

or allowed to drip on plants.

**Storage Tank:** Tanks are available in a range of materials and sizes. For small installations, tanks, including whiskey barrels, 55-gallon drums, and horse troughs can be used. For large installations, many options exist for



*Water features provide beauty and high quality rainwater extends the life of equipment.*

manufactured and site-built systems. The size and material the collection tank is made of can vary depending on the size needed, demands for aesthetics, and money available. A 55 gallon barrel may be handy and sufficient for special or smaller needs. While polyethylene, wood, galvanized metal, concrete, masonry or fiberglass may be most appropriate. The aesthetics, life expectancy, availability and size needed will dictate the material to use. The tank needs to be as light tight as possible to prevent algae buildup and mosquito proof to prevent other problems.

**Other Parts:** There will be a need for an overflow pipe to prevent water from backing up into the gutter. A set of gate valves, facets and connections to get the water to the desired location, pump and pressure tank if there is a need to send water up hill or if a mist or spray system is needed. Also a water level gage is handy. It can be a short piece of clear hose connected to a facet and connected to the top of the tank allowing water to rise to the same level in the hose as it is in the tank. Filters and sanitizers can be added to provide high quality drinking water inside the home.

## Water Uses

**Landscape Usage:** Turf is very water demanding. It is recommended to put 1" of water on the turf each time you irrigate to allow water to move down 6 inches or more into the soil profile for deeper, healthier roots and plants. This also allows there to be more time allowed between irrigations. Therefore the demands for watering turf suggests that no more than a third of the landscape be in turf. Another third should be hardscape and the other third in adapted shrubs and flowers. I even prefer less turf if there is not the need for it. The location of each should be well thought out to get the most enjoyment out of the yard and most efficient usage of the water. Drip irrigation works great in landscape watering without the need for electrical or mechanical equipment. There is enough pressure exerted from the tank to supply effective usage of emitters. If misters are needed in a green house or bed of annuals, a shallow well pump and pressure tank are sufficient.

**Water Features:** Water can be used in ponds in the back yard or any number of places. It can support fish, amphibians, reptile, birds and bugs and wetland areas. The sound of running and splashing water is soothing, relaxing, and inviting to both humans and wildlife. Ponds can be constructed to provide for various needs. Recirculating pumps can provide motion or emitters can be used to provide a dripping sound for birds and critters.



*A small water guzzler provides water for wildlife. A roof, 50 gallon barrel and pet waterer is all required*