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**NEWS RELEASE FROM THE OFFICE OF:**

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COUNTY EXTENSION AGENT  
GREGG COUNTY**

***Rainwater Harvesting To Save Money***

Even if you live where annual rainfall averages only 12 inches, you can save money by collecting and storing rainwater and using it to irrigate your trees, shrubs and lawn.

Efficient water use is increasingly important to Texas. With the state's growing population and limited supply of both groundwater and surface water, Texans must use water wisely. Rainwater harvesting is an innovative approach anyone can use.

Rainwater harvesting captures, diverts and stores rainwater for later use. Rainwater can even be used for drinking, with proper treatment. But the easiest way to use stored rainwater is for landscaping. In many communities, 30 to 50 percent of the total water is used for landscape irrigation. If that demand for a limited natural resource can be reduced, everyone benefits.

Harvesting rainwater for use in the home landscape:

- ◇ Saves you money by reducing your water bills.
- ◇ Reduces demand on the municipal water supply.
- ◇ Makes efficient use of a valuable resource.
- ◇ Reduces flooding, erosion and the contamination of surface water with sediments, fertilizers and pesticides in rainfall run-off.

Rainwater is good for plants because it is free of salts and other minerals that harm root growth. As rainwater percolates into the soil, it forces salts down and away from root zones, allowing roots to grow better and making plants more drought tolerant.

Rainwater harvesting can be used both in large-scale landscapes, such as parks, schools, commercial sites, parking lots and apartment complexes, and in small residential landscapes. Whether your landscape is large or

small, developed or new, installing a rainwater harvesting system can help you save money on your water bills while reducing the demand on the municipal water supply.

For more information on designing and building a rainwater harvesting system, contact the Gregg County Extension Office.

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