



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: November 12, 2021

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San Mateo Countywide Rain Barrel Distribution Event, Saturday November 13

SAN MATEO, California — Flows To Bay, the public outreach arm of the San Mateo Countywide Water Pollution Prevention Program (SMCWPPP), will be having a rain barrel distribution event on Saturday, Nov. 13, 2021 to distribute 330 barrels purchased during its pilot program to San Mateo County residents. Residents from 18 of the county's 20 cities and towns, including unincorporated area, will be picking up their barrels from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the City of San Mateo Public Works facility located at 1949 Pacific Blvd, San Mateo, CA where team members will be confirming their orders and loading the purchased barrels into vehicles. The initial goal was to get 100 rain barrels sold, but the program maxed out the available inventory with over triple that amount. There is also current waitlist of almost 200 more San Mateo County residents requesting rain barrels once inventory is available.

Launched in late September and selling out in four weeks, the inaugural rain barrel program encouraged County residents and businesses to save money and water by offering high-quality, 50-gallon rain barrels priced at \$80 a piece. SMCWPPP also promoted their countywide rain barrel rebate program that provides a minimum \$50 rebate per rain barrel. Resident may still take advantage of the rain barrel rebate program with any qualifying rain barrel purchase and can get additional information at flowstobay.org/rainbarrel.

California is experiencing ongoing drought conditions, and San Mateo County is included in the declared State of Emergency. Flows To Bay encourages the use of rain barrels as a low-cost, easy to maintain, and effective water capture and conservation strategy. At 50-gallon capacity a piece, the rain barrels from this program will be able to capture 16,500 gallons of water each time the barrels are filled—which would only require an eighth of an inch of rain falling on a 500 square foot roof area.

By capturing rainwater during the upcoming wet winter months, rain barrels help cut back potable water used for irrigation and can help mitigate future drought conditions by providing storage for drier months. Beyond the water conservation and financial benefits, capturing rainwater also improves the water quality of our local creeks, the San Francisco Bay, and the Pacific Ocean. Rainfall funnels into streets, collecting urban pollutants from all surfaces, including roofs. These pollutants then flow into storm drains and nearby waterways without treatment. Runoff is the number one source of pollution in our waterways nationwide.

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Flows To Bay is a program of the City/County Association of Governments of San Mateo County, a joint powers agency of the County and the 20 cities and towns in San Mateo County. In addition to funding green infrastructure projects, C/CAG supports its member agencies in achieving State-mandated stormwater pollution reduction requirements through countywide and regional collaboration on stormwater planning, water quality monitoring, community outreach and engagement, and public education.



PRESS RELEASE | FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: November 19, 2021

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San Mateo County Residents Line Up To Help Conserve Water, Prevent Water Pollution



SAN MATEO, California — On Saturday, November 13, 2021, Flows To Bay held an event to distribute 330 USA-made, 50-gallon rain barrels purchased during its pilot program to San Mateo County residents. Residents from 18 of the county’s 20 cities and towns and unincorporated areas picked up their barrels at the City of San Mateo Public Works facility located at 1949 Pacific Blvd, San Mateo, CA.

Launched in late September as an effective water capture and conservation strategy against California's ongoing drought condition, rain barrels for this program sold out in just four weeks. By capturing rainwater during the upcoming wet winter months, rain barrels help cut back potable water used for irrigation (or even indoor use for things like watering houseplants) and can help mitigate future drought conditions by providing storage for drier months.

"This program aimed to educate residents about the water conservation and pollution prevention aspects of rain barrels to San Mateo County residents while providing an easy and affordable way to take action. The countywide rain barrel rebate funded by the City/County Association of Governments of San Mateo County (C/CAG) and partnering agencies from the Bay Area Water Supply and Conservation Agency (BAWSCA) coupled with this rain barrel program is just one way that we hope to underscore just how valuable water is as a resource. Clean water, a healthy community—it's truly a team effort!" said Reid Bogert, C/CAG Stormwater Program Specialist.



Beyond water conservation, capturing rainwater also improves the water quality of our local creeks, the San Francisco Bay, and the Pacific Ocean. Rainfall funnels into streets, collecting urban pollutants from all surfaces, including roofs. These pollutants then flow into storm drains and nearby waterways without treatment. Runoff is the number one source of pollution in our waterways nationwide. Rain barrels help reduce the amount of pollutants that reach our waterways.

Just how much of an impact did this program have?

At 50-gallons of capacity a piece, the purchased rain barrels from this program will collectively capture 16,500 gallons of water each time the barrels are filled—which would only require an eighth of an inch of rain falling on a 500 square foot roof area in a single rain event. After just one inch of rain, say over the course of a couple months and with regular use of the captured water, these rain barrels could capture and supplement our residents with 132,000 gallons throughout the county. That's no drop in the bucket!

The initial goal for this program was to secure 100 rain barrel pre-orders, but the program maxed out the available inventory with over triple that amount. Flows To Bay is also working on a solution to provide the almost 200 San Mateo County residents on the current waitlist once inventory and another hosting site are arranged. Residents interested in signing up for the waitlist may do so at flowstobay.org/waitlist.

“This is exactly the kind of engagement and community support we are seeking to provide through the Countywide Stormwater Program and our longstanding partnership with BAWSCA on the Rain Barrel Rebate Program. As seen through the tremendous interest in and enthusiastic turnout for this unique pre-order rain barrel campaign event, our residents are thirsty for ways to improve their sustainable use of water, help protect the environment, and buffer the effects of climate change, locally and beyond. We're thrilled with the results of this pilot campaign, and look forward to expanding it in future years,” stated Marie Chuang, Chair of the C/CAG Board of Directors and Councilmember, Town of Hillsborough.

Resident may still take advantage of the rain barrel rebate program with any qualifying rain barrel purchase. To learn more visit flowstobay.org/rainbarrel.

Link to logos and images:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1wJQyhV5WeTn3dM3kkO0xbEakFoweHlxM?usp=sharing>

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