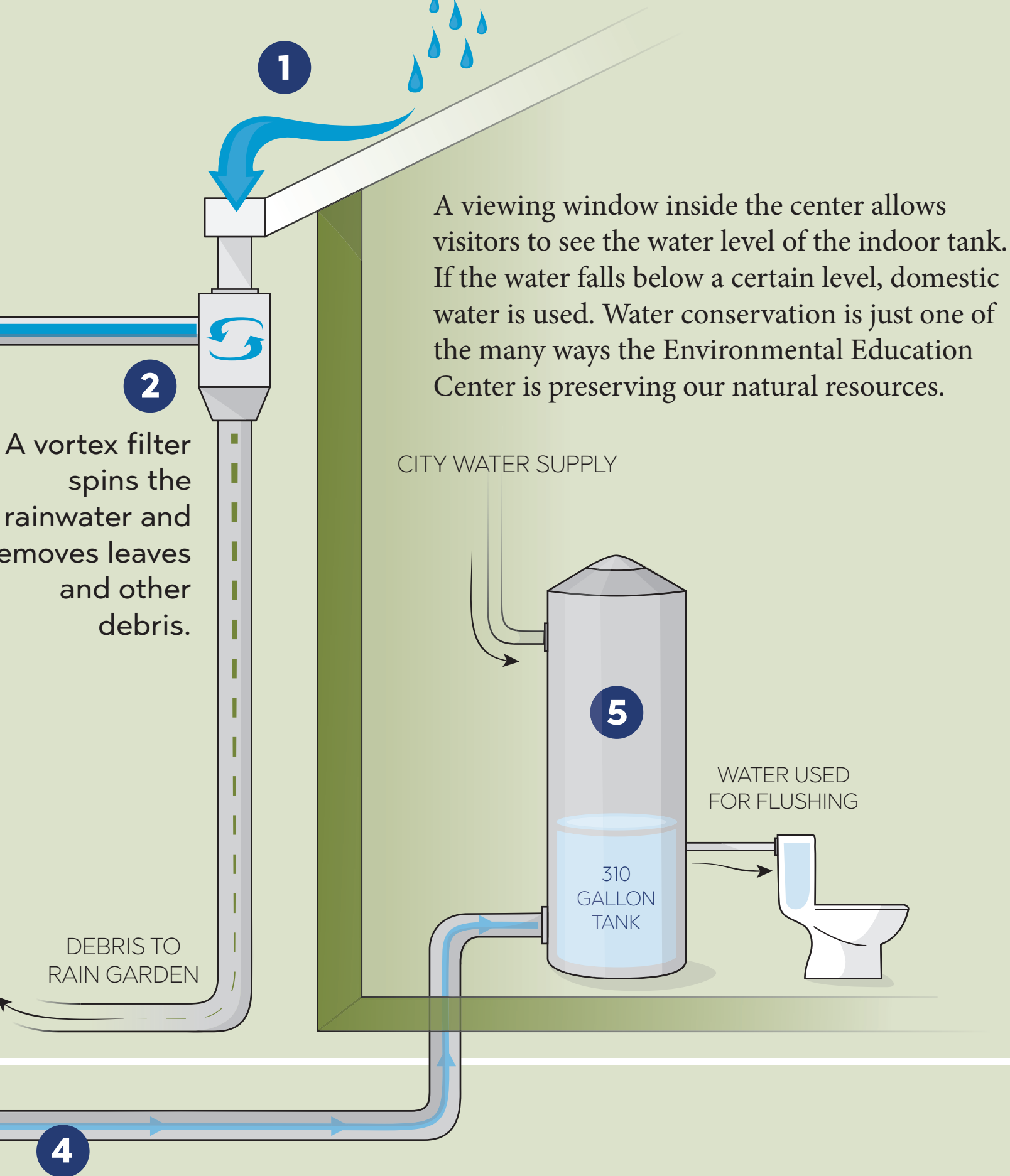


# RAINWATER CISTERN

*Preserving and reusing water, a valuable natural resource*

Water is one of our most precious resources which is why it is so important to conserve our water supply at every opportunity. The Park District of Oak Park is doing just that with a 1,400 gallon cistern located outside the Austin Gardens Environmental Education Center. This cistern captures rainwater from the roof, then stores and filters the water until it flows to an indoor tank and is used to flush toilets.

Rainwater flows off the roof and into the gutter system.



A viewing window inside the center allows visitors to see the water level of the indoor tank. If the water falls below a certain level, domestic water is used. Water conservation is just one of the many ways the Environmental Education Center is preserving our natural resources.

Water is stored in the cistern tank. Some of the water overflows into the nearby rain garden.

Water flows from the tank underground to the Environmental Education Center.

## How you can conserve water in your home

It is not always feasible to install a cistern at home like we can at the Environmental Education Center, but there are still many ways you can conserve water.

### INSIDE YOUR HOME

- Take shorter showers—this saves water and energy that is used to heat the water.
- Install low-flow faucets, showerheads and toilets.
- Turn off the water while brushing your teeth.
- Repair dripping faucets and running toilets promptly.

### OUTSIDE YOUR HOME

- Use rain barrels to capture water from downspouts and use it to water plants.
- Plant Illinois native plants—they are adapted to our soils and climate and need less water.
- Reduce the size of your lawn—less watering and less mowing.
- Install rain gardens—these gardens can absorb rainwater and prevent flooding naturally.