

## Position Statement

As an industry body, the GWIG has undertaken discussion and developed statements on its three core cornerstones of education, lobbying for new or changes to legislation, and research.

Western Australia is facing an ever-increasing population and increasing demand for potable water. This, coupled with decreasing water availability all have adverse effects on water security. In the Water Futures for Western Australia 2008-2030 study it is believed that Perth will be water deficient by 2020, and all water use scenarios still predict an absolute deficit of some 30GL by then. This report stated that “if potential reductions in water availability due to climate change were taken into account the situation would be significantly worse. It may be concluded that agricultural and other rural water demands are likely to be constrained by water availability, competition from growing urban water demands, and climate impacts. The scenario projections therefore support the need for significant gains in water use efficiency and the development of alternative water supplies including desalination, water re-use or substantial new inter-regional transfers into the Metropolitan Area”.

The GWIG believes that consumers can adopt water-sensible gardening, water reuse in the home and garden, and water conservation techniques and appliances in an effort to mitigate the effects of our changing climate and water scarcity.

## Our Objectives

The Greywater Industry Group, as a collective of water industry professionals, has developed a number of aims that will enhance the community awareness of the benefits of greywater reuse. These aims include, but are not limited to:

- Working towards a responsible, sustainable use of water in Western Australia.
- Promoting the use of recycled water for all members of the community, including large-scale industrial and commercial premises.
- Supporting the development and testing of new and improved greywater reuse systems, incorporating both diversion devices and treatment devices.
- Educating, through public promotions and professional development, and to provide relevant and factual information about greywater reuse.

- Liaising with government departments, regulatory bodies, private companies and organisations, and individuals to develop policies, programs, state and national codes, standards and legislation.
- Encouraging industry knowledge sharing, networking and co-operation to improve the greywater industry's productivity and performance.
- Ensuring that the regulatory framework best serves the community interest by appropriate policy responses and submissions, contributing to the development of codes of practice and lobbying government for legislation changes as required.
- Identifying emerging issues of importance to the greywater industry and to develop strategic responses.
- Undertaking projects and facilitating research strategies and outcomes of state and national significance.
- Developing, promoting or advocating resource management tools to assess environmental and health risks for sustainable urban and rural development.

## Our Goals

The actions of the Greywater Industry Group are such that the following community values are promoted and adopted:

- The protection of community public health.
- Cost-effective delivery, supply and installations of greywater systems and services.
- Being responsive, in appropriate ways, to customers' concerns and comments.
- Engaging the community and all stakeholders in policy development, formulation of standards and codes, and responses to issues.
- Actively working to ensure the sustainable management of water resources.
- Minimising the impact of the greywater industry on the environment.
- Regular self-assessment and reporting, as required, on the performance of systems.
- Understanding and managing the risks for any greywater installation to ensure public safety.
- Providing information, and making statements and decisions based on sound knowledge and research.
- Demonstrating leadership and guidance for the responsible use of greywater recycling.

## Education

The GWIG will actively promote all aspects of water conservation and reuse to the general public, to local and state governments and to the commercial sector. Raising awareness will be achieved by a number of strategies including the development of an informative website with links to relevant manufacturers and installers of greywater systems, a series of “fact sheets’ and the promotion of water-wise products and services.

The outcomes of research do indicate that consumer awareness is key to modifying the behaviour of households towards more environmentally-kinder actions. However, awareness alone does not lead to behaviour change. The availability and price of appropriate green alternatives, responsible legislation, habit and routine, among others, are factors that influence the potential for behavioural change. A change in purchasing and consumption behaviour by households towards practices that are more environmentally-friendly would significantly reduce the pollutant load of domestic wastewater, and therefore reduce the cost of sewage treatment, damage to the environment and risk to the WA’s valued water resources.

## Legislation

The GWIG will take an active role in providing feedback and comment of any legislation dealing with greywater reuse and general water security issues. This may involve examining the Codes of practice for greywater reuse in WA, Australian standards for on-site domestic wastewater management (AS/NZS 1547) and Plumbing and drainage (AS/NZS 3500), or any other policy documents relating to particular industry standards, irrigation and water usage.

Furthermore, the GWIG will contribute to policy formation, make recommendations to remove regulatory barriers, communicate messages of responsible water use, and lobby government and other agencies to make the necessary legislative changes to improve the greywater industry. In addition GWIG aims to increase the uptake of such systems in premises throughout Western Australia by making sound argument for incentives and rebates, as well as providing pertinent information and data so that all stakeholders can make informed decisions.

## Research

GWIG has members who are under the auspices of Tertiary Institutions. Some of these members will be involved in the assessment and testing of equipment, community perceptions of recycling wastewater and on-ground research on the effects of greywater on plants, soil and the environment.

Partnerships between the various Universities, companies and organisations will be forged to enable research to be conducted that will further support the greywater industry, in light of the future need to conserve and recycle water as part of the Water Corporation strategy of securing a water future for all.

Not only are there possibilities to undertake formal laboratory-based research but there are opportunities to use a risk assessment approach to assess wastewater management related issues, determine options for both on-site and community-scale wastewater re-use, examine how the greywater industry can significantly reduce the amount of greenhouse gas production resulting from wastewater systems, and if the aim of greywater diversion and/or treatment is to reduce pollutants in the wastewater to very low levels, how this can be achieved to minimise environmental impacts.

## Our Affiliates

The GWIG endeavours to forge and build relationships with a number of similar organisations, all associated with water, wastewater, landscape, irrigation and gardens. The following list is not prescriptive but a useful guide of the types of industry partners GWIG supports:

- Garden Industry Alliance
- Irrigation Australia
- Master Plumber's Association
- Housing Industry Association
- Australian Water and Wastewater Association