



CIPH Information Bulletin on U.S.A. EPA WaterSense

For decades manufacturers, regulatory authorities, and users of products have been volunteering their time and efforts on Technical Standards committees to ensure the health and safety of Canadians. This forum has been quite successful as it provides the best opportunity for stakeholders from all areas to be involved in the process and the content of the technical standards. These technical standards are referenced in model codes for many building and consumer products. One such model code is the National Plumbing Code of Canada (NPC).

The NPC references the ASME A112.18.1/CSA B125.1 technical standard for plumbing fittings (hereafter called ASME/CSA B125) and the ASME A112.19/CSA B45 technical standard for plumbing fixtures (hereafter called ASME/CSA B45). The committees for these technical standards in recent years have expanded their mandates to not only include health and safety, but also water efficiency and conservation. Besides other products, these technical standards address the requirements for lavatory faucets, showerheads and toilets, focus products of the EPA WaterSense program in the U.S.A.

The members of these committees have worked diligently to incorporate EPA WaterSense requirements into the latest standards for these products so that certification to the requirements of EPA WaterSense is available. In fact, recently members of the ASME/CSA B125 technical committee worked with EPA WaterSense on the requirements for showerheads, such that similar requirements will go into the EPA WaterSense program and at the same time be incorporated into the ASME/CSA B125 standard. The ASME A112.19/CSA B45 Technical Committee will be balloting changes which will incorporate EPA WaterSense requirements for toilets. Therefore, manufacturers who wish to receive certification to EPA WaterSense, may do so at the same time they certify their product to the ASME /CSA standard referenced in the NPC. This greatly reduces costs associated with certification.

Once a manufacturer receives their certification to both the ASME/CSA standards and the EPA WaterSense requirements, they can register their product with EPA WaterSense and obtain the right to use the EPA WaterSense mark anywhere they wish to market their product. This includes Canada.

The ASME/CSA B125 Technical Committee has finished the latest draft of the standard which incorporates these new EPA WaterSense requirements and it will be available by the last quarter of 2010. The ASME A112.19/CSA B45 Technical Committee plans to complete the ballot for EPA WaterSense requirements and then it will be published as an addendum within the next year. Unfortunately due to the code cycle, these new standards will not be considered for inclusion in the NPC until 2015. We encourage government to push the Natural Resources Canada (NRC) in reducing the time frame for the code cycle so these important changes are enforced sooner. We also encourage provincial governments to follow the lead of Quebec and Alberta in making it illegal to sell plumbing products not certified to existing applicable standards.

CIPH understands that government is developing voluntary requirements for water conservation patterned after the EPA WaterSense program. The Institute encourages governments to endorse certification to the ASME/CSA standards and the EPA WaterSense mark and strongly recommends that they do not develop Canadian-only marking requirements or separate logos or labels which would put an unnecessary burden on industry and be counterproductive. Municipalities can become EPA WaterSense promotional partners and be allowed to use the EPA WaterSense logo in web sites, literature, and promotional materials. Details on this program are on the EPA WaterSense web site.

Adopting the EPA's WaterSense program would be a simple and logical solution since it builds on the Energy Star program. The EPA and its program are already well recognized in the marketplace as providing a creditable and independent certification process.

The following chart provides the current WaterSense Savings Requirements (Water savings while maintaining sufficient performance):

| Product | Current max. | WaterSense max. | Percent Savings (%) |
|------------|--------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| Lav | 2.2 gpm | 1.5 gpm | 32 |
| Toilet | 1.6 gpf | 1.28 gpf | 20 |
| Showerhead | 2.5 gpm | 2.0 gpm | 20 |
| Urinals | 1.0 gpf | 0.5 gpf | 50 |

There is no standard for kitchen faucets. EPA has stated that they do not intend on developing a standard. The kitchen faucet is viewed as having a primary function of filling sinks and pots and restrictions in this area would increase task time for the consumer.

There is also a critical need to ensure that water savings are balanced in meeting consumer needs and health and safety are maintained with the use of low flow showerheads. There is a potential for scalding with these devices. The Plumbing Manufacturers Institute has developed a position statement and offers the following information:

<http://www.pmihome.org/positionstatements/showerheads.aspx>

*** Footnote: WaterSense is a registered trademark of the US EPA.**

The Canadian Institute of Plumbing & Heating is a not-for-profit trade association. Founded in 1933, the Institute is a vibrant organization committed to providing members with the tools for success in today's competitive environment. More than 250 companies are members of this influential Canadian industry association. They are the manufacturers, wholesaler distributors, master distributors, manufacturers' agents and allied companies who manufacture and distribute plumbing, hydronic heating, industrial, waterworks and other mechanical products. CIPH wholesalers operate more than 700 warehouses and showrooms across Canada. Total industry sales exceed \$5 billion annually.