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**MOUNT AIRY CITIZENS FORM COLLECTIVE TO PURCHASE  
AQUABARREL RAIN BARRELS  
Gaithersburg-based Business Helps Local Municipality Cope with Summer Water  
Restrictions**

Mount Airy, MD, residents have received some help in coping with summer water restrictions—in the form of rain barrels.

Aquabarrel, a business based in Gaithersburg, MD, delivered 100 rain barrels to the city on Aug. 13. The Co-Op America-approved company is dedicated to supporting water conservation through the use of rain barrels.

Longstanding dry weather forced Mount Airy Mayor Frank Johnson to institute water use limitations in late July that will continue through mid-September. The Aquabarrels will help Mount Airy residents reduce their use of public water supplies by collecting rainwater from their rooftops for outdoor use, such as watering gardens and lawns, or washing cars and windows.

The large purchase of rain barrels was part of a pilot program sponsored and subsidized by Mayor Johnson and the Mount Airy Town Council, and coordinated by Tim Richard, co-director of Citizens for a Green Mount Airy ([www.greenmountairy.org](http://www.greenmountairy.org)). A July 21 water conservation workshop was an overwhelming success, and demand for rain barrels far exceeded the 20 barrels given away at the workshop. Richard quickly coordinated a rain barrel bulk purchasing collective to meet the demand. Aquabarrel was able to fulfill the collective's needs for 100 additional rain barrels by Aug. 13.

Richards found that Aquabarrel rain barrels have a “superior, more durable design” than the rain barrels supplied for the initial workshop. Aquabarrel's unique features include an extremely durable hose assembly located at the lowest point of the barrel and an oversized overflow port. All parts of the multi-piece hose assembly are made from materials with compatible rates of expansion and contraction, resulting in extra durability. The hose assembly's location at the bottom of the barrel maximizes water pressure and minimizes stagnant water at the bottom of the barrel. An extra-large overflow port lets the same volume of rainwater exit the full barrel as the downspout allows to enter the barrel.

Aquabarrels can be customized by adding specialized downspout diverters and filters. The company sells a wide range of these hard-to-find accessories, as well as ready-to-install rain barrels, rain barrel parts kits and instructional CDs. Company founder Barry Chenkin also offers installation services in and around the Washington, DC, metropolitan area.

Aquabarrel is committed to water conservation and protection of watersheds. The company was invited by the Anacostia Watershed Society to a July 28 event in Bladensburg, MD, to help spread the word on how rain barrels help protect waterways. Earlier in the summer, Aquabarrel participated in a “Green Merchants” event as part of the grand opening of the Rockville, MD, library.

Visit the company web site, [www.aquabarrel.com](http://www.aquabarrel.com), for free illustrated instructions on how to make an Aquabarrel-style rain barrel, a complete do-it-yourself parts list and links to other resources.