



Plumbing Newsflash

LOCAL GOVERNMENTS MAY ALLOW GREYWATER USE IN SEWERED AREAS

Purpose

This newsflash is to inform local governments about recent amendments to the *Plumbing and Drainage Act 2002* (PDA) and, in particular, provisions that will allow local governments to decide whether or not they wish to promote greywater use in seweraged areas.

Background

Following the Government's decision to allow greywater use in seweraged areas, draft legislation was prepared which required local governments to accept and process applications for greywater use in seweraged areas. The draft legislation did not give local governments any discretion in determining whether or not they wished to accept applications for greywater facilities.

The draft legislation was released for public comment in January this year. During the consultation process, a large number of local governments expressed concern about the mandatory nature of the greywater reforms. They pointed out that in some local government areas, water management strategies had identified more pressing priorities for water conservation and some of these would be incompatible with greywater use.

As a result of this feedback it was agreed that the intent of the legislation should be to allow local governments to decide on the most appropriate investment of resources for promoting water conservation. Legislation has been drafted, accordingly, to allow local governments discretion in terms of deciding whether or not to accept applications for use of greywater in seweraged areas.

Legislation

Amendments to the PDA (*Plumbing and Drainage and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2005*) were passed by Parliament on 23 August 2005. Most provisions commence on 1 March 2006, however a provision relating to greywater, section 85A, commenced on assent - i.e. 1 September 2005.

Section 85A provides that a local government may pass a resolution deciding to "opt out" and not to accept any applications for greywater use in seweraged areas. The intention to commence this section on assent is to give local governments time, prior to 1 March 2006, in which to make a decision and put in place a resolution if necessary.

The decision not to accept further applications can also be made after 1 March 2006 and if, at some time in the future, a local government decides to opt back in, they can decide to accept applications by rescinding the previous resolution.

A copy of the amendments to the PDA can be accessed through the Queensland Parliamentary Counsel website at www.legislation.qld.gov.au - BILLS.

Contact Officer

For further information in relation to this Newsflash, please contact Bill Gowland on (07) 3237 0368 or email buildingcodes@dlgpsr.qld.gov.au.

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