

City of Bisbee, Arizona Water Harvesting Projects



Bisbee is a small community of 5,000 residents nestled in the Mule Mountains in southeast Arizona. Average annual rainfall is 18" and primarily falls in torrential monsoonal downpours in July, Aug and early September, and in gentle rains during the winter months. Spring is windy, hot and dry.

To help protect depleting groundwater supplies, in 2012, the City of Bisbee began harvesting rainwater.

In 2012, the City participated in the installation of their first rainwater collection system selecting City Park in Old Bisbee as the pilot site. The University of Arizona Cochise County Cooperative Extension Water Wise Program obtained three successful grants to train city personnel and residents on how to construct 660 gallon, 4' x 8' corrugated metal pipe (CMP) cisterns (great for public places where vandalism could be a problem). After city personnel learned how to install the cisterns, with their oversight, community members installed the second CMP as a "barn-raising" event. A youth mural contest was held and local judges selected murals to be painted on the tanks. Gutters were installed on the ramada that not only directed rain into the tanks but also reduced flooding problems in the park and property damage on the offices below the park. This project was funded with grants from the Cochise Community Foundation, the Upper San Pedro Partnership and the Bisbee Bloomers. In-kind-service was provided by the city.

City Park, Brewery Gulch, Old Bisbee

Collection capacity: Approx. 1,200 gallons
Containers: Two 600-gallon corrugated metal pipes "CMP"s
Roof collection area: 1260 sq ft.
Filtration: Coarse screen rainheads
Rainwater delivery: Gravity
Rainwater use: Landscape irrigation



In 2013, city personnel used the skills they learned from the first CMP installations and installed a third CMP in the newly renovated Grassy Park in downtown Old Bisbee. The Cochise Water Project, a local non-profit, funded this cistern project.



Grassy Park, Main St, Old Bisbee

Collection capacity: Approx. 660 gallons
Containers: 1- 600 gallon corrugated metal pipe "CMP"
Roof collection area: 576 sq ft.
Filtration: Gutter screens
Rainwater delivery: Gravity
Rainwater use: Landscape irrigation

