

April 20, 2010
Board of Supervisors
County of Ventura
800 South Victoria Avenue
Ventura, CA 93009

SUBJECT: Receive and file a report on recent changes to Title 24 Part 5 (California Plumbing Code) related to Non-potable Water Reuse Systems (Graywater)

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive and File a report on the County's efforts to implement changes to the 2007 California Plumbing Code recently adopted by the State Building Standards Commission.

FISCAL MANDATES/IMPACTS:

None

BACKGROUND:

On July 30, 2009, the California Building Standards Commission (BSC) adopted emergency changes to Part 5 of the California Building Standards Code. Specifically, Chapter 16A related to Non-potable Water Reuse Systems, commonly known as Graywater, was added to the State plumbing code. This chapter included significant changes in the way the State of California viewed the regulatory controls for Graywater and significantly reduced the compliance standards necessary for local building officials to approve a Graywater system. Some changes adopted in the July 2009 emergency package were controversial and opposed by various interests throughout the State. In January 2010 the BSC held public hearings for the permanent adoption of these standards and, on January 20, 2010, adopted revisions "Exhibit 1" which addressed concerns expressed during the preceding 180 days.

DISCUSSION:

The revised standards adopted by the BSC on January 20, 2010, provided a permit exemption for Laundry Graywater Disposal/Irrigation Systems (LGDS). Basically, these

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new provisions allow an LGDS to be constructed on the site of a single-family dwelling provided the installed system complies with 12 simple requirements which are prescriptively provided in Chapter 16A.

PERMITTING REQUIREMENTS:

Section 1603A sets forth the specific provisions that, when complied with, exempts an LGDS from permitting. A properly installed LGDS is one that requires no modification or change to any portion of a building's existing plumbing system. Should a modification be necessary, a permit for that portion would be required.

These provisions related to LGDS systems have been a topic of discussion by all of the cities in the County, as well as the County Building and Safety Division since final adoption by the BSC in January. Following the County's lead, city and county members of the International Code Council, Ventura Chapter, worked together and developed a common format handout for LGDS systems "Exhibit 2" that can be provided to members of the public, both on the internet and at every Building and Safety Office in the County. Included within the standard handout are advisory notes and recommendations to help ensure that the LGDS, when complete, has less of a chance of becoming a nuisance.

In addition, we have mocked-up two examples of how a system such as this should be constructed. Although a permit is not required for these systems, our goal in developing this standard plan and mock-up is to help ensure that users will get long-term, problem-free use of their system, and hopefully avoid future problems which can generate complaints from neighboring property owners. Also, these mock-ups are portable enough that they can be placed in public spaces where information on the Graywater Disposal Systems can be readily available to the general public.

This letter has been reviewed by the County Executive Office, Auditor-Controller's Office and the County Counsel's Office. If there are any questions concerning this item, please contact Jim MacDonald at 805-654-2787.



Jim MacDonald, C.B.O.
Building Official

Attachment: Exhibit "1" – Chapter 16A of the 2007 California Plumbing Code
Attachment Exhibit "2" – Laundry Graywater Disposal System