

Workshop Planning Guide 2022



Please review this entire guide before applying to host a Project Rain Barrel Workshop

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Questions?

Contact msterett@rivernetwork.org

WHO WE ARE

Established in 1988, River Network has been at the forefront of water protection and restoration, encouraging diversity in the environmental movement, and giving people and communities the tools, training, resources, and mentoring necessary to take a stand for their local rivers and waters.

Today, River Network connects the more than 8,500 river conservation and water advocacy organizations and entities nationwide, connecting tens of thousands of water protectors from coast to coast. Our community increasingly includes organizations that are led by Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color (BIPOC), are BIPOC-serving, or explicitly focus on environmental justice issues.

We provide knowledge and community to ensure individual leaders, organizations and coalitions are effective, results-oriented and equipped to have the greatest impact on water-related issues. Four key issues help move this network from connectivity to alignment and power: Safe, clean, affordable drinking water; healthy rivers in agricultural landscapes; climate resilient cities and communities; and robust and effective water laws and policies. We address equity directly throughout our programs and operations.



PROGRAM BACKGROUND

Project Rain Barrel is a collaboration between River Network, the Coca-Cola Company, the Coca-Cola Foundation, and local host organizations across the U.S.. The program facilitates public rain barrel building workshops by supplying host organizations with free materials, workshop planning support, and event promotion. Rain barrel workshops are a cost-effective way to engage individuals, families, and communities in water education and conservation.

Generous support from the Coca-Cola Foundation allows River Network to connect approved workshop hosts with local Coca-Cola bottlers or distributors to arrange donation of recycled 35 or 55-gallon food-grade ingredient drums. These drums are capable of capturing and storing rainwater, which can be used for a variety of household purposes, including watering gardens and lawns. Rain barrels help people save money on water bills, reduce demand for treated tap water, control erosion around foundations, save water for use during droughts, and reduce the amount of polluted stormwater that flows into our rivers and lakes. Rain barrels also stimulate people to begin thinking about their water system and how they can reduce their water footprint.



ELIGIBILITY AND REQUIREMENTS

Most non-profit and community organizations engaged in water education, management, or conservation are eligible to host Project Rain Barrel workshops. Individuals are not eligible to host workshops but may volunteer with a local organization to help produce an event or install rain barrels in public locations. Eligible organizations include all free and premium River Network member organizations, as well as neighborhood improvement groups, conservation districts, local governments and utilities, university extension programs, gardening organizations, and others. Project Rain Barrel materials are limited and distributed to approved applicants. In the United States and across the globe, low-income and minority communities have systematically had less access to nature, live in areas of higher localized pollution, and are more vulnerable to climate change. Rain barrels can be an easy, hands on starting point into green infrastructure. Therefore, organizations that will host a free workshop in a low-income community (median household income < \$45,000) will receive priority in application review. Building rain barrels for use at public locations including schools, community gardens, etc. is acceptable where legal and does not require hosting a formal public workshop. Additional requirements include incorporating an educational component into each workshop and providing post-event data and photos. River Network reserves the right to deny Project Rain Barrel applications for any reason.

Hosting rain barrel workshops is a cost-effective way to generate local interest in your organization and directly engage and educate your community about water conservation. Facilitating successful workshops is labor intensive and logistically demanding. It requires dedicated staff and/or volunteer time for planning, marketing, transporting bulky materials, workshop implementation, and follow-up reporting. Project Rain Barrel makes this process as simple as possible. Applications will be open December 10 – January 31. The deadline for hosting all workshops is August 31, 2022. Please contact us with questions about eligibility.



WHAT RIVER NETWORK PROVIDES

River Network provides nearly everything needed to host successful public rain barrel building workshops. If your workshop is approved, River Network will provide the following:

Contact(s) for Coca-Cola Ingredient Drums Donations where available

All approved workshop hosts will be provided with contact information for the nearest Coca-Cola facility to arrange pick-up or drop-off of donated 35 or 55-gallon recycled ingredient drums. Please review this map to see if there is a Coca-Cola facility in your area. Your organization must coordinate directly with the designated Coca-Cola representative to obtain donated drums for your workshop(s). Drums are generally donated in groups of 25 because transporting and building more than 25 barrels per workshop is exceedingly difficult. Coca-Cola has been extremely generous in providing these high-quality food grade drums. Please thank your local facility for their donation and consider recognizing them on your social media pages, website, and annual report.

