained hydraulic system. Parma has a reputation for building heavy-duty equipment that lasts, Blaylock says. It can be fitted with either a beater or spinner to handle manure and compost.

To convert to hauling forage, you lift off the beater with a front-end loader, add extension panels and install a rear gate.

"The apron chain cleans things out very well, and the sidewalls are slick," Blaylock says, so it's easy to keep clean between uses. An optional poly-lined floor is also available.

Parma offers two style boxes. The box with the beater attachment costs about \$55,000. The box with the spinner attachment is about \$65,000. The spinner attachment is the most versatile for spreading manure, compost, bedding and dry material in a consistent spread pattern. A 30-ft. long semi tractor-drawn model is also available.



Parma's 2-in-1 box can be used all year long, hauling manure in the spring and winter and forage or feed the rest of the year.

"We build a quality box that will hold up in tough conditions," Blaylock says, and by being useful year round, the box offers added value.

Parma sells through a dealer network

that can be found on the company's website. Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Parma Co., P.O. Box 190, Parma, Idaho 83660 (ph 208 722-5116; www.parmacompany.com; www.arenagroomer.net).

Hand-Held String Trimmer

"After looking at the price of commercial string trimmers, I came up with a simple trimmer of my own that I call the Hillbilly Weed Wacker," says Jeff Hoard, Austin, Nev.

"I had some high-density poly (HDPE) laying around so I cut out a 4-in. disc. I drilled a 5/16-in. hole right in the center, squared the hole with a file, and then drilled two 3/32-in. holes 180 degrees apart, 1/4 in. from the edge of the disc. I inserted a 2 5/16-in. carriage bolt with square 'shoulders' on it through the center hole with a nut and washer on it. Lastly, I inserted a piece of store-bought line into the two small holes. I bought a pack of 12 16-in. long 'strings' for \$2.69.

"It works great for trimming grass. Although I have to bend down to use it, I've found that's an advantage because it gives



Trimmer disc mounts on hand-held drill.

me more precise control around plants and trees, eliminating the damage people often get with larger trimmers. Be sure to wear safety glasses because you're close to the action," says Hoard.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Jeff Hoard, HM Ranch, HC 61, Box 6108, Austin, Neb. 89310 (hm ranch@wildblue.net).

Handy Hose Reel

"It provides a nice, wide surface that keeps the hose from ever kinking up," says Chris Yingling, Bigelow, Arkansas, who screwed a 5-gal. bucket to the side of his barn to use as a hose reel.

The bucket is located next to a frost-free faucet at the corner of Yingling's barn. He uses the hose to wash his vehicles and also to irrigate a nearby garden. "It's handy because I can leave the hose on the faucet all the time," says Yingling.

To attach the bucket to the barn, he placed a 1 by 6 board inside the bucket at the bottom and then ran screws through both the board and bucket. "Without the board, the weight of the hose would rip the screws out of the bucket," says Yingling.



Yingling stores nozzles and other garden tools inside bucket.

The bucket also makes a handy storage area for nozzles, sprinklers and other tools. "I keep the lid on the bucket in order to keep birds and wasps out."