

GREYWATER

Greywater is wastewater 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.

Untreated greywater is often used throughout Queensland without a clear understanding of the health and environmental risks and must be used with care. Untreated greywater can contain contaminants derived from household cleaning and personal hygiene activities.

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.

Using greywater

Under the *Plumbing and Drainage Act 2018*, residents in sewered and unsewered areas may use greywater by means of:

- manual bucketing (except kitchen greywater)
- connecting a flexible hose to a washing machine outlet
- installing a greywater diversion device or greywater treatment system by a licensed plumber.

Manual bucketing or connection of hose to washing machine outlet.

No Council permit is required; however, the owner of the premises must ensure:

- the greywater does not cause an odour and any ponding or run-off does not cause a danger or health risk
- any ponding or runoff is contained within the premises.

Greywater diversion device

Greywater diversion devices may be installed for the diversion of untreated greywater to a land application area. The installation must be carried out by a licensed plumber and may be installed as "Minor work" in accordance with the *Plumbing and Drainage Regulation 2019*.

The device must:

- include a filter that screens out hair, lint and other solids

- be fitted with a switch to divert greywater through to a sub-surface irrigation system
- automatically divert to the sewer if there is a blockage
- have Watermark approval and comply with the Queensland Plumbing and Wastewater Code.

Greywater treatment system

A greywater treatment plant collects, stores, treats and disinfects greywater to specific standards. Depending on the standard of treatment, the treated greywater can be re-used for a number of applications including:

- lawn and garden irrigation
- washing of paths and vehicles
- toilet flushing.

The installation must be carried out by a licensed plumber and may be installed under the "Notifiable work" category in accordance with the *Plumbing and Drainage Regulation 2019* if the system generates no more than 3 kilolitres (kL) of greywater per day. This means the licensed plumber can install the system without Council approval by submitting a Form 4 to the Queensland Building and Construction Commission (QBCC)

If the Greywater treatment system generates more than 3 kL of greywater per day, an application must be submitted to Council for assessment and approval given before any works can commence.

Greywater treatment systems must comply with the requirements of the *Queensland Plumbing and Wastewater Code*.

Information for Plumbers

The greywater guidelines for plumbers on the Department of Housing and Public Works website can help plumbers assess whether the homeowner has suitable and sufficient land to distribute greywater.

Plumbers should use these guidelines to give advice on the purchase and installation costs of greywater systems, prior to the installation of greywater diversion devices or greywater treatment plants.

Related Websites

Department of Housing and Public Works
www.hpw.qld.gov.au

Queensland Plumbing & Wastewater Code
www.hpw.qld.gov.au

Plumbing and Drainage Act 2018
<https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au>

