

# New Mexico

[Old New Mexico grey water law](#) considered greywater as part of septic system law—a bad idea.

New greywater law based on Arizona model—a much better approach—signed March 11th 2003:

HB114 -- Facilitating Gray Water Use in NM Landscapes  
See summary below or go to the [full legislation](#) on the official site.  
Rep. Mimi Stewart was the bill's lead sponsor.

*3/8/03--We did it! HB114 that allows us to use gray water for residential landscapes passed the Senate yesterday with only two senators voting against 35 others who voted in favor!*

*Thanks to everyone who called, emailed and testified over the last weeks. Your efforts made a real difference!*

*Also, since the bill has an emergency clause tacked on to it, the bill will go into effect immediately*

*--instead at the beginning of the fiscal year in July.*

*This will be great for New Mexico!*

*Thanks, Melissa McDonald*

What would HB114 do?

HB114 simplifies state code so that gray water can be used safely in the landscape. Currently state code does not differentiate between black and gray water (defined below). This makes gray water re-use prohibitively expensive. By making the necessary distinction and creating safe guidelines, we will take an essential step in conserving New Mexico's most valuable resource for future generations. With essentially no expense to the state, the positive effect of HB114 would be immediate.

HB114 would NOT undermine any local ordinances, because it allows for towns, cities, and counties to be more restrictive when it comes to gray water reuse

What is Gray Water?

Technically, gray water is untreated household wastewater that has not come in contact with toilet waste (black water). Primarily, gray water includes waste water from bathtubs, showers, bathroom sinks, and clothes washing machines. HB114 also stipulates that wastewater from kitchen sinks, dishwashers and the washing of material soiled with human excrement to be "black water".

Is Gray Water Safe?

Yes. When handled properly, gray water is safe. HB114 includes best management practices developed to protect public health and water quality. Arizona and Texas already have gray water regulations similar to HB114. Many of the rules in Arizona are based on an extensive study conducted in Tuscon, which can be found at <http://ag.arizona.edu/AZWATER>.

What does HB114 require?

1. Every gray water distribution system must provide for overflow into the sewer;
2. Gray water storage tanks must be covered;
3. Systems must not be sited in floodways;
4. Gray water must be stored at least five feet above the ground water table;
5. Pipes must be clearly identified;
6. Gray water must not run out of a homeowner's property;
7. Contact with people or domestic pets must be minimized;
8. Ponding of gray water is prohibited;
9. Spraying of gray water is prohibited;
10. Gray water must not be discharged to a watercourse;
11. Use of gray water must comply with local ordinances ; and
12. No more than 250 gallons of gray water can be used in a given day.

Some of the benefits of this new Gray Water Reuse Legislation:

Conserves Water  
Beautifies Communities  
Saves money on water bills  
Supports water efficient homes  
Saves water for future generations  
Reduces demand on water systems  
Creates plumbing and landscaping jobs

If you would like more information on this bill, please contact:

Melissa McDonald 424-4444

Paul Paryski 660-4077

Representative Mimi Stewart 986-4341