Keep Mosquitoes out of your Rain Barrel

Rain collection devices need to be properly modified & maintained to keep mosquitoes out

Examples of UNSAFE Rain Collection

Large screens and perforated tops will NOT keep mosquitoes out

Modified or decorative tops will hold enough water to breed mosquitoes

Don't allow water to overflow above the screen or collect in the lid

Simple Tips to be Water Smart and Bite Free

Mosquitoes need water to lay their eggs and grow. Rain collection devices create a perfect environment for them. Prevent mosquito breeding with these tips:

1. Intake Opening

Always keep the intake opening covered with screen and tightly sealed. A double layer of fine mesh window screen is necessary to keep mosquitoes out. Hoses and downspouts should not feed directly into the rain barrel. An air gap is required so that water must pass through the screen of the intake opening.
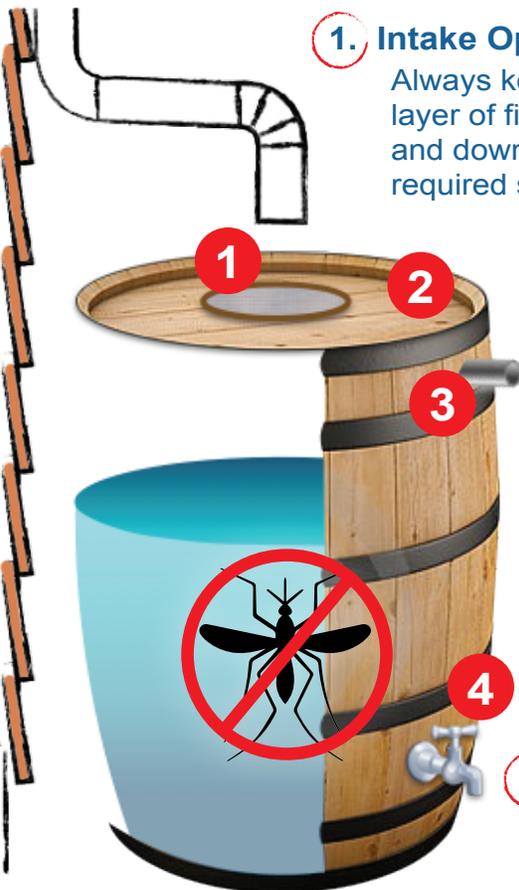
2. Decorative Top

Some rain barrels have design elements that can hold water or a rim that allows water to overflow and collect above the screen. Choose a barrel with a smooth top, keep the depressions filled with sand or remove water immediately after rains.

3. Overflow Port

If left open, the overflow port creates an access point for mosquitoes. Securing two layers of fine mesh screen around the opening is recommended.

4. Outflow Port/Valve

Because the outflow valve is an inch or two from the bottom of the barrel, when drained the barrel will still hold water in the bottom below the valve. Securing two layers of fine mesh screen around the opening in recommended as well as keeping the valve closed. The remaining water needs to be removed and the barrel should stay completely dry between rain events.

For more information:
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San Gabriel Valley Mosquito & Vector Control District

Failure to properly prevent mosquitoes can result in increased health risks in your community, and may result in fines up to $1,000 per day in accordance with the California Health and Safety Codes 2000-2067

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