

DNREC Division of Watershed Stewardship accepting applications for youth artist rain barrel-painting contest through March 17

DOVER – DNREC's Division of Watershed Stewardship is now accepting applications from children and student groups in grades K-12 to participate in a rain barrel painting contest aimed at educating young Delawareans on the benefits of using rain barrels to reduce rainwater runoff and improve water quality. Selected children or groups will be invited to paint creative designs on rain barrels for later public display.

To enter the contest, young artists must complete and submit an application by Friday, March 17, with a description and preliminary sketch of their design. Watershed Stewardship staff will choose contest participants based on their application and design ideas.

Once contest participants are selected, they will have five weeks to finish their barrel painting and submit final photographs and information requested about their works.

Young artists who participate in the contest must be willing to give of their time and materials, including paint and brushes or other application tools, and provide a short biography. In exchange, Watershed Stewardship will provide a fully-assembled 55-gallon plastic rain barrel with two coats of primer applied, plus cans of clear top coat. This year's barrels have been donated by Tidewater Utilities, Dogfish Head Craft Brewery and Coca-Cola.

Photos of the finished rain barrels will be posted online for

public voting at <http://delawarewatersheds.org/>. The barrels also will be displayed at the Delaware Agricultural Museum and Village in Dover from May 31 through July 19. The top five painted entries as chosen by online voters will be displayed at the 2017 Delaware State Fair in Harrington from July 20-29, where they will be voted on again by fair visitors for best painted rain barrel. The five finalists also will be recognized with the first place barrel announced during the annual DNREC Awards program on Governors Day, Thursday, July 27, at the Delaware State Fair.

Applications are available online at <http://delawarewatersheds.org/>. Completed applications and sketches should be emailed to sharon.webb@delaware.gov or sent by close of business March 17 to:

DNREC Nonpoint Source Program
C/O Sharon Webb
State Street Commons
100 West Water Street, Suite 6B
Dover, DE 19904

For more information, please contact Sharon Webb at sharon.webb@delaware.gov or 302-739-9922.

What is a Rain Barrel?

A rain barrel is a container that collects and stores water from roofs and downspouts for uses such as watering lawns, gardens, and house plants; cleaning off gardening tools; and washing your car. Rain barrels help lower your water bills, particularly in the summer months by collecting thousands of gallons of water a year. Rain barrels are also important for our environment because they help reduce water pollution by decreasing the amount of stormwater runoff reaching our streams and rivers. An average rainfall of one inch within a 24-hour period can produce more than 700 gallons of water that run off a typical house. This stormwater runoff picks up anything on the ground such as litter, excess fertilizer, pet waste, and motor oil, transporting it to storm drains that

dump the untreated water directly into our waterways.

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