



Building and Safety Division - Public Information

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GUIDELINES FOR THE INSTALLATION OF RESIDENTIAL GRAYWATER SYSTEMS

New to the 2007 Ventura County Building Code is California Plumbing Code Chapter 16 which provides requirements for the installation of Residential Graywater systems. The following information is provided regarding permitting requirements for Residential Graywater systems.

What is a Graywater system?

Simply defined, "Graywater" is "untreated household wastewater which has not come in contact with toilet waste." A "Graywater System" is a system in which Graywater from a dwelling is collected and deposited into subsurface irrigation fields within a property in a controlled manner.

Where can a Graywater System be installed

A Graywater system can be constructed on the site of a single-family dwelling where it has been demonstrated that the soil conditions are such that the Graywater will be adequately absorbed into the soil without adversely affecting existing Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems (OWTS) or their required 100% expansion areas.

What CAN be put into a Graywater System?

Graywater systems CAN accept untreated household waste from only the following single-family residential plumbing fixtures:

- Bathroom sinks (Lavatories)
- Bathtubs and/or Showers
- Laundry tubs and clothes washers

What CANNOT be put into a Graywater System?

Graywater systems CANNOT accept waste from:

- Any multi-family, non-residential or commercial building or use
- Toilets and Bidets
- Kitchen Sinks and Dishwashers

What are the limitations of a Graywater system?

- Installations are only allowed for single family dwellings.
- Graywater can only be used for subsurface landscape irrigation.
- Except in special circumstances, the system shall consist of one or more holding tank(s) which, through a series of underground drain lines, discharge the Graywater into subsurface irrigation beds.
- There must be adequate lot area and appropriate soil conditions for absorption of the Graywater.
- The capacity of a private On-site Wastewater Treatment System (OWTS) shall not be reduced or affected by the Graywater system, as confirmed by the Environmental Health Division as a part of the Setback Certification.

What is Required to install a Graywater system?

In addition to a plumbing permit, the following is required for the installation of a Graywater system:

- A report, or log, from a soils engineer detailing the following:
 - Soil Absorption rates based on percolation tests
 - Soil formations and groundwater encountered during excavations of test pits dug in proximity to the proposed disposal fields.

DIVISION OF BUILDING AND SAFETY COUNTY OF VENTURA  BUILDING OFFICIAL	B & S STD	P-1 SHEET 1 OF 2
	DATE: 02/29/08	

- An accurate site plan, drawn to scale, reflecting the following minimum information:
 - Location of all structures on the lot including property lines, streams, lakes, water-wells, sewer and water lines and easements.
 - Location of any OWTS and its required expansion area.
 - Location of the proposed Graywater system, including the location and extents of the Graywater leaching lines.
- Setback Certification from the Environmental Health Division for sites where an OWTS is installed or proposed to be installed.

