

## Graywater for Orchards

Graywater is wastewater generated from domestic activities such as laundry and bathing, which can be recycled on-site for uses such as landscape irrigation. Graywater can provide a reliable supply of water year-round to trees and shrubs. Graywater systems can be as easy as washing machine water pumped through hose to back yard (fruit) trees. In fact fruit trees respond well to graywater . . . with a well-formulated detergent.

Keep in mind:

- Abide by local regulations and consider your soils and slope.
- Detergents and soaps that are in waste water go directly to trees. Choose detergents without sodium, phosphorus, boron (toxic) and especially don't use chlorine bleach (you can use oxygen bleaches).
- Winter is a good time to give your soil a chance to rest from graywater by shutting the system down. Rains can cleanse any salts from your soil.
- Consider not shaving in the shower as small hairs easily clog underground pipes. Then you have to dig up your yard again.
- Behavioral changes may be necessary as you consider the impact to family and visitors.
- Maintain graywater systems by periodically purging with a hose for ~½ hour.

A graywater system is complex, requires attention, and some maintenance but does not have the existing support (maintenance professionals) that traditional landscape systems have.