Did you know?  
The roof of an average Gulf Island home can capture 91,000 to 105,000 litres (20,000 to 23,000 gallons) of water a year with an average rainfall. That's enough to fill a swimming pool or provide about half the supply for a four-person water-saving household.

We are the solution!  
The biggest users of water on the islands are homes and tourist accommodations. So, water conservation at home is crucial.

I guess if we just used less water, we wouldn't have a problem.

That would help. Conservation is key. There are lots of easy ways to save water. A next step is to harvest rainwater and store it in cisterns, tanks or ponds.

My roof is not very big. Can my rainwater collection make a difference?  
Sure, and if other people collect rainwater too, it adds up to a lot of water.

So a lack of water storage is why we have water shortages in the summer?  
Partly. As well, populations grow every summer, so demand for water is highest when our stored water supplies are at their lowest.

That should be easy to fix. Make more storage.

There are only two ways that nature stores water in the Gulf Islands - in lakes and underground. We can help by storing the rainwater that falls on our rooftops.

High summer demand for water occurs as supplies dwindle.
Collecting and Conserving Rainwater on the Gulf Islands

Thanks, Raindrop. We learned a lot today. I think that rainwater harvesting is a great idea, and I’m also going to try to conserve more water and reduce my greenhouse gases.

I’m happy to hear that, Sally. The Gulf Islands are a wonderful place to live. If everyone makes small changes we can continue to have water year-round for people and nature.

Hi there. I’m Sally and this is Lionel. We live on a Gulf Island. I’m hearing a lot about rainwater harvesting. Can you tell us about it?

Sure thing. I’m Raindrop. Let’s follow the raindrops to check it out.

Everyone is talking about rainwater harvesting because of our water shortages in the summer. With our wet winters, why don’t we have lots of water all year?

Most of our winter rainwater evaporates, is taken up by plants, or flows in streams to the sea. Nature can only store a small amount.

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Simple Actions to Help Prevent Climate Change
- Reduce driving - bike, walk, or carpool
- Don’t idle in ferry line-ups
- Check your car’s tire pressure
- Cut your energy use at home
- Buy locally grown food
- Compost
- Harvest rainwater

I don’t want our water situation to get even worse. What can I do to prevent climate change?

Scientists predict that future summers will be even warmer and drier. In the future, with more people and less water, we will have to conserve water and start using sources like rainwater.

Can climate change cause water problems for nature too?

Droughts in the summer can cause streams to dry and kill trees. Intense winter storms can cause run-off that damages stream habitat.