Sample Graywater Installation Requirements

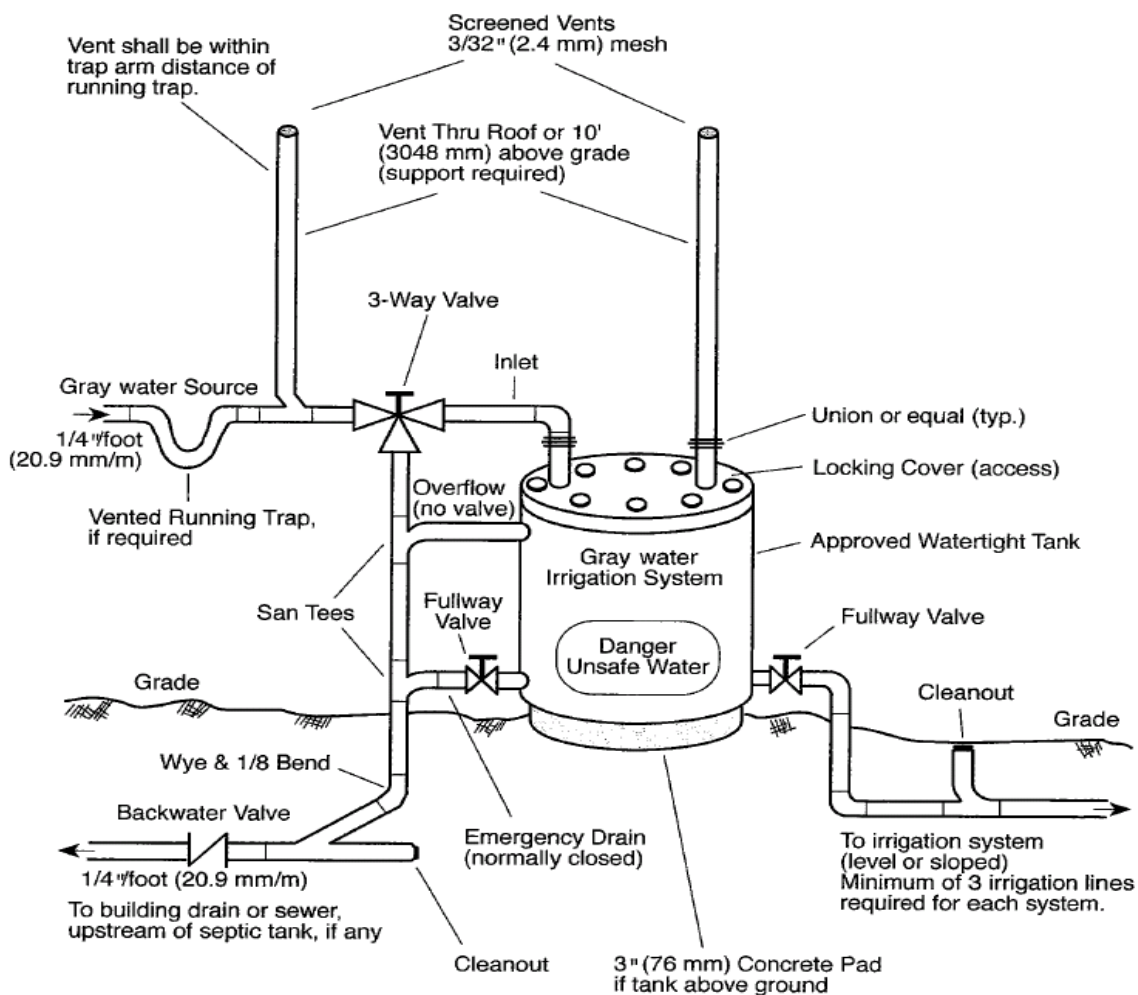


FIGURE 16-1 Gray Water System Tank – Gravity.

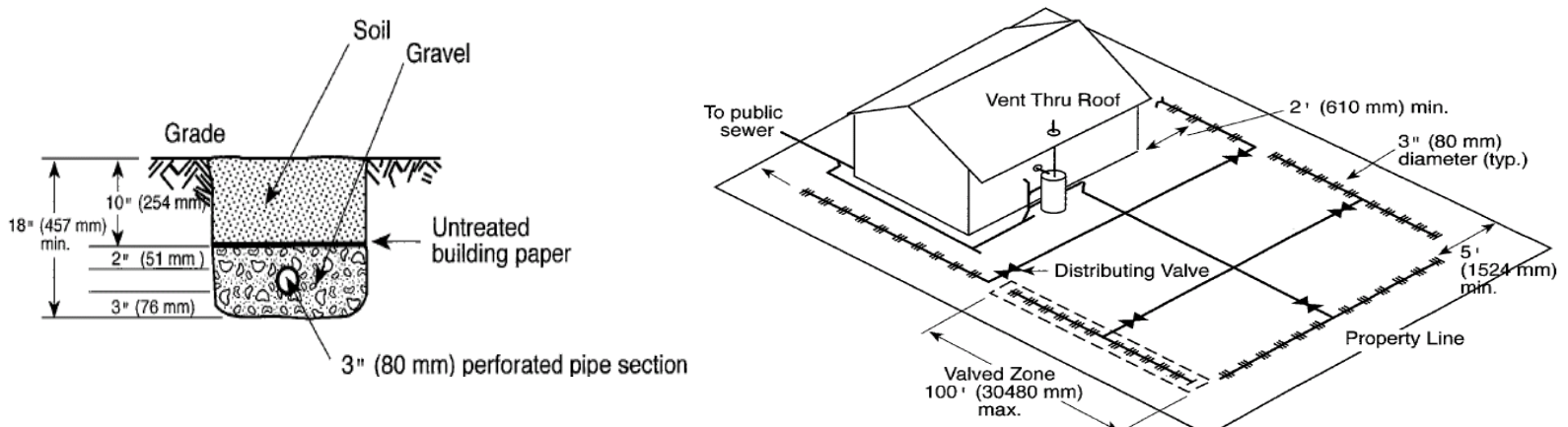


FIGURE 16-5 Gray Water System Typical Irrigation Layout.