Rain Barrel drums are also available to purchase for groups in Colorado from our partner, [Colorado Rain Catcher](#). If you have a budget to purchase drums, you can contact [us](#) to discuss purchasing barrels at cost. There are also a number of alternative options for sourcing drums from other companies. Local dairy farms and other drink manufacturers often use 35-55 gallon drums. Please reach out if you would like to explore alternatives.

DIY Installation Kits

DIY Installation Kits from our partners at Colorado Rain Catcher include all the hardware needed to construct a fully functioning rain barrel. Each kit includes a diverter, fill hose, fill hose seal, threaded rubber (spigot) seal, a winter cover, a hole saw kit, 2 stainless steel screws, and a plastic full port spigot. The kit eliminates the need for an overflow outlet and creates a closed system which prevents mosquitoes from breeding inside the barrel. This design only works if buildings have functioning gutters and standard residential 2" x 3" or 3" x 4" downspouts.



Hardware kits are shipped directly to your organization once you've confirmed that Coca-Cola is able to donate ingredient drums for your workshop, or you have acquired drums from another source. River Network will cover the cost of shipping the hardware kits to you (as funding allows). River Network expects all hardware kits to be used in a timely manner. If you have any unused kits as of September 1, 2022, you will be required to return them to River Network and pay shipping costs.



Workshop Promotion

All workshop host organizations will receive up to \$45 in advertising including newspaper ads, flyers, and boosted Facebook posts or events. River Network will boost posts that your organization makes on your own page, or share and boost you event page. Boosted posts will be targeted to your workshop location. Be sure to “like” the River Network Facebook page and share posts across your social media platforms! River Network also posts all workshops to our [Community Events Calendar](#). **You must update River Network if the details (date, time, location, price, etc.) of your workshop change!**



Heavy Duty Stencils

Painting rain barrels is a great way to get families more involved during a workshop. River Network can mail you a set of free fish and flower stencils if you plan to offer barrel painting.

Personalized Workshop Planning Support

River Network’s Community Engagement Assistant facilitates Project Rain Barrel and is available to answer questions and provide personalized workshop planning support.

Workshop Resources

River Network has developed a suite of resources to help your organization more easily lead an engaging educational workshop. These resources will be emailed to you if your application is approved.



Customizable PowerPoint

This slide deck is designed to teach workshop participants about their water source and issues impacting local water quality and/or quantity. Please download and customize a few slides with your logo, relevant information about your organization, and information about your watershed.

Rain Barrel Benefits

- ◆ Save money on water bills
- ◆ Limit pollution from flowing into rivers
- ◆ Save water for use during droughts
- ◆ Control erosion and moisture accumulation near foundations
- ◆ Reduce demand for treated tap water

A rain barrel can save most homeowners **1,300 GALLONS** of water each year.

Brochure & Instructions

The instructions supplied with the DIY kits are difficult to read. We’ve simplified them for you!

Workshop Flyers, Images, and Graphics

Use customizable full and half page flyers to advertise your workshop around town. Pre-formatted graphics and images are also available to help advertise workshops.

“How to” Video

Our friends at Coca-Cola and Chattahoochee Riverkeeper produced this brief video explaining how to construct a rain barrel. Download and [watch the video](#) prior to your workshop and consider playing it during your presentation to give attendees a quick overview of the construction process. Please note: video shows drilling into the side of the downspout. Smaller downspouts should be drilled in the front.



Promotional Video

This 45 second video was created by Coca-Cola to highlight benefits of Project Rain Barrel. You may use the video to promote your workshop on social media. [Access the video on YouTube.](#)



Customizable Press Release

Add details about your workshop and send the press release to your local news outlets to generate excitement about your workshop. Better yet, invite a local newscaster to attend your workshop!

What Your Organization Provides

Your organization should anticipate incurring a few relatively minor expenses to host Project Rain Barrel workshops. You can recover these expenses by charging a workshop fee (see page 6, step 6).

Staff Time

Planning, promoting, and hosting a Project Rain Barrel workshop takes time. Utilize your volunteer base to keep staff costs low. Facilitating the average workshop should take no more than 10 hours total staff time.

