

Date of Hearing: June 30, 2010

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
Felipe Fuentes, Chair

SB 518 (Lowenthal) – As Amended: June 21, 2010

Policy Committee: Environmental Safety and Toxic Materials Vote: 9-0

Urgency: No State Mandated Local Program: No Reimbursable: No

SUMMARY

- 1) This bill requires the California Building Standards Commission (CBSC), at its next triennial building standards rule-making cycle commencing on or after January 1, 2011, to adopt nonresidential building standards for the construction, installation, and alteration of graywater systems. The bill provides that CBSC's adoption of graywater nonresidential building standards relieves the Department of Water Resources (DWR) of its existing responsibility to adopt such standards.

FISCAL EFFECT

- 1) Minor GF costs, likely less than \$50,000 in 2011-12, to CBSC to develop and adopt graywater system building standards for nonresidential buildings.
- 2) Minor GF savings, if any, to the Department of Water Resources (DWR) in a future fiscal year resulting from the elimination of DWR's responsibility to update graywater system standards.

COMMENTS

- 1) Rationale. The author claims graywater systems allow the state to make the most of its increasingly scarce water resources. The author contends that development and adoption of graywater standards for nonresidential buildings is the logical and appropriate follow up to the state's graywater standards for residential buildings.
- 2) Background. Wastewater from bathtubs, showers, bathroom wash basins, washing machines, and laundry tubs is considered to be "graywater." Graywater generally comprises between 50% and 80% of a home's wastewater from indoor sources and makes up a significant portion of the water used in nonresidential buildings. Graywater primarily is used in place of treated water for landscape irrigation and other nonpotable uses. In this way, graywater can reduce the demand on water supplies and the energy and cost associated with water treatment.

Existing law requires the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) to adopt and submit to the CBSC for approval building standards for the construction, installation, and alteration of graywater systems for indoor and outdoor use in residential buildings. In 2009, CBSC adopted such standards for residential buildings.

Existing law also directs DWR to adopt standards for the installation of graywater systems. Upon CBSC's approval of standards for the installation of graywater systems in residential buildings, the law relieves DWR of its responsibility for installation of such systems in residential buildings. DWR retains, however, responsibility to develop standards for the installation of graywater systems in nonresidential buildings.

- 3) Related Legislation. SB 1258 (Lowenthal), Chapter 172, Statutes of 2008, required HCD to submit, for approval by the CBSC, building standards for the construction, installation, and alteration of graywater systems for indoor and outdoor use at residential buildings.
- 4) Support. This bill is supported by a variety of conservation and industry groups.
- 5) There is no registered opposition to this bill.

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