

Please call or email me for more information or with your questions.

Brought to you by:  
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## Good Day! Here is this month's info on Green Real Estate and related issues:

The rains have finally arrived and I thought it would be appropriate to talk a bit about how you can make your home and property a water efficient one which, by the way, will add value to your property when it comes time to sell it. For buyer's, my intention is to shed some "moisture" on what to look for in your next real estate purchase.

Obviously, living in the southwest, we need to think about our water use, and that means everyone! There are several, low cost and even free strategies we can adopt to help use water wisely.



Lets start outside with our watering habits on the landscape. Be sure to adjust your automatic timer NOT to go on when it's been raining. This may sound obvious but you'd be surprised how many sprinkler systems pump water out of our aquifer, which costs money and uses energy, while it's raining! Irrigate landscapes in the early morning or after sunset. 50% of above ground sprinkler water gets evaporated before it reaches the roots

of plants during the daytime in summer months. Plant low-water use, drought tolerant, and native species. The city puts out a list of appropriate plants for our region. Check your drip lines and faucets for leaks.

Rainwater harvesting is a great way to save money and conserve water. There are a few people in the Prescott area that can easily help with this. Basically you catch the water as it runs off your roof and store it in a tank for use later when there is no rain. If done correctly you will not have to use city or well water ALL YEAR LONG for your outdoor irrigation needs. Think about how much water and energy that can save! (See below for contact; sizing and installation are important!)

Another easy way to get the most of the rain that falls is to create swales or burms on your property in strategic areas. They will catch and divert the water and store it in the ground where you want it rather than letting it run off. This will also reduce your use of city and well water and put less of a strain on our storm water systems. It can also reduce and prevent erosion while retaining soil nutrients on-site.

Moving inside you can certainly conserve water by using less. Run only full loads on your washer's. Don't let the water run when doing dishes or brushing teeth. For \$9 you can install low-flow aerating showerheads with shut off valves. Put a brick or a full and sealed jug of water in your older toilet tank to reduce the use there by displacement, or if you are replacing an older toilet be sure to get a low-flow or dual flow toilet that allows you to adjust the flush depending on the need. Check your toilet tank for slow leaks from the tank to the bowl.

For a home with an accessible plumbing system consider a Graywater system. Graywater is any water that has been used in the home, except water from toilets. Dish, shower, sink, and laundry water comprise 50-80% of residential "waste" water. This may be reused for other purposes, primarily

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*Integrating  
Environmental  
Ethics with  
Your Home and  
Your Life*



landscape irrigation. You simply catch the water from washer's, sinks & showers before it goes into the sewer or septic system; store it outside in a tank to be used on your landscape. You will need to use less toxic cleansers and bring more awareness to what you put down your drain, which is a good thing.

Household wastewater treatment systems vary widely from traditional sewer and septic systems to alternative systems like constructed wetlands and living machines. The latter are ecological wastewater treatment systems. They can be on-site, inexpensive, low energy and very effective if used correctly. Be sure you know how and where your household wastewater is being treated and that if it's an on-site system it is inspected and certified by state licensed professionals before a purchase.

On the safety side, be sure to have well water tested by a certified lab regularly and before buying a home with a well. Even city and municipal water supplies are subject to standards of quality so test that too if you have concerns. Water quality can vary from neighborhood to neighborhood, house to house. Older pipes in a house can be an issue too.

### ***About Robert J. Israel...***

*Robert J. Israel is a licensed REALTOR® in Arizona and EcoBroker Certified®. He has over 20 years experience in environmental issues and nearly a decade in Green Building and Sustainable Design. Additionally, he has over a decade of experience working in the building trades as well as professional marketing experience at both the local and national level.*

***I'm on the Web! Visit Rob Israel at [www.PrescottAzGreenRealtor.com](http://www.PrescottAzGreenRealtor.com)***

### **Helpful Links:**

Rainwater Harvesting

<http://www.oasisdesign.net/greywater/>

<http://www.watercache.com/standard.php?p=gr>

Local Installation –

High Desert Rain

(928) 308-5992 MacRae Nicoll

Constructed Wetlands

<http://www.constructedwetlands.org/cw/index.cfm>

<http://www.epa.gov/owow/wetlands/construc/>

Ecological Treatment

<http://www.oceanarks.org/>

<http://www.livingdesignsgroup.com/website-redirect/>

Well & Drinking Water

<http://www.epa.gov/safewater/dwh/dw-health.pdf>

[http://www.epa.gov/safewater/privatewells/pdfs/household\\_wells.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/safewater/privatewells/pdfs/household_wells.pdf)

Arizona Water

<http://www.azwater.gov/dwr/>