Shipping Costs

River Network will pay shipping costs until funding runs out. Kits will be shipped directly to you from the CO Rain Catcher in Fort Collins, CO. Your organization will be responsible for shipping costs if River Network’s funding for shipping has run out (first-come first-served). Costs average \$1.25 per kit but can be higher for distant locations.

Drum Transportation & Storage

Your organization will be responsible for transporting donated ingredient drums from your local Coca-Cola facility or alternative source to the event location. You may need to rent a truck (see page 7, step 7). You will also need a space large enough to store the drums until the day of your workshop.



Power Drills

Power drills are required for constructing rain barrels and installing them at their final location. Ask coworkers, volunteers, and friends if you can borrow a few drills for your workshop. You could also ask workshop participants to bring drills. [Power drills can be rented](#) for around \$20 per day from local home improvement stores. River Network recommends at least one drill for every eight barrels.



Personal Protective Equipment

Workshop participants must wear [safety glasses](#) and [work gloves](#) when constructing rain barrels. Hole saws are sharp and can produce flying plastic fragments. Consider providing sunscreen if your workshop is outdoors.

Food and Beverages

Consider providing a small snack and/or beverages for workshop participants. Hosting a potluck as part of your workshop in another great way to build a sense of community!

Paint

You may choose to offer rain barrel painting as part of your workshop. This is a great way to get children more involved in workshops. Plastic primer is required to make paint adhere to barrels. Consider contacting a local recycling center or home improvement store for donations of miss-mixed paint. Paint pens also work well, especially for kids. Consider asking local artists to decorate barrels for auction or use at public locations. See the instructions document for painting advice and remember that additional time will be required to let paint dry before barrels can be transported home.

Printing

Please print a copy of the Project Rain Barrel brochure/instructions for each rain barrel.



Post-Event Reporting

You must agree to provide River Network with photos and accurate data about your workshop within 5 business days of the event. Reporting only takes 10 minutes and helps us share the collective impact of Project Rain Barrel. Failure to complete the report will disqualify your organization from receiving future program support.

Planning Your Workshop

Step 1: Determine Your Goals

Project Rain Barrel workshops are intended to go beyond simply providing low cost rain barrels to the community. Workshops are an opportunity to help participants understand where their water comes from, the health of their water source and system, where their stormwater goes, and how their everyday activities affect the health of local waterways and drinking water sources.

Participants should leave your workshop with a better understand of their local water system, its respective challenges, and potential solutions.

Hosting Project Rain Barrel workshops enables your organization to reach new constituents and attract positive attention through earned media coverage. Educational rain barrel workshops often inspire participants to get involved with water conservation in other ways. Be prepared to share ideas for how the community can get more involved with your organization's work!

Start outlining your workshop by evaluating your target audience and determining your goals and criteria for success. For example, the goal of your program could be to directly educate 50 people who live in your watershed, including at least 20 children, about where their drinking water comes from at 2 workshops per year.

Step 2: Select a Workshop Location and Date

Hosting a Project Rain Barrel workshop requires a publicly accessible venue where you can both assemble rain barrels and deliver an educational presentation. This will likely require access to a computer, projector, a screen or wall to project on, and seating for all participants. River Network recommends capping workshop attendance at 25 people or 25 families/couples/teams. Workshops may be held outdoors but you should have an indoor backup location in case of inclement weather. Building rain barrels specifically for use at public facilities doesn't require hosting a formal workshop.

Spring is generally the best time of year to host rain barrel workshops because people will be prepping their gardens for the upcoming growing season. Hosting a workshop at an Earth Day festival or as part of a larger community event is a great way to showcase your organization's work to a broader community. Rain barrels also make great gifts for the family gardener, so consider hosting a workshop the week before Mother's or Father's Day. All Project Rain Barrel workshops must be completed no later than August 31, 2022 due to the nature of the grant cycle. Most workshop hosts plan for a one-and-a-half or two-hour workshop on a weekend morning or evening. Midweek evening workshops can be successful if advertised at least six weeks in advance.

Step 3: Apply for Support from River Network

Please outline basic information about your proposed workshop including location/venue, timeframe (e.g. mid-April), and cost before applying for Project Rain Barrel support from River Network. See the How to Apply for Support section at the end of this document for the application link.

