
HOUSE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE COUNTIES TO USE THE AUTHORITY GRANTED TO THEM UNDER SECTION 342D-70, HAWAII REVISED STATUTES, AND ADOPT AND IMPLEMENT STANDARDS FOR THE REUSE OF RESIDENTIAL GRAY WATER FOR SUBSURFACE LANDSCAPE IRRIGATION.

1 WHEREAS, Hawaii consumes the most water per capita in the
2 United States, eighteen per cent higher than the national
3 average; and
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5 WHEREAS, Hawaii's population is projected to increase by
6 three hundred thousand residents by 2030 and the resulting
7 increased demand for water requires us to care for and manage
8 our watersheds, uphold water quality standards, and support
9 adequate infrastructure for residential, commercial, and
10 agricultural use; and
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12 WHEREAS, three of the four counties reuse wastewater at a
13 rate of less than five per cent, one county at the rate of less
14 than fifteen per cent, and the State at a rate less than twenty-
15 five per cent; and
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17 WHEREAS, the residents of Oahu are facing a \$1,000,000,000
18 bill to repair an aging sewer system that must carry a large
19 amount of otherwise reusable gray water and that has all too
20 often failed, with potentially disastrous consequences for the
21 health, safety, and economic welfare of residents; and
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23 WHEREAS, the Hawaii 2050 Sustainability Plan calls for,
24 among many other things, measures to encourage greater
25 production and use of recycled water and continual review of
26 water-conserving technologies for possible incorporation in
27 county building codes; and
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29 WHEREAS, the counties have jurisdiction over residential
30 wastewater treatment in areas served by county sewer systems;



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WHEREAS, section 342D-70, Hawaii Revised Statutes, authorizes the counties to implement a gray water recycling program within their jurisdictions in which gray water, defined as any water from the domestic plumbing system of a residence except toilets, is used for the purpose of irrigating lawns and gardens; and

WHEREAS, the counties have not sought approval from the Department of Health to institute gray water recycling programs as required by section 342D-70, Hawaii Revised Statutes, and in adopting national plumbing standards have deleted gray water reuse provisions; and

WHEREAS, gray water can replace fresh water for many uses, saving money and increasing the effective water supply; and

WHEREAS, gray water use greatly extends the useful life and capacity of wastewater systems, and for municipal treatment systems, decreased wastewater flow means higher treatment effectiveness and lower operation and capital costs; and

WHEREAS, gray water is purified to a high degree in the upper, most biologically active region of the soil, thereby protecting the quality of natural surface and ground waters; and

WHEREAS, gray water reuse can help reduce the threat to groundwater in areas where on-site wastewater treatment systems cause nitrate contamination; and

WHEREAS, a gray water reuse system can be a partial or complete substitute for a very costly, over-engineered system at sites with slow soil percolation or other problems; and

WHEREAS, a gray water reuse system can decrease strain on critical blackwater treatment facilities for sites with slow soil percolation, fast percolation, or other problems; and

WHEREAS, there is a long history of gray water reuse in the United States, with not a single documented case of gray water-



1 transmitted illness, even though gray water systems have only
2 recently been the subject of regulatory control;

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4 WHEREAS, numerous other states facing water shortages have
5 adopted gray water reuse standards that have reduced potable
6 water use, Arizona being a particularly safe, effective, and
7 successful example; now, therefore,

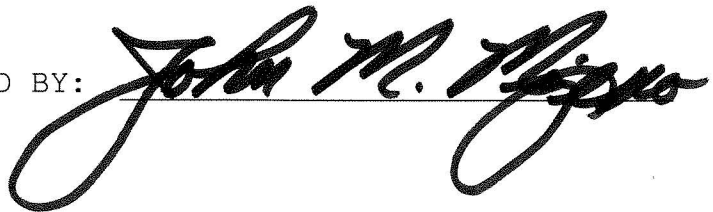
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9 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
10 Twenty-fourth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular
11 Session of 2008, that the counties are requested to use the
12 authority granted to them under section 342D-70, Hawaii Revised
13 Statutes, and adopt and implement standards for the reuse of
14 residential gray water for subsurface landscape irrigation; and
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16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the counties are requested to
17 adopt standards that:

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19 (1) Use a tiered approach to gray water system regulation
20 based upon the amount of gray water produced by the
21 system involved, with specific requirements increasing
22 from simple to more complex as the size of the system
23 increases;
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25 (2) Are performance-based, requiring achievement of
26 specific goals, such as ecologically and biologically
27 safe treatment of gray water, with explicit designs
28 being options, rather than mandatory specifications;
29 and
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31 (3) Are realistic about the extremely low health risk
32 presented by gray water reuse; and
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34 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
35 Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Health and the
36 Mayor and the Chairperson of the Council of each county.
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OFFERED BY:



MAR 12 2008

