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Welcome to Karen and Simon's Campervan Adventures – A couple in our fifties exploring life one road at a time in our campervan. Sharing adventures, campsites, hidden gems, tips, tricks and the reality of van life.

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GREY & BLACK WASTE DISPOSAL

A Practical Guide for Campervan & Motorhome Users

1. What's the Difference Between Grey and Black Waste?

Grey Wastewater

Grey waste includes **all wastewater from your campervan except toilet waste**.

This typically comes from:

- Washing up
- Showers
- Bathroom sinks
- Kitchen sinks

Grey water often contains:

- Soap residue
- Shampoo
- Detergents
- Food particles

Although less hazardous than black waste, it **must NOT be poured onto roads, hedgerows, or street drains**, especially in the UK where rainwater and wastewater are managed separately by law.

Black Wastewater

Black waste is **highly contaminated toilet wastewater**, including:

- Human excrement (solid waste)
- Urine
- Any toilet chemicals used in cassette toilets

Black waste is treated as **raw sewage** and must only be emptied at approved disposal points.



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2. Where Can You Legally Dispose of Grey & Black Water?

Campsites

The easiest and safest option.

- Almost all campsites have grey and black waste disposal points.
- Many allow non-residents to use their facilities for a small fee (typically £7–£10).
- If you're staying overnight, disposal is usually included.

If You're Not Using a Campsite

🚫 IMPORTANT – Grey Water Warning 🚫

Do NOT empty grey water into street drains or onto the road.

It is illegal in the UK and can result in fines.

Household Waste Recycling Centres

Many councils now provide:

- Dedicated **motorhome grey waste drains**
- Sometimes **black waste disposal points**

Check the **local council website** for facilities near you.

Service Stations / Truck Stops

- Truck-oriented service areas often have **drive-over grey waste grids**.
- Some sites also provide **black waste (Elsan-style) disposal**.

Motorway Service Stations

Increasing numbers of UK motorway services provide:

- Motorhome service points
- Grey waste drains
- Black waste/chemical toilet emptying

Availability varies by location.

Marinas & Harbours

Boating facilities often have:

- Grey water disposal
- Chemical toilet disposal

Always ask permission first, and expect to pay a small fee.



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Coach Depots & Coach Yards

Coach companies regularly empty onboard toilets and sinks, so their depots may allow:

- Grey waste disposal
- Black waste disposal

Ask first – some may charge a small fee.

Carrying Extra Waste Containers

A portable waste container can help you:

- Empty grey water from your tank
- Store it temporarily
- Transport it to a legal disposal site

(Useful off-grid, but does take up storage space.)

3. Black Waste Disposal – How & Where

Designated Chemical Disposal Points (Elsan Points)

Commonly found at:

- Campsites
- Marinas
- Motorway service stations
- Truck stops
- Some council recycling centres
- Coach depots

These facilities are designed specifically for safe sewage disposal.

If You Have a Separation/Composting Toilet

Solid Waste

- Collected separately
- No added chemicals
- Can usually be disposed of in **general waste bins**, double-bagged
- Classified similarly to nappies or dog waste

Urine

- Chemical-free



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- Can be disposed of in **any public toilet**

4. Apps to Help You Find Waste Disposal Points

Use dedicated campervan navigation and search apps:

- **Park4Night**
- **Search4Sites**
- **CamperContact**
- **BritStops**

These list disposal points, prices, and user reviews.

5. DO NOT Dispose of Waste Here

Under absolutely **no circumstances** should grey or black water be disposed of in:

- Hedgerows
- Woodlands
- Rivers, streams, canals, lakes
- Beaches or coastal areas
- Street drains
- Storm drains
- Farmers' fields (unless you have *explicit permission*)
- Roadside verges
- Car parks

Black waste is raw sewage and remains hazardous even when using “eco-friendly” chemicals.

6. Travelling in Europe

Good news — Europe generally has:

- More motorhome service points
- Easier-to-access grey and black disposal facilities
- Dedicated “Aire” systems in many countries

Making waste management much simpler.