

Cisterns and Rain Barrels: Antigua, Bermuda, BVI, and Jamaica

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Cis-tern:

An artificial reservoir used for storing liquids and especially water (as rainwater).

In some locations on several Caribbean islands, cisterns are still the main source of drinking and irrigation water.

Part of a cistern is usually above and below ground. Some are build entirely underground below the house, such as under the kitchen or porch.

Antigua



The island averages 41 inches of rainfall per year.



Water from this sloped concrete roof is collected in a cistern, the dome of which can be seen at the end of the roof.



These two cisterns, built of mortar, are at Nelson's Dockyard. Lord Horatio Nelson was famous for his service in the Royal Navy. He died in 1805 in the Battle of Trafalgar against forces of Napoleon Bonaparte. The admiral lived on the island for a time.



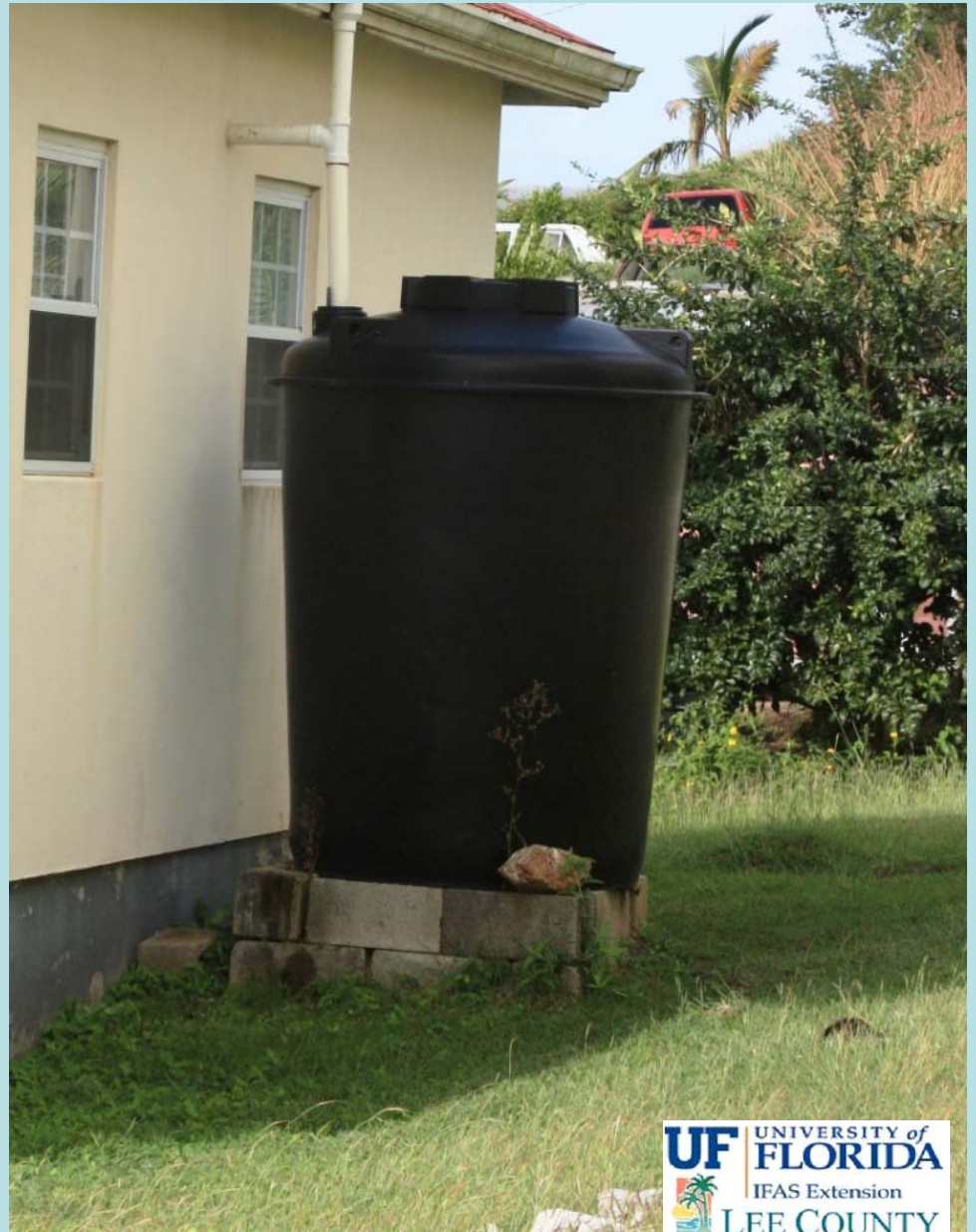
An old, and still serving, cistern made of metal.



Lighter, plastic rain barrels are now in use.



This rain barrel is used simultaneously with water piped into the house.







Bermuda



The islands average about 56 inches of rainfall per year.





In this historical home, the door of cistern is used to retrieve water.

Anegada, British Virgin Island



Anegada is the flattest (lowest to sea level) island in the Caribbean and is in fact a coral island.



Unknown photographer

This house and its cistern were probably built at the turn of the last century.



A rain barrel used to collect rain water from the roof. It supplies irrigation water to a 1.0 acre small farm.

Jamaica



- Most of the cisterns shown were built in the 50's and 60's.
- Cisterns were usually built a few feet from the house, the bulk of which were below ground.
- Cisterns were usually built either in front of or behind the house.



Pedro Plains, Jamaica



Pedro Plains, Jamaica



Water moves into the cistern from both roofs of the house, and directly through the slats of the metal roof covering the cistern. This area usually gets about 38" of rainfall a year.
House A, Queensbury, Jamaica



The bucket used to collect water.

House A, Queensbury, Jamaica



In this case, water flows from the sloped concrete slab in the foreground, which is also part of the cistern, and into the lower portion of the cistern having the metallic roof. House B, Queensbury, Jamaica



Water can be collected with a bucket or pumped upwards into a second tank (known as an air tank, and not pictured here) which is then gravity fed into the house.
House B, Queensbury, Jamaica



House C, Queensbury, Jamaica



Here, water is collected into the cistern from the roof and pumped upwards into the air tank (center) and gravity fed into the house. The bottom of the air tank serves as the laundry room and supplies water to the washing machine.

Treasure Beach, Jamaica



The above ground dimension of this cistern is 20' long, 18' wide, and 6' tall at its highest end. It is roof fed.
Southfield, Jamaica



An abandoned house and a cistern without a roof.
Southfield, Jamaica



The depth and interior construction of a cistern. This cistern is about 12 feet in depth.
Southfield, Jamaica



A new house and a new cistern. This cistern is much larger than the one in the previous slides. The method of collecting water has not changed.
South Field, Jamaica

- All pictures taken by Stephen Brown except where indicated.
- Do you have pictures of cisterns or rain barrels, from anywhere in the world, you would like to become a part of this presentation and placed on line?
- Send them to me at brownsh@ufl.edu
- To get to my web page click on <http://lee.ifas.ufl.edu/hort/GardenHome.shtml>

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