

## Preventing rainwater contamination – Rainwater tanks

Rainwater is relatively free from impurities except those picked up by rain from the atmosphere, but the quality of rainwater may deteriorate during harvesting, storage and household use. Poor hygiene in storing water in and abstracting water from tanks or at the point of use can lead to health risks from the consumption of contaminated water from storage tanks.

Here are some ideas to minimize the risk of rainwater contamination in the storage tanks:

- Install a calmed water inlet system to reduce sediment disturbance during heavy rainfall.
- Install the water intake near the water surface (where the water is likely to be cleanest) using a floating intake (Figure 1).
- Attach insect-proof screens or flap valves to the end of all pipes to keep insects out and ensure the tank is properly vented.
- Keep access covers closed to prevent access into the tank by insects, pests or debris.
- If the storage tank is below ground, ensure that surface run-off from areas other than the roof catchment cannot get into the tank.

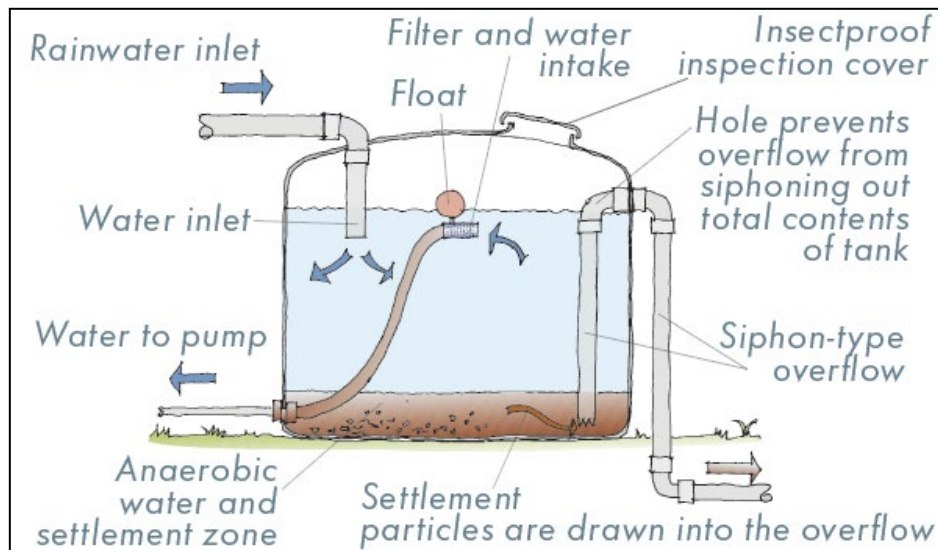


Figure 1: Storage tank

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