Step 4: Contact your Local Coca-Cola Facility

Independently owned and operated Coca-Cola bottling facilities and warehouses have generously agreed to donate empty 35 or 55-gallon heavy duty plastic food-grade ingredient drums to Project Rain Barrel and other community projects. Please respect facility manager’s time as they are going above and beyond normal work responsibilities to facilitate these donations and partnerships.

You will receive contact information for a local Coca-Cola facility if your application is approved. Please email and/or call your contact at least 6 weeks prior to your workshop so they may begin setting ingredient drums aside. Ask them to please include the barrel caps. You must coordinate directly with Coca-Cola and notify



River Network once you’ve confirmed ingredient drum availability. Hardware kits will be shipped once you’ve verified that donated drums are available.

You may source barrels from a supplier other than Coca-Cola if there is no facility near your workshop location, if Coca-Cola is unable to deliver drums to a more convenient location, or if not enough barrels are available. You must ensure that all drums did not contain harmful chemicals or irritants.

Step 5: Promote your Workshop

Please promote your rain barrel workshop aggressively via email, your organization’s newsletter, social media, and traditional media (e.g. press releases and flyers). Please give Coca-Cola and River Network credit for facilitating the program. Remind participants that their home must have gutters and downspouts and that they may need permission from their Home Owner’s Association or landlord before installing a rain barrel. This blog provides an overview of [state rain water harvesting legislation](#).

Consider creating a simple rain barrel photo contest to help promote future workshops. Workshop participants could be invited to post pictures of painted & installed rain barrels on your Facebook page or to email them for posting on your website, like the [Galveston Bay Foundation's Rain Barrel Program](#). Select one winner at random, have staff choose the winner, or ask Facebook followers to vote. The winning barrel could be featured in your next newsletter or the winner could receive your demonstration barrel as a prize.

Consider partnering with other community organizations to host and promote your workshops. Your local water utility could be a great partner. Some cities even have rebates or [incentives for installing rain barrels](#). Churches, civic groups, universities, farmers' markets, and Master Gardeners might be interested in helping host a workshop or advertising to their followers. Consider inviting employees of your local Coca-Cola facility to volunteer and participate.

Step 6: Register Participants and Collect Workshop Fees

River Network strongly recommends requiring workshop participants to pre-register and pre-pay for workshops. There are several options for registering workshop participants. The simplest but most time consuming method is to have interested participants email or call your organization to reserve their space. Alternatively, you could use a simple [Eventbrite](#) page for registration or create a registration form on your organizations' webpage. Please always provide a phone number for those who lack internet access.

While we do recommend keeping workshops free where possible, charging a workshop fee at the time of registration greatly increases the likelihood that registered participants will show up on time and follow through with installing their rain barrel at home, but it does create a barrier of access for low income communities. Workshop fees also help cover costs associated with hosting the workshop. Using Project Rain Barrel workshops as a fundraiser for your organization is acceptable. River Network recommends clearly stating a strict no refund policy on workshop registration pages. Unclaimed rain barrels can be donated or saved for your next workshop. Most workshop host organizations charge \$30 - \$40 for admission to the workshop which includes a complete rain barrel. This is inexpensive compared to commercial rain barrels which sell for at least \$100. Charging a workshop fee is not required but is acceptable. Free or very low cost workshops specifically targeted to low-income communities are encouraged.

Step 7: Collect and Transport Donated Ingredient Drums

Be sure to pick up your donated ingredient drums at least one week before your workshop. Most Coca-Cola facilities have security guards and internal processes for admitting guests onto their property. Please coordinate directly with your designated local Coca-Cola contact to determine if special arrangements need to be made.

All Coca-Cola facilities have standard operating procedures for moving their empty ingredient drums to a recycler or chipper on site. Please verify that the barrels you are picking up have been reserved for you. All facilities also have procedures for triple-rinsing and removing labels from donated ingredient drums. Some barrels may require extra rinsing and/or de-labeling before your workshop. **YOU ABSOLUTELY MUST REMOVE ANY AND ALL REMAINING LABELS FROM DONATED INGREDIENT DRUMS!** River Network is at risk of losing program funding if barrels are distributed to the public with labels still attached.

