



The WELS System

Water saving not only helps the planet but also your hip pocket.

The Facts

1. WELS stands for Water Efficiency Labelling Scheme

2. The system was introduced in July 2005 and became compulsory in July 2006.

3. The aim of the scheme is to reduce urban water consumption in Australia.

4. Prior to the scheme being introduced water conservation rating labelling was based on a voluntary system.

How the system works

The system used on all water using appliances works much the same way as the labelling system used to determine the power efficiency of electrical appliances we buy.

A label is fixed to the front of every new water consuming product shows a 0-6 star rating. The rating steps up in half increments and allows you to establish the water efficiency of the product and quickly compare brands and models. The higher the star rating the more efficient the machine and the lower the water consumption.

As well as the stars the label shows the average water flow per minute or the average water consumption per use.

The government website that explains the scheme claims:

By 2021 it is estimated that using water efficient products will help to:

- *Reduce domestic water use by