

Old-fashioned water-saving technique gets new twist

COAST CITIES — With summer bringing a Level 2 Drought Alert and mandatory water conservation measures beginning July 1, Ace Raingutters offers a new twist on an old-fashioned rain barrel that makes conserving water simple and attractive.

"It is not always easy bringing these two things together, saving money and saving water in a stylish manner," said North County locals Andy Moffat and Mark Mangen, owners of Ace Raingutters. "Often, you'll find 'rain barrels' made out of old beverage containers that don't add to the aesthetics of your yard or your home."

Rainwater is naturally pure, naturally soft and free of chlorine and pesticides. Plants and gardens love it. Also, using saved gray water in your rain barrel will allow efficient recycling of water without ugly buckets. Ace Raingutters most popular model of rain barrel is the Algreen Cascata.

"They're beautiful," Hansen said. "They add such a beautiful decorative element to your home. It's hard to believe they are actually saving water, too."

Cascata Rain Barrels combine the timeless aesthetic elegance of ceramics with the enduring longevity of UV-stable, BPA-free, scratch- and chip-resistant polyethylene that is able to withstand extreme temperature with a terra cotta look in three colors. Each barrel features a quality brass spigot, corrosion-proof



WATER SAVER Ace Raingutters are offering an attractive new way to conserve water with their gutters, rain chains and storage barrels. *Courtesy photo*

screen guard overflow valve, a six-foot garden hose with a shut-off nozzle and a metal hook for storing the hose.

The 65-gallon urn also has a removable top with a recessed crown basin for storing yard accessories or displaying a potted plant. The smaller, 50-gallon Algreen Agua Rain

Barrel is also made up of the same quality polyethylene, also with the hose and shut-off valve.

Ace Raingutters is open weekdays from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. and weekends from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. For more information, visit www.aceraingutters.com or call (760) 734-4888.



MOSAIC MAESTRO

Terry Oshrin, mosaic and jewelry artist, was part of the San Dieguito Art Guild Annual Mother's Day Weekend Artist Studio and Garden Tour held May 9 and May 10. This was a self-guided tour featuring eight Guild members' homes, gardens and art studios. The San Dieguito Art Guild has been a nonprofit, 501(c)4 community organization since 1965. This year the tour netted the Guild \$14,000 which will be used to off-set the Off Track Gallery operating expenses. More than \$1,000 of the proceeds from this tour will be donated to a local school's art department. The school receiving the money will be voted on at the next guild board meeting. *Courtesy photo*

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foundation with a screwdriver to check for rotted wood. To check for carpenter ants, look for piles of sawdust along baseboards. Regular termites also shed wings along windowsills, walls and other entry points.

Rodents gravitate toward disorder and debris, such as leaf piles around the founda-

tion. Plug holes in the siding and the foundation walls with expandable foam. Don't forget to look up for signs of birds, bees, or squirrels in soffits and attic vents.

4. Mold and mildew. Even houses in arid climates aren't immune. Hot outdoor temperatures can drive even small amounts of water trapped in the structure to condense on colder interior surfaces, leading to mold. Musty odors,

dank air and family members with chronic runny noses are warning signs. Check under carpets and around windows for visible mold or mildew. Also remove cover plates for cable-TV, phone and Internet connections, and use a flashlight to peer behind walls and wallpaper for mold.

If indoor mold covers less than 10 square feet, treat it yourself with a homemade solution of 1 cup chlorine bleach per gallon of water. Be sure to don an N-95 disposable respirator, goggles and heavy-duty gloves. Professional remediation is required for larger outbreaks.

5. Foundation cracks. Some cracks are harmless, but others can mean trouble. Hairline cracks can be filled with an epoxy-injection system. Cracks wider than 3/16 inch, even vertical ones, can be a problem. Mark smaller cracks with tape and monitor their progress over the coming months. Also be on the lookout for horizontal cracks or bulging or buckling. Along with expanding cracks, those conditions require the attention of a structural engineer. CR warns that the longer you wait to correct a problem, the more costly it will probably be.

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