

## Greywater

Greywater is waste water from the bath, shower, hand basin and laundry which can be diverted for reuse on lawns and gardens. Kitchen greywater is not suitable for reuse, as grease and oil can clog irrigation systems and build up on soil surfaces.

Under the state government's Plumbing and Drainage Act 2002, residents in sewered areas may use grey water by means of:

- manual bucketing
- connecting a flexible hose to a washing machine outlet
- installing grey water diversion devices (with council approval) and treatment plants by licensed plumbers, connected to an irrigation hose
- surface or sub-surface system (with council approval).

Care should be taken if reusing greywater because of its:

- potential health risks to humans
- potential for environmental damage to soils, ground water, and waterways caused by increased nutrient and chemical levels.

### Council approval for grey water diversion and treatment systems

You will need a council permit before installing either:

- a grey water diversion device, which diverts grey water from the bath, shower, hand basin and/or laundry to an irrigation hose. Untreated grey water cannot be stored
- a grey water treatment system, which collects the greywater and treats it to a high standard for reuse as garden irrigation.

You don't need a permit for manual bucketing or connection of a flexible hose to a washing machine outlet.

### Checklist of precautions for home owners

- Only divert grey water from the bath, shower, hand basins and laundry.
- Install signs around grey water irrigation systems to alert people that it is not drinking water.
- Prevent odours, surface ponding or run-off onto adjoining properties, waterways and stormwater drains.
- Prevent children from playing in grey water discharge areas.
- Prevent pets from walking through grey water discharge areas.
- Choose laundry detergents with low phosphorus, sodium, and nitrogen content.
- Take care not to keep watering the same spot - it can affect soil and can cause plants to die.

- Be careful when using grey water on native plants and don't use it on edible parts of vegetables or fruits.
- Make sure it doesn't enter swimming pools or neighbouring properties.

### **Information for plumbers**

The grey water guidelines for plumbers on the Department of Infrastructure and Planning website can help plumbers assess whether the home owner has suitable and sufficient land to distribute grey water.

Plumbers should use the guidelines to give advice on the purchase and installation costs of grey water systems, prior to the home owner making an application to council.