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California gray water laws loosen

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California gray water laws loosen (Photo by Jane Gates)

Although there were code plans ready to be activated in January of 2011 for California gray water regulations, due to the critical water shortage from drought conditions rules went into effect on August 4th of 2009.

Here are some of the provisions:

Single water sources like a clothes washer or a dishwasher do not need to be permitted.

Gray water must be covered by mulch if discharged above ground so there is no run-off.

Written standards offer easy guidance and sizing information for different soil types.

No gray water is to be discharged below three feed above groundwater level.

All gray water systems need to be equipped with a valve that allows water to be routed into a sewer system if necessary.

No gray water is to be sprayed on or near edibles.

Local agencies can pass tighter constraints on gray water rules if they hold a public hearing and vote changes, so stay aware of any attempts that are made to change these new regulations.

Although gray water should be handled carefully, it is a logical way to make the best of our diminishing water supply – especially in drought areas. It is a good thing these restrictions have been revisited in California as some other states like Arizona have been successfully recycling gray water for years. There may be even more loosening of rules and regulations to help us use our resources more efficiently