

Moving Water in Camp

As of 2024, we don't quite have the water system fully dialed in, but we've learned a lot over the years and it feels like we are close to a painless water solution on playa. A part of that involves getting fresh water from the tanks where it's used, and grey water to the tanks where it can be collected or removed from playa.

Fresh Water Well Pumps

We have a few of the [Harbor Freight 1HP Well Pump](#). ([Manual](#)) These pumps seem to work really well, and they have their own bladder so that the pump doesn't have to flip on and off frequently shortening it's life. Basically, they will maintain pressure in a pressurized water system, like the flower or the Kitchen Fort, or even when attached to a hose.



This is what Sierra Site Services delivers attached to their fresh water tank.

It is also what we use in the Gayflower for the fresh water system. And we have a new backup in a box in the Gayflower.

Pro Tip: When delivered, our pump was not primed. To prime it, you have to open a little nut and pour in some water until it overflows. We did this using a plastic bag with the corner cut off.

Pro Tip: Do not run this kind of pump dry for more than 10 seconds.

Pro Tip: The tank must be pressurized to 23 psi which can be done with a bicycle pump.

Only ever use this kind of tank for potable water.

Sewer Pumps

We bought two of the [Harbor Freight 3/4 HP Submersible Sump Pumps](#) ([Manual](#))



These were intended to move grey water around camp quickly, say, from

the kitchen to the davflower. They pump water into a thick red 2" hose that looks like this:



We have a bunch of those hoses - probably 150 feet worth.

There are two problems with this method of pumping grey water. The first is that the sump pump is meant to sit in a bucket that fills up with grey water causing the ball to float which turns on the pump. That means it never pumps the bottom n inches of water which can be a lot depending on the size of the bucket you put it in. The second is that those 2" hoses fill up with grey water and once the bucket is empty, they stay filled up with grey water... there is no way to cause the pump to push out the remaining contents all the way to wherever you're going. This means there is a manual step, after pumping grey water, involving walking the red hose from the source to the destination to gravity-force out all the water.

ided by Sierra is low-slung and looks like this:



With this tank, it's not a big problem to hand-caress the grey water from

the hose into the tank. However, if you are trying to move grey water up to the Gayflower, where the tanks are probably 5' off the ground, it's not so easy.

For the last mile, we have these little Water Bug Style Pumps:



That can be completely submersed in water and it will suck up virtually everything and pump it up through a narrow hose, which gets the last little bits of water up and out. It's slow, though, compared to the big sewer pumps.

IN SHORT we still don't have a great way to move grey water from the Kitchen Fort to either the Gayflower or a Sierra Grey Water Tank. It's just a bit of a manual messy process. This is something we will continue to work on for 2025.

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