Drum Size	55 gallon	35 gallon
Height	39 inches	33 inches <input type="text"/>
Diameter	26 inches	19 inches
Weight	23 pounds	16 pounds
Volume	7.4 cubic feet	4.7 cubic feet

Be very careful when transporting drums on the road. You could cause a serious traffic accident if a drum falls out during transportation! The drums are bulky and will require a large truck and/or trailer for safe transportation. Vehicles must be able to hold and secure the entire load. This means you may need straps, rope, and/or a box truck. Coca-Cola facility staff rarely have time to help load vehicles. Please bring at least two people to load drums and do not make multiple trips to the Coca-Cola facility.

There are several options for transporting donated ingredient drums:

Rent a U-Haul box truck. A 10' U-Haul truck can be rented for about \$20 per day plus \$.79 per mile. A 10' truck will hold approximately 25 drums. River Network prefers this option because it eliminates the need to secure drums with tie-downs. U-Haul even has a [truck donation program](#) for registered 501(c)3 non-profits. Contact them at least three weeks before your event to request free use of a truck!

- Borrow a truck and trailer. A standard pickup truck can only hold a few drums. A 12' by 16' utility trailer with high sides can hold 24 drums strapped together. Consider putting out a request for volunteers who are willing to help you pick up and transport drums with their trucks. You may need multiple vehicles. Consider using [Volunteer Match](#) to reach local volunteers.
- Some Coca-Cola facilities may be able to deliver empty ingredient drums to a grocery store or other Coca-Cola retail location as part of their regular distribution route. Please recognize that this is an additional cost for Coca-Cola. Have staff or volunteers ready to quickly unload barrels when the delivery truck arrives and thank them profusely!

Step 8: Build a Demonstration Barrel

Build one demonstration barrel before your workshop. You'll be better able to describe the process to workshop participants after having built a barrel yourself. See the brochure for details on how to construct a rain barrel. Your organization may choose to keep a single demonstration barrel for future workshops.

Step 9: Host Your Workshop

Planning ahead is the key to success! Remember to record required workshop data (see Step 10) and take high quality photos of the event. Ask workshop participants if it's ok to take and share their photo.

A typical two-hour workshop starting at 10 am might proceed as follows:

- 10:00 – 10:10 Workshops participants arrive and sign in
- 10:10 – 10:30 Introduction to your organization’s work & problems facing your watershed, show PowerPoint
- 10:30 – 11:00 Rain barrel introduction – show “how to” video & explain RainRecycle kit parts
- 11:00 – 11:10 Participants break out, select a barrel, gather materials
- 11:10 – 11:45 Build barrels in small groups, sharing drills and safety glasses
- 11:45 – 12:00 Wrap up, share other ways to get involved, send participants home with remaining parts of the hardware kit and brochure



Step 10: Follow Up with Participants and River Network

River Network recommends emailing all workshop participants one week after your workshop. Thank your participants for attending and taking action to protect their local water resources. This is an opportunity to remind participants to share photos of their painted and installed rain barrel on social media. Also consider sharing other opportunities to get involved with your organization’s work and ways to stay informed or donate.

Your organization must submit this [post-event report form](#) to River Network *within 5 business days* of completing your workshop. A simple spreadsheet is a great way to keep track of workshop data and enable easier reporting. You may also use the provided sign-in sheet to collect information. Failure to report accurate and timely data will disqualify your organization from receiving Project Rain Barrel materials in the future.

You will be required to report the following information:

- Number of workshop participants and general age breakdown (age estimates are acceptable)
- Number of rain barrels constructed and installed during the workshop
- Number of rain barrels to be installed in public locations
- Number of volunteers engaged and hours worked
- One or two salient quotes from participants
- At least two high-quality workshop photos
- Total income (if any) generated from workshop fees

[Project Rain Barrel Post-Event Report Form](#)



Use this form to report results of your Project Rain Barrel workshop

1 Basic Information 2 Event Metrics 3 Photos, Quotes, and Media

Host organization *

Find this form at our website Rivernetwork.org -> Connect and Learn ->Project Rain Barrel -> scroll to the button '[Submit Your Post-Event Report!](#)'

How to Apply for Support

Your organization may apply for Project Rain Barrel materials and support from River Network after reviewing this guide and outlining the basic details of your workshop(s). Use this form to apply at least six weeks before your proposed workshop. Applications will close on January 31, 2022 or when materials run out. The absolute deadline for hosting workshops is August 31, 2022. If you have any questions please contact the Community Engagement Assistant msterett@rivernetwork.org