



CITY OF BEVERLY HILLS STAFF REPORT

Meeting Date: October 27, 2009
To: Honorable Mayor & City Council
From: George Chavez, Assistant Director of Community Development *GC*
Subject: Request of Councilmember John Mirisch to be provided with an update on Graywater.
Attachments: 1. Small graywater system illustration

INTRODUCTION

On July 30, 2009, the California Building Standards Commission (CBSC) adopted emergency standards pertaining to graywater for single-family applications. The emergency standards have been in effect since August 4, 2009. These new standards relax existing graywater installation requirements making it easier for homeowners to conserve water by installing small graywater systems.

DISCUSSION

Graywater is defined as untreated waste water that has not been contaminated by any toilet discharge, not been affected by infectious contaminants, or unhealthy bodily wastes, and does not present a threat from contamination by unhealthful processing, manufacturing, or operating wastes.

Graywater includes wastewater from:

- Bathtubs
- Showers
- Bathroom washbasins
- Clothes washing machines
- Laundry tubs

Graywater does not include wastewater from:

- Kitchen sinks
- Dishwashers
- Other plumbing fixtures such as toilets

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The emergency amendment modifies the existing graywater system standards and includes a new provision, which allows the installation of small systems such as a clothes washer or single fixture system without a permit (see attached illustration). More complex graywater systems and systems that produce more than 250 gallons per day have very specific design standards and require permits.

These relaxed standards are intended to be cost-effective and encourage homeowners to conserve up to 250 gallons of water per day in irrigation costs and reduce the graywater disposed into the sanitary sewer system.

Despite the recent emergency standards adopted by CBSC into the California Plumbing Code, graywater systems have been allowed and regulated by the California Plumbing Codes since the early 1990's. Additionally, on September 23, 2008, the City Council adopted a voluntary single-family residential Green Building Program which requires a graywater system.

These new relaxed graywater emergency standards are currently in effect and in the process of being incorporated as part of the 2010 California Plumbing Code, which the City of Beverly Hills will adopt by January 1, 2011. The Department of Community Development has updated the website, www.beverlyhills.org/graywater, with information of these new emergency standards.

FISCAL IMPACT

As written these emergency standards have no measurable fiscal impact.

RECOMMENDATION

Because the State enacted these emergency standards, City Council action is not necessary. Therefore, it is recommended that the city council receive and file this report.

Susan Healy Keene, AICP,
Director of Community Development


Approved By

SMALL GRAYWATER SYSTEM ILLUSTRATION

