



Cistern Reward Instructions and Design Guidelines City of Gaithersburg RainScapes Rewards Program

General Information

To be eligible for a rebate, projects must be installed at a single-family residential property, homeowners association, private education facility, nonprofits, or multifamily dwelling located in the City of Gaithersburg. To verify the property is within the city boundary you may review the city map here: gburg.md/StormwaterProgramFee.

Eligible properties can receive up to a total of \$5,000 per property owner in rebates. If an existing property owner received \$2,500 of rebates and sells the property, the new property owner is eligible for \$5,000 in rebates.

Property owners are encouraged to schedule a pre-application meeting with Chesapeake Bay Trust (Trust) staff. This will ensure that all aspects of the project and application process are fully considered. Contact the Trust at gaithersburgrebate@cbtrust.org to schedule a meeting.

Cistern means a container that holds at least 250 gallons or more of precipitation for landscape irrigation or other non-potable uses. Program participants who follow application guidelines are eligible for a rebate of **\$1 per gallon for cistern installations with a minimum volume of 250 gallons.**

Eligibility

- ✓ To participate, the subject property must be located within the jurisdictional boundaries of the City of Gaithersburg. *If you are unsure about the location of your property, please confirm at gburg.md/StormwaterProgramFee.*
- ✓ Projects are **not** eligible if they are associated with permit approval requirements for new building construction, additions, or renovations.
- ✓ Projects that are partially or completely finished before approval will **not** qualify for rebates.
- ✓ All requirements as outlined below, in the application, and in the Design Guidelines for project eligibility (attached) must be met. All decisions are final and at the sole discretion of the City of Gaithersburg.
- ✓ ***This program does not supersede any zoning requirements.***

Application Process and Requirements

1. **Review requirements and submit your application.** Review all requirements and Design Guidelines below. Then, complete the online application found at <https://cbtrust.org/grants/city-of-gaithersburg-rainscapes-reward-program/>. Have photos of the project area(s), approval letters, and other documentation ready to upload. Please allow at least 14 business days for application processing.
2. **Receive application pre-approval and sign Property Owner Agreement.** Wait to receive pre-approval from the RainScapes Coordinator before purchasing or installing the project.
3. **Purchase materials and complete your project.** You must retain and submit itemized receipts and/or invoices for all project costs. Documented costs must equal or exceed the rebate amount requested. The project must adhere to the most recent Design Guidelines for Project Eligibility.

4. **Submit your reimbursement form, receipts, and/or invoices.** Send your reimbursement form, itemized receipts, and/or final invoices. Scanned copies or photocopies are acceptable. Once the project is complete, upload all related receipts, final invoices, and photos of the completed project your online portal (<https://bbgm-apply.yourcausegrants.com/apply/applications>). A final inspection site visit may be scheduled within 14 business days.
5. **Final inspection.** At the final inspection, installation of the project will be verified, and the project area will be photographed.
6. **Receive reimbursement check.** Once all requirements are met, the rebate will be approved, and a check will be issued by the Chesapeake Bay Trust within four (4) to six (6) weeks.

Cistern Design Guidelines

Issue Date 7/1/2025

These guidelines and criteria will be periodically updated to ensure currency with the latest technical information and best practices – please verify that you have the latest version.

Written approval from the RainScapes Coordinator is required before you begin installation or construction. Projects installed before approval will not qualify for rebates.

Cistern Requirements:

- ☐ Minimum size: 250 gallons
- ☐ Required elements:
 - Inlet connected to a downspout.
 - Secure lid and/or screen for safety and mosquito control.
 - Water spigot at the bottom of the cistern for releasing water.
 - Made of hard plastic or wood, no bags.
 - Overflow with pipe that releases water on to the ground.
 - Clear access for cleaning the inlets when necessary.
 - If re-purposing a barrel, it needs to be food grade.
- ☐ Location requirements:
 - Must be **above ground**.
 - Must be on private property.
 - Installed on a solid, level support base.
 - Overflow must drain onto a pervious surface (grass, garden, etc.) or back into the downspout.
 - Positive overflow drainage outlet must be directed a minimum of 4ft away from building's foundation and must not change the pre-existing flow path of stormwater.
 - After application submittal, you will be contacted for a preliminary inspection to ensure site suitability.

Documentation Requirements:

To complete the application process, you will need to complete and submit the following:

Pre-Installation:

- ☐ Photos of the project site (up to five).
- ☐ Location plan; indicate foundation area and plan (materials, thickness, width, drainage, etc.)
- ☐ Cistern description, which may be submitted as a link in a word document or PDF of planned purchase.
- ☐ A plan for winter drawdown/emptying, safe overflow, and mosquito management
- ☐ If applying as a homeowner within an HOA, condominium association, or non-profit, you will need to upload a project approval letter from your organization's board.
- ☐ If applying as a renter, you will need to upload a project approval letter from the property owner.
- ☐ Sign and submit the Property Owner Agreement.

Post-Installation:

- ☐ Submit itemized receipts (tax will be subtracted).
- ☐ Schedule and pass final inspection.