



WATER CONSERVATION

Livingston Environmental Commission



How to use rain gauges

When using a rain gauge it is important to follow these simple steps:

Step 1: Make sure the rain gauge is empty before each rainfall. It is good practice to empty the rain gauge after each time it is read to ensure this occurs.

Step 2: Lift the rain gauge to eye level. The top of the water line must be at eye level to ensure an accurate reading.

Step 3: Record the height of the water. The surface of the water will be slightly curved because its surface tension tends to make it stick to the sides of the container. This is known as the meniscus. Read the height of the water at the base of the meniscus. Most rain gauges will have numbers that are divided into tenths of inches. If the rain gauge is filled to the 0.50 line, that means that 0.5 of one inch, or one-half inch, of rain has fallen. There are larger lines that denote inches on the gauge. If the meniscus is 0.50 above the 1 inch line, then one and one half inches of rain has fallen.

Step 4: If rain has fallen, but there is little to no water in the rain gauge, then record that a "trace" of precipitation has fallen.

Step 5: Empty the rain gauge for the next measurement.