

	STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE BUILDING & SITE DEVELOPMENT	Number: 250.4
Approval: Yves Khawam		Effective Date: June 11, 2008
Subject: Permitting requirements for water tanks		Page 1 of 2

1.0 PURPOSE:

This document clarifies permitting requirements for water tanks/rain harvesting cisterns.

2.0 REVISION HISTORY:

Revised on 8/10/10 to merge building and zoning requirements. Renumbered SOP from 640.1 on 12/30/10.

3.0 PERSONS AFFECTED:

Permitting staff and public at large.

4.0 ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY:

Permitting requirements for rainwater harvesting cistern/tanks shall be as follows:

- Water tanks supported directly on grade of up to 1000 gallons used for water storage or rain harvesting purposes are exempt from permitting requirements regardless of aspect ratio.
- Water tanks supported directly on grade between 1000 gallons and 5000 gallons are exempt from permitting requirements when ratio of height to diameter or width does not exceed 2:1.
- Water tanks exceeding 5000 gallons shall require a building permit.
- All water cisterns/tanks exceeding four feet in height need to comply with the maximum height and setbacks limitations for accessory structures within the installed zone. If a building permit is not required per the above three bullet items, height and setbacks can either be reviewed by consulting the Zoning Code at www.pima.gov/developmentservices, or can be confirmed by applying for a voluntary building permit through Development Services and paying applicable fees.

Note that permanently installed electrical/pumping equipment incidental to tanks, regardless of size, shall require a building permit.



5.0 DEFINITIONS:

Not applicable.

6.0 RESPONSIBILITIES:

Not applicable.

7.0 PROCEDURES:

Not applicable.



Title 18 – Zoning, Chapter 18.07 – General Regulations and Exceptions

18.07.030 – Land Use Regulations

R. Rainwater Harvesting System.

1. Rainwater harvesting systems are permitted in all zones, subject to the requirements and exceptions of this subsection:
 - a. Exposed openings to cisterns shall be screened with a corrosion resistant metallic fine mesh to prevent mosquitoes from entering.
 - b. Large openings in cisterns shall be securely fastened to prevent accidental drowning.
 - c. Overflow or discharge from rainwater harvesting systems must not have an adverse impact on adjacent property or rights-of-way.
 - d. Cistern setbacks:
 - 1) Front: In accordance with the minimum front yard requirements for a main structure or building of the underlying zone.
 - 2) Side: In accordance with the minimum side yard requirements for an accessory structure or building of the underlying zone, except that zero lot line siting is permissible for cisterns eight feet or less in height, excluding piping, on lots of eight thousand square feet or less.
 - 3) Rear: In accordance with the minimum rear yard requirements for an accessory structure or building of the underlying zone.
 - e. Exceptions for cisterns:
 - 1) Cisterns forty-eight inches or less in height and width excluding piping are exempt from minimum yard distance setback requirements of the underlying zone.
 - 2) Cisterns are exempt from maximum lot coverage requirements of the underlying zone.
 - 3) For single detached or one-family dwellings on lots of less than seventy-two thousand square feet, if more than two cisterns are visible within a front or side yard from a single point on an abutting street, the cisterns must be screened with a minimum five-foot-high wall, fence, or hedge.

S. Stormwater Harvesting System.

1. Purpose. The use of stormwater harvesting systems can:
 - a. Increase on-site stormwater infiltration to reduce run-off and soil erosion;
 - b. Improve stormwater quality by absorption, filtration and uptake of pollutants into natural systems;

- c. Provide a low-cost, sustainable source of irrigation to augment and reduce use of groundwater resources;
 - d. Support landscaping to create shade, lessen urban heat island, improve air quality and beautify local development;
 - e. Provide wildlife habitat and preserve and enhance existing riparian corridors; and
 - f. Reduce the burden on and cost of building public stormwater control structures.
2. Stormwater harvesting systems are permitted in all zones, subject to the requirements and exceptions of this subsection:
- a. Design, installation and use of stormwater harvesting systems should use as guidance, where applicable, Pima County Code Title 16-Floodplain Management, the Regional Flood Control District Manual "Design Standards for Stormwater Detention and Retention," the City of Tucson/Pima County "Low Impact Development-Green Infrastructure Guidance Manual," and other accepted stormwater harvesting principles and guidelines for arid climates approved by the floodplain administrator and planning official.
 - b. Stormwater harvesting shall be reviewed in conjunction with site improvement plan review.
 - c. Stormwater harvesting systems shall be designed to:
 - 1) Collect stormwater from all on-site paved, impervious or disturbed surfaces, but may also collect off-site non-regulatory stormwater;
 - 2) Drain directly into bufferyards, off-street parking, and other required landscape and screening areas, as well as detention basins and areas that augment existing riparian habitat; and
 - 3) Allow the flow of stormwater between harvesting elements across the site — walls, hardscaping, and other structures shall also be designed to facilitate stormwater flow.