

# RAINWATER HARVESTING

## MAKING THE MOST OF OUR RESOURCES

### OVERVIEW

Rainwater harvesting is an age-old practice that has become popular again. It involves collecting and storing rainwater. The Riverside Nature Center has built a demonstration rainwater harvesting system.

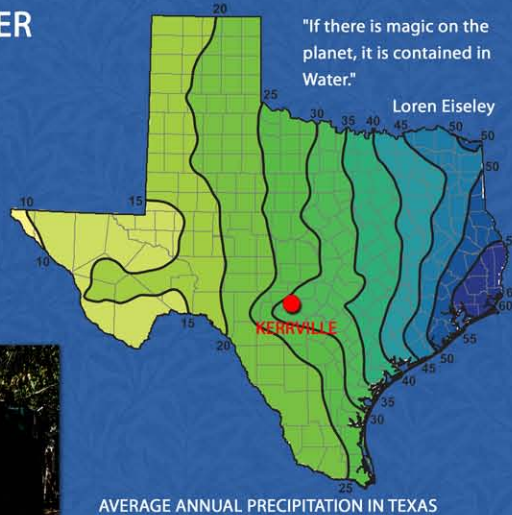
### HARVESTING FREE WATER

Rainwater harvesting conserves water and reduces utility costs. The Riverside Nature Center installed a rainwater harvesting system both as a demonstration and to supplement city water for its drip irrigation system. The system relies on gravity. Water is collected from the the building roofs, gathered into gutters and pipes, and stored in tanks that hold over 17,000 gallons of water.



### DID YOU KNOW?

The Chihuahuan Desert is only several hours to the west of Kerrville with an average rainfall of about 8 inches a year. Kerr County has a rainfall average of 32 inches.



### RAINWATER

Rainwater is naturally soft without chemicals found in treated water. However, because roof surfaces are not clean, it is not considered potable or drinkable. The Riverside Nature Center uses it only for irrigation.

### THE STORY BEHIND AVERAGES

Kerr County's average precipitation amount is around 32 inches annually. However, the amount varies dramatically from year to year. The most rainfall recorded in a single year over the past century was above 50 inches and the driest year was around 13 inches. This fluctuation makes water management a high priority in this area of Texas. Creative use of alternative sources of water such as rain harvesting is very important.

