

## BANKING ON RAINWATER

*Is it a silo?*

*Is it a corn crib?*

*Is it a chicken coop?*



All questions that cross the mind of customers at Citizen's State Bank in Navasota, and of people passing by on highway 90.

Right there in front of the new bank under construction stands a bright metal circular structure with a tall roof. But wait, now it is being surrounded with Texas stone to match the bank building. What's going on?

The structure in question is a cistern. That's right, an old-fashioned term for a water storage system, cistern. It will be used to collect rainwater from the bank's roof and then distribute it to the landscape.



Ben Flencher, President of Citizens State Bank, home office in Somerville, with branches in Snook, Brenham, Caldwell and Deanville, and now in Navasota, explains the genesis of having a cistern in front of the new bank's large front windows. "When our architects came to us with this plan they urged us to consider the future and value as well as the "focal point" aspect of capturing rainwater at our front door."

Ben Boettcher, lead at Boettcher and Associates, Architects in Brenham, assigned Darrin Heine to the Citizens' project. He had also been the force behind their new facility in Brenham. Heine was looking for a focal point and the space was limited. But, he had an idea and he knew where to turn for specifics.

Samantha Whitney-Schwartz designed the cistern with input from the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center in Austin and from the rainwater harvesting publications offered by various water agencies.

Here are some facts about the Citizen's State Bank cistern:

- ⌘ Rainwater is collected, or "harvested" to supply water for landscape irrigation only. And the local landscapers were brought in on the project from the beginning. Their design is based on native Texas plant species and grasses that have minimal watering requirements.
- ⌘ The capacity of the cistern is about 5,600 gallons
- ⌘ The square footage of the roof capture area is 2,357 which would collect 1,461 gallons of rainwater per one inch of rainfall.
- ⌘ The efficiency of any rainwater system typically ranges from 75% to 90%. Therefore the approximate amount of water the cistern should collect per year is between 44,936 and 53,922 gallons – or an average of 50,000 gallons per year.

The location on Highway 90 east, across the street from Navasota High School will make Water Conservation Field Trips a simple matter and it will be available for eco-minded learners of all ages.

The cistern is designed for viewing both for Citizen's State Bank customers and employees and interested passers-by.

On Monday, August 11, 2008, the new bank opened for business and right out front, waiting for the next significant rainfall, is the Citizen's Cistern. Stop in and see it when you're in Navasota!

