

GREYWATER FACT SHEET 1

GREYWATER DIVERSION DEVICES
– DO'S AND DON'TS



PREVENTING HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS FROM GREYWATER REUSE

Greywater diversion devices can be installed, without approval from your local council, to divert greywater from your laundry or bathroom for sub-surface irrigation as long as you ensure that you follow the guidelines for greywater reuse. The Do's and Don'ts listed here outline some precautions necessary to protect your health and the health of the environment if you plan on diverting your greywater for reuse.

WHEN UNDERTAKING DIVERSION OF GREYWATER

- **Do** check with your council to make sure your property is not registered in an area that is deemed to be environmentally sensitive.
- **Do** install a greywater diversion device that has a WaterMark licence (previously a Plumbing Safety licence).
- **Do** reuse diverted untreated greywater only for sub-surface irrigation (at least 10 cm below the surface of soil or mulch).
- **Do** install a greywater diversion device that incorporates some form of non-storage surge reduction (i.e. a tank to even out the sudden flow of greywater from a washing machine or shower to the garden irrigation system).
- **Do** ensure the greywater diversion device is switched to divert greywater to the sewer after irrigation periods.
- **Do** undertake a water balance to estimate the amount of water that can be reused by the household.
- **Do** select garden-friendly detergents that are biodegradable and low in phosphorus, sodium, boron and chloride.
- **Do** select washing detergents that are low in salt – consider using a powder concentrate, or a liquid washing detergent.
- **Do** consider enriching the soil (e.g. adding compost) if irrigating with greywater, especially if located on dune sand or shallow rocky soils.
- **Do** monitor plant and soil response to greywater sub-surface irrigation.
- **Do** occasionally irrigate with drinking water to disperse salts from the soil (only appropriate during extended periods of zero rainfall).
- **Do** consider applying a soil rewetting agent every six months.
- **Do** ensure that regular maintenance is undertaken, including cleaning out the greywater diversion device filter weekly and maintaining the sub-surface irrigation system.
- **Do** ensure that all pipes are marked or labelled to indicate greywater use.



WHEN UNDERTAKING DIVERSION OF GREYWATER

- **Don't** leave a diversion device on all the time. Treat it like a garden tap and only reuse greywater when the garden needs watering. Greywater is for reuse not disposal.
- **Don't** reuse toilet or kitchen wastewater.
- **Don't** reuse greywater during rain.
- **Don't** reuse greywater from the washing of nappies or soiled clothing.
- **Don't** reuse greywater when a resident is sick, e.g. has diarrhoea.
- **Don't** reuse greywater generated by cleaning in the laundry or bathroom, or when using hair dye or other chemicals.
- **Don't** reuse greywater generated by washing rags used for painting or for maintaining machinery and vehicles.
- **Don't** reuse greywater to top up rainwater tanks or swimming pools.
- **Don't** store untreated greywater.
- **Don't** over-water.
- **Don't** reuse greywater on fruit, vegetables and plants that will be eaten raw or where fruit has fallen to the ground and could be eaten.
- **Don't** reuse greywater to wash paths, driveways or cars.
- **Don't** allow direct contact with or ingestion of the greywater.
- **Don't** reuse greywater so that it flows into the streets or down stormwater drains.
- **Don't** install drippers of a sub-irrigation system within one metre of boundary lines, buildings, inground pools and inground potable water tanks.
- **Don't** let greywater go beyond the property boundary and cause a nuisance to neighbours.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Further detailed information on greywater reuse is available in the following fact sheets:

Greywater Brochure: How can greywater be used?

Greywater Fact Sheet 2: Choosing the right greywater system for your needs

Greywater Fact Sheet 3: Irrigating with greywater

Greywater Fact Sheet 4: Keeping your plants and soil healthy with greywater

Greywater Fact Sheet 5: Maintenance of greywater treatment systems and diversion devices

The full Greywater Reuse Guidelines and these fact sheets can be downloaded from the Water For Life website: www.waterforlife.nsw.gov.au

