

## Rainwater harvesting empowering poor Bhal villagers. (TNN)

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Ahmedabad: Not a raindrop that lands on a rooftop in Dholera is wasted -it is harvested and channeled into tanks. If these underground tanks are full, residents fill up other smaller tanks to take care of their domestic water needs for the year.

Savitaben Vasani of Khund village says "We have an underground water tank which stores 10,000 litres. This year, with the good rains, the tanks were filled early and so we fill up big barrels, which are normally used for diesel storage." She says the harvested water is enough for her day-to-day needs for drinking and other domestic use.

Karni Sartanbhai, also a resident of Khund says, "Our village has Narmada water supply but this is not adequate and irregular. Villagers use these underground water tanks to meet their drinking water needs." She said the water is filtered using nets and water from rooftops is channeled to the tank using pipes. We allow the first five minutes of water to flow away so the roof gets washed and the dirt doesn't enter the tank.

Ramaji Chauhan, a resident of Valindra, says, "Water in the tank is allowed to settle for three or four days and after the rainy season the tank is kept closed. The hand pump is on the tank means we don't need to put a vessel in to draw water." He said that they earlier had to depend heavily on water tankers or the women would have to go far away to fetch water. "These tanks have solved our drinking water problems."

Divyang Vaghela of Coastal Salinity Prevention Cell says, "We take up water conservation programmes in the area to make locals self-sufficient in their drinking water needs. CSPC supports all sections of society but we focus more on the economically backward and poor so that they don't have to depend on others. It is precisely this class which would have to walk far to get water as they don't have money to get tankers."

**Source:** *Times News Network*