

INNOVATORS

Benchmark in rain tanks

GARRY BAKER lives in a terrace house in Fitzroy with a small back courtyard. Environmentally conscious, he wanted a rain-water tank for his garden but couldn't find anything to suit.

So he decided to design one himself.

"I thought if I could put something under a seat it would be good . . . but the plumbing etc made it prohibitive to do that," recalls the 45-year-old marketer. "So I spent many nights thinking about how to do it and had this idea that if I

could remove the filtration system and overflow from the tank and create a filter and diversion system on the downpipe, it would mean I'd be able to lower the profile of the tank and fit it underneath a garden seat."

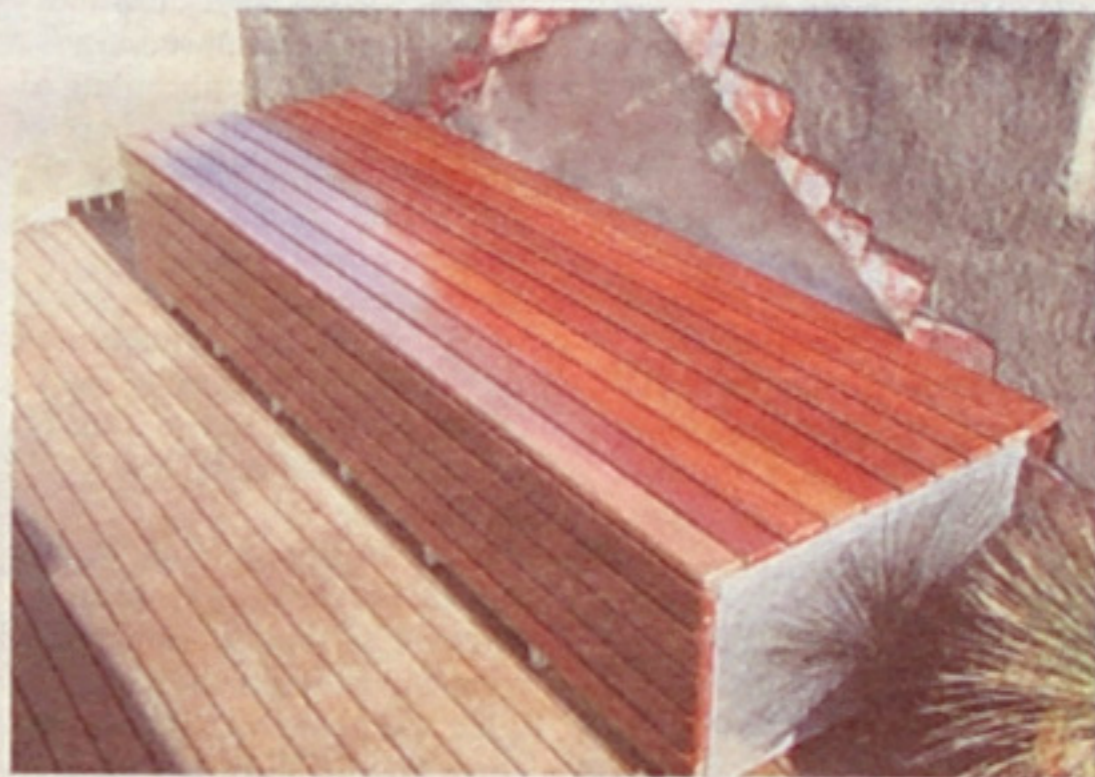
Mr Baker's product — the Rainwell — resulted in him being named one of 15 finalists in last year's Next Big Thing People's Choice Award, which along with the Next Big Thing Award, is presented annually by Innovic, a not-for-profit State Government-supported organisation that helps innovators

bring new ideas to market.

The galvanised, sheet metal Rainwell ranges from 345 litres to more than 600 litres, stands about 455 millimetres high and is between 1.5 metres and three metres long. It is covered in timber decking.

"It's got a kind of a Japanese look about it," Mr Baker says. "And it's a nice height — you can actually lie down on it."

The Rainwell is not yet available commercially but those wanting to contact Mr Baker can do so via his website, rainwell.com.au.



The Rainwell water tank is covered in kauri or spotted gum decking. Above, Rainwell creator Garry Baker.

Download applications for this year's Next Big Thing and People's Choice awards (worth \$5000 and \$2500 respectively) from innovic.com.au. The closing date is March 17.

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