

WATER SENSE and GREEN JOBS

Job Creation through Water Efficiency Retrofits in Homes, Multi-Family, Commercial, and Institutional Buildings

A broad cross-section of plumbing and irrigation contractors, equipment manufacturers and wholesalers, retailers, utilities, environmental groups, water efficiency organizations and real estate organizations – urge Congress to authorize a \$500 million rebate program for plumbing and irrigation efficiency products that have been certified by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Further, we urge that Congress include federal procurement of WaterSense Products for new buildings and renovations.

EPA’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.

Not only will rebates for WaterSense products create jobs quickly, but installation of WaterSense products will save consumers money, save billions of gallons of water, reduce energy consumption, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

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.

- 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 \$500 million investment in WaterSense incentives has the potential to boost employment by 9,000 jobs with commensurate growth in US GDP.
- 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 1,250 jobs for every \$500 million invested.
- The supply chain in the plumbing industry is poised to respond almost immediately to the increased consumer demand for WaterSense products.

WaterSense Saves Water and Energy and Reduces Greenhouse Gas Emissions: 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	700,000 metric tons

WaterSense Rebate Program

The WaterSense rebate program would authorize a rebate for homeowners and certain building owners who purchase and install WaterSense products that have been certified by EPA. 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.

1. WaterSense Rebate Program: There would be authorized a \$500 million WaterSense Rebate with the funds to remain available until expended. Additional funds of \$25 million would be authorized for administration of the program.
2. Eligibility: The rebate program would be available for WaterSense labeled products intended for private use, including plumbing fixtures in residences and apartments, to private bathrooms in hotels and hospitals, and to restrooms in commercial establishments where the fixtures are intended for the use of a family or an individual; and for WaterSense labeled irrigation controllers.
3. Product Rebate:

The program will provide a Mail-In Product Rebate of 30% of the price of a product certified to carry the WaterSense label, with a maximum rebate of up to \$150 per product.

4. Installation Rebate: The program will provide a Mail-in Installation Rebate of 30% of the installation cost of product certified to carry the WaterSense label and installed by a licensed or certified contractor, or the services of WaterSense certified irrigation contractor, with a maximum rebate up to \$300.
5. Rebate Request:

The Installation Rebate and Product Rebate request forms would be made available at point of sale locations, EPA's website, and all participating manufacturer's websites. The rebate request would be submitted to the appropriate federal agency or to an independent third party fulfillment house. In any case, administrative procedures must be designed for speed and efficiency, to roll out the program rapidly and effectively and to provide timely payments.