



December 29, 2009

President Barack Obama
 White House
 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
 Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama:

The undersigned companies and organizations – representing a broad cross-section of plumbing and irrigation contractors, equipment manufacturers and wholesalers, retailers, utilities, environmental groups, and real estate organizations – urge you to propose to Congress the inclusion of plumbing and irrigation efficiency retrofits in legislation to create green jobs and boost the economy. Not only will water-efficient retrofits create near-term jobs in the plumbing industry, but installation of WaterSense products will save consumers money, save billions of gallons of water, reduce energy consumption, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. A jobs bill should also include federal procurement of WaterSense products for new buildings and major renovations.

The Environmental Protection Agency’s WaterSense program promotes water efficiency among consumers. Incentives for the purchase of WaterSense products and services can be deployed quickly to build consumer demand for WaterSense technology and create and retain jobs. The WaterSense label certifies that a product will save water and perform well, backed by third-party testing and independent certification to ensure that the product meets EPA’s criteria for efficiency and performance.

WaterSense standards have been finalized for toilets, faucets, urinals, and irrigation professionals. Standards will be in place shortly for showerheads and weather-based irrigation controllers. As of December 2009, the WaterSense program included:

- More than 300 WaterSense labeled toilet models
- More than 800 WaterSense labeled faucet and faucet accessory models
- More than 700 irrigation partners certified in deploying water-efficient landscaping techniques.

Incentives for WaterSense Create Jobs: WaterSense incentives will spur hiring by manufacturers that produce the products, wholesalers and retailers who sell the products and the local contractors and construction workers who install these plumbing and irrigation products. Federal procurement will offer a guaranteed market for WaterSense products, and will reduce taxpayer dollars spent on water and energy consumption in federal buildings.

- The jobs potential for investment in replacing plumbing fixtures is on the order of 18 jobs per million dollars of direct investment. For example, a \$1 billion investment in WaterSense incentives has the potential to boost employment by 18,000 jobs and the U.S. GDP by \$1.47 billion.
- Employment in construction-related jobs, including plumbing, fell to 7.2 million in 2008 from 8 million in 2006, and the trend has not improved. WaterSense incentives will help reverse this trend.
- In just the wholesale-distribution sector of the plumbing industry, WaterSense incentives will create or retain 2,500 jobs for every \$1 billion invested.

Incentives for WaterSense Create Jobs Immediately: Incentives for WaterSense products will provide an immediate boost to the economy.

- The supply chain in the plumbing industry is poised to respond almost immediately to the increased consumer demand for WaterSense products. Little lead time is needed to create the necessary jobs to respond to the demand.
- Homeowners will take advantage of WaterSense incentives, just as they have done in 2009 in response to incentives for energy efficient products, such as window replacements.
- Retrofitting WaterSense plumbing fixtures or irrigation systems in commercial buildings can be done over the short-term compared to more expensive whole building or building-systems energy retrofits.
- A workforce of landscape professionals to install native plants, rock gardens, and other water-efficient vegetation designs can be mobilized over a shorter term.

WaterSense Saves Water: The average household spends as much as \$500 per household annually on its water and sewer bill. By making a few simple changes to use water more efficiently, a household could save about \$170 per year. Replacing an older, existing toilet with a WaterSense labeled model, can save 4,000 gallons per year. If all U.S. households installed water-efficient appliances, the country would save more than 3 trillion gallons of water and more than \$18 billion dollars per year! Also, with the more efficient use of water, the need for costly water supply infrastructure investments and new wastewater treatment facilities is likewise reduced. In addition, if homeowners with irrigation systems hired WaterSense irrigation partners to perform regular maintenance, each household could reduce water used for irrigation by 15 percent, or about 9,000 gallons annually.

WaterSense Saves Energy and Reduces Greenhouse Gas Emissions: It takes a significant amount of energy to deliver and treat water that is used every day. American public water supply and treatment facilities consume about 56 billion kilowatt-hours (kWh) per year – enough electricity to power more than 5 million homes for an entire year. For example, letting a faucet run for five minutes uses as much energy as burning a 60-watt light bulb for 14 hours.

Reducing household water use not only reduces the energy required to supply and treat public water supplies, it also helps address climate change.

- If one out of every 100 American homes were retrofitted with water-efficient plumbing fixtures, we would save about 100 million kWh of electricity per year – avoiding 80,000 tons of greenhouse gas emissions. That is equivalent to removing nearly 15,000 automobiles from the road for one year!
- If 1 percent of American homes replace their older, inefficient toilets with WaterSense labeled models, the country would save more than 38 million kWh of electricity – enough to supply more than 43,000 households with electricity for one month.

WaterSense Has a Proven Track Record: In 2008, WaterSense demonstrated that it saves water and energy and reduces greenhouse gas emissions.

	Water Saved	Electricity Saved	GHG Emissions Avoided
Toilets	2.19 billion gallons	7 million kWh	5,000 metric tons
Faucets and Aerators	7.19 billion gallons	1 billion kWh	7,000 metric tons

We believe, without question, that incentives to encourage the homeowners and building owners to purchase WaterSense products and services will offer a tremendous boost to the economy. WaterSense incentives will create green jobs quickly, save water and energy resources, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

- Alliance for Water Efficiency
- American Rivers
- American Supply Association
- Building Owners and Managers Association (BOMA) International
- First Supply
- Irrigation Association
- Kohler Co.
- Mechanical Contractors Association of America
- Moen Incorporated
- National Apartment Association
- National Multi Housing Council
- Plumbing Contractors of America
- Plumbing Manufacturers Institute
- Plumbing-Heating-Cooling Contractors National Association
- Real Estate Roundtable
- U.S. Green Building Council