

MEDIA RELEASE



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Increasing the efficiency of our water use

Standards Australia has submitted a proposal for a new International Standard on water efficiency labelling with the help of Singapore, Malaysia, China and New Zealand. This aims to further reduce domestic water wastage, support the government's Water Efficiency Labelling and Standards (WELS) scheme and make it easier for more countries to benefit from using water efficient products.

Water is the world's most precious resource and we all have a responsibility to use it wisely. The UN's Sustainable Development Goal 6 (SDG6) notes that access to safe water and sanitation is essential to human health, sustainability and economic growth.

As part of Australia's commitment to greater water efficiency, the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources manages the WELS scheme. WELS reduces demand for high quality drinkable water by informing consumers about water efficiency at the point of sale.

The new proposal follows Standards Australia's development of the joint Australian and New Zealand Standard AS/NZS 6400, *Water efficient products – Rating and labelling*, through the technical committee WS-032, Water Efficient Appliances. This standard contributes to a more water efficient Australia and helps consumers identify which products are "best-of-breed" when it comes to water usage.

The proposed International Standard would assist manufacturers of specified products to transact in a common market, enabling competition and encouraging best practice. It would also empower consumers to use water more wisely.

The WELS Regulator in the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources, Mr Paul Morris, said an international standard would benefit both consumers and business in reducing water wastage globally.

"Australia's WELS scheme has been very successful in reducing domestic water use in Australia. Consumers use the information on the WELS label to make informed purchasing decisions that save water and save money on utility bills," said Mr Morris.

"By 2021 it is estimated that use of water efficient products will help to reduce domestic water use by nearly 150,000 megalitres each year—enough water to fill 60,000 Olympic swimming pools.

"In addition, Australians will save more than one billion dollars overall through reduced water and energy bills.

"An international standard will benefit Australian consumers and manufacturers by reducing manufacturing costs, and will help other countries implement water efficiency schemes that can save water and reduce the need for costly water infrastructure."

Standards Australia CEO, Dr Bronwyn Evans, applauded the committee for positioning Australia as a leader for this initiative.

“An international standard would harmonise existing national systems and help facilitate a common market.

“With Australia driving this important area of work, we are shaping the way the world works together to reduce our global impact,” said Dr Evans.

The standard relates to the following range of products:

- Showers
- Tap equipment
- Flow controllers
- Lavatory equipment
- Urinal equipment
- Dishwashers
- Clothes washing machines
- The dryer function of combination washer/dryers, where they use water to dry a load

Standards Australia’s submission has been registered with the International Organization for Standardization (ISO). The 161 member bodies of ISO will now consider and assess the proposal before commencing work.

For more information on Australia’s water efficiency labelling scheme and the benefits it delivers to Australians, visit: www.waterrating.gov.au

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