

Household Rainwater Recycling (Installation Rebate, State and Federal Tax Credit Proposal)

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Abstract

Proposing a quest for installation rebate, state and federal tax credit program that compliments lower sewer and water fees for homeowners who collect rainwater and reuse it for irrigation. This is an easy, environmentally friendly way of conserving water and in principal is similar to solar panel installation incentives.

The rainwater collection structure is an underground cistern with a pump, similar to septic tank, which collects rainwater running off from gutters, and this water may be later used for irrigation or other household needs for non-potable water.

There is a contractor (perhaps several contractors) in Hawaii, who offers the parts and labor to install the whole system. See attached brochure. Who has the authority to turn this proposal into reality?

Introduction

Being a house-owner, in my search how to conserve resources, I concentrated on water and electricity. I found good incentives regarding electricity - solar panels - and quite extensive savings in forms of not only smaller electricity usage, but also rebates and federal and state tax credits. However, I have not found many incentives regarding water conservation devices, with the exception of the ultra-flushing toilet and tips how to not waste water. In Hawaii, we have abundant rainfall that seems to be mostly wasted running off from the gutters of households to be diverted to the ocean. On the other hand, we consume a lot of water for irrigation. All this run-off rainwater could be trapped, and than reused for irrigation. To promote this conservation procedure, I would like the state of Hawaii (as well as eventually the federal departments) to offer similar incentives in form of installation rebate, state tax credit and federal tax credit, as is offered for solar panels. This type of incentive and conservation system already runs well in other countries (e.g. Australia). Homeowners than would benefit not only from lower water bills and sewer fees, but also from tax credits, along with a piece of mind of environmental consciousness.

Body

Since especially in Hawaii there are many areas with abundant rainfall, I am considering installing a structure (similar to septic tank) collecting rainwater from gutters and using it later for irrigation. Already, I was able to find a contractor, who has the abilities and all the supplies and materials to install this water conservation system. The contractor is International Wastewater Technologies, LLC, www.internationalwastewater.com. The

offered product is called ProSTEP Effluent Pumping System. On the website, as well as on attached brochure is a description of the system and its components.

The system consists of

- Fiberglass tank buried in the ground (different sizes available).
- Pump with filters and floats (monitoring water level).
- Splice box (internal/external).
- Risers, lids, and accessories.
- Discharge assembly.
- Pump.
- Control panel (digitally programmable).

The system is buried underground; only a non-disturbing, green-colored opening of the size of sewer canal (similar to the ones on streets) is seen on surface. A significant weight can be put on top of the soil above (although it is not recommended to install the tank underneath a driveway). Additional filters can be installed to purify the water. Control panel can be programmed to pump water out for irrigation at set times or at set water level. Maintenance is minimal. Warranty plans apply.

Because the total installation cost runs about \$5,000 (comparable to the solar panel installation cost), without any kind of major incentives homeowners might be reluctant to invest such amount of money into installation of rainwater recycling system. If the homeowners were granted an installation rebate and tax credits, the system could become as common as the household solar panels.

Conclusion

Hawaii has abundant rainfall that is being wasted as run-off. Homeowners use a lot of water for irrigation. There is a contractor with all the necessary elements to install gutter rainwater collection cistern that stores rainwater for later use. It is simple, it is doable, it makes sense. Homeowners save on water bill, sewer bill, recycle water; this is a perfect water conservation plan. Why has nobody initiated and enforced a program that would offer installation rebates and tax credits to homeowners installing this recycling rainwater system? Where do we need to go, who do we need to talk to to start the process?!!