

Bengaluru to make greywater reuse compulsory for new constructions

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Synopsis

Bengaluru's water board recently announced plans to make greywater recycling mandatory for all new residential buildings and independent houses. The proposed regulation will require separate treatment and reuse of wastewater from kitchens, bathrooms, and laundry areas, aiming to reduce the city's dependence on distant river sources and ease pressure on drainage systems. Officials believe this move will help improve groundwater recharge and promote sustainable water management across the city.



Representative image

In a significant policy shift, the Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) has decided to extend its wastewater reuse rules to include all new constructions in Bengaluru. Until recently, only residential projects with more than 120 units were obliged to treat and reuse wastewater. However, with the city facing mounting water scarcity, the board has deemed it necessary to expand the regulation to individual homes and smaller buildings.

Under the proposed plan, greywater-originating from bathrooms, kitchens, washing machines, and sinks-will need to be separated from toilet waste. Builders will be required to install dedicated pipelines and treatment systems to ensure this wastewater is filtered and reused for non-potable purposes such as toilet flushing, cleaning, and gardening. The BWSSB has also proposed regular maintenance of these systems, at least once a year, to maintain hygiene standards and protect groundwater quality.

Officials highlighted that Bengaluru spends substantial resources every day transporting Cauvery water over nearly 100 kilometres to meet the city's demand. Yet around 40% of that treated water is wasted and ends up in drains, overloading the city's sewer network. The new greywater recycling mandate is expected to reduce

dependency on Cauvery water by almost half while also alleviating the burden on the existing drainage infrastructure.

A senior BWSSB official mentioned that the rule would initially apply only to new projects, as enforcing it on existing properties would be logistically challenging. The board is preparing detailed guidelines, which will be forwarded for government approval. Industry experts have supported the move, stating that it represents an essential step towards sustainable urban water management in Bengaluru.

The initiative is expected to cut down freshwater consumption, improve groundwater levels, and lessen strain on the city's drainage systems. While implementation across older properties may take time, beginning with new developments ensures a manageable rollout. The success of this measure will depend on strict adherence, regular monitoring, and public participation, paving the way for a more water-resilient Bengaluru.