

Human waste feeds rest stop greenhouse

31 August 2005

A new Vermont highway rest stop has blue water in the toilets as part of a "green" system that uses tropical plants to cleanse and recycle sewage water.

The state spent \$6.3 million on the facility on Interstate 89, 10 miles northwest of White River Junction, which also has a greenhouse containing mainly Asian plants that do the purification and recycling.

The site is also home to the country's first Vietnam veterans memorial, erected in 1982, the New York Times reported.

In the so-called living machine, the contents of a flushed toilet are pumped into a filtration system to rid them of odor and then into six concrete cylinders holding vegetation that eat the waste, converting it into plant food.

After the water is cleaned for reuse, it is pumped back into the toilets to resume the cycle. Signs hanging over toilets warn users that the water, dyed blue for good measure, is undrinkable wastewater.

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APA citation: Human waste feeds rest stop greenhouse (2005, August 31) retrieved 29 November 2020 from <https://phys.org/news/2005-08-human-rest-greenhouse.html>

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