
HOUSE RESOLUTION

URGING THE COUNTIES TO ADOPT AND IMPLEMENT GRAY WATER RECYCLING PROGRAMS FOR RESIDENTIAL IRRIGATION PURPOSES AS PROVIDED UNDER THE UNIFORM PLUMBING CODE STANDARDS.

1 WHEREAS, at 18 percent higher than the national average,
2 Hawaii consumes the most water per capita in the nation, and the
3 demand for water in Hawaii is not likely to decrease; and
4

5 WHEREAS, the wastewater reuse rate is not as high as it
6 could be--three of the four counties reuse wastewater at a rate
7 of less than five percent, the remaining county at a rate of
8 less than 15 percent, and the State at a rate of less than 25
9 percent; and
10

11 WHEREAS, a low wastewater reuse rate is also taxing our
12 wastewater treatment facilities--it will cost \$1,000,000,000 to
13 repair an aging sewer system; and
14

15 WHEREAS, the sewer system has failed in the past, and
16 another failure of the sewer system potentially has disastrous
17 consequences for the health, safety, and economic welfare of our
18 residents and visitors; and
19

20 WHEREAS, much of the wastewater currently treated at the
21 City and County of Honolulu's wastewater facilities is otherwise
22 reusable gray water that can be diverted from the sewer system;
23 and
24

25 WHEREAS, gray water can replace potable water for many
26 uses, thereby saving money, increasing water supply and
27 treatment effectiveness, and reducing operation and capital
28 costs of treatment facilities; and
29

30 WHEREAS, gray water has a history of safe use in the
31 nation, and does not contaminate the natural surface and ground
32 waters because it is purified to a high degree in the upper,
33 most biologically active region of the soil; and



1 WHEREAS, counties have jurisdiction over residential
2 wastewater treatment in areas served by county sewer systems;
3 and
4

5 WHEREAS, under section 342D-70, Hawaii Revised Statutes
6 (HRS), counties, with the approval of the Department of Health,
7 may implement a gray water recycling program within their
8 jurisdictions in which gray water, defined as any water from the
9 domestic plumbing system of a residence, except toilets, is used
10 to irrigate lawns and gardens; and
11

12 WHEREAS, the counties have not implemented gray water
13 recycling programs under section 342D-70, HRS, and, in adopting
14 national plumbing standards, have deleted gray water reuse
15 provisions; and
16

17 WHEREAS, numerous other states facing water shortages have
18 adopted gray water reuse standards that have reduced potable
19 water use; now, therefore,
20

21 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
22 Twenty-fourth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular
23 Session of 2008, that the counties are urged to implement a gray
24 water recycling program that adopts the gray water standards for
25 residential subsurface landscape irrigation as provided in the
26 Uniform Plumbing Code; and
27

28 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the Department of Health is
29 requested to provide the counties with guidelines for gray water
30 reuse; and
31

32 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the counties are requested to adopt
33 standards that:
34

35 (1) Limit each residence to use of 250 gallons of gray
36 water per day;
37

38 (2) Ensure that overflow from a gray water system is
39 adequately directed into a sewer system or on-site
40 wastewater treatment and disposal system;
41

42 (3) Require that gray water storage tanks be adequately
43 covered to eliminate breeding of mosquitoes or other
44 vectors;



- 1 (4) Require that gray water systems be at least five feet
2 above the ground water table;
- 3
- 4 (5) Require all gray water piping to be clearly identified
5 as non-potable water;
- 6
- 7 (6) Prevent gray water from a residence from being used
8 outside of the residential property;
- 9
- 10 (7) Minimize the potential for contact with people or
11 pets;
- 12
- 13 (8) Prevent ponding and minimize standing water;
- 14
- 15 (9) Ensure that the hydraulic capacity of the residential
16 property is not exceeded with the use of gray water;
- 17
- 18 (10) Ensure that gray water is not sprayed;
- 19
- 20 (11) Prohibit the discharge of gray water to a water
21 course; and
- 22
- 23 (12) Ensure that gray water systems are not permitted in
24 flood zone areas;

25
26 and

27
28 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
29 Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Health and the
30 Mayor and the chairpersons of the county council of each county.

