

Gray Water

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Gray water is non-toilet waste water.

Gray water may contain:

Grease

Hair

Detergent

Cosmetics

Dead Skin

Food Particles

Small amounts of fecal matter

Gray Water Use

What gray water can be used?

Don't use water from	OK to use water from
Dish-washer Kitchen sink Laundry w/diapers	Shower / bath Sinks Washing machine

Dish-washer and kitchen sink water is considered dark or black water.

Impact on Plants

- Use on edible plants not recommended (except citrus & nut trees); best used on landscape plants
- Cautions:
 - Soaps and detergents are biodegradable but can be a problem with extensive use
 - Cleaning agents contain sodium salts (can damage plants)

More Cautions

- Avoid detergents that advertise “softening power” (contain sodium-based compounds)
- Phosphates in detergents are good for plants, but those detergents also contain large amounts of sodium
- Washing machine – cut down or eliminate bleach, do not use detergents that contain boron (too much could be toxic to plants)
- For household cleaning, use products with ammonia rather than bleach

How to apply

- Bucket or modified household plumbing
- Apply directly to soil surface (don't spray)
- Don't use with drip emitters (will clog)
- Use on flat areas; avoid run-off
- Apply over large area; don't concentrate on one site
- Alternate use of gray w/ fresh water to leach soil contaminants
- Apply thick organic mulches to speed decomposition of waste residues

Legal Guidelines

Resources –

- ADEQ (Arizona Department of Environmental Quality)
- General permit (ARS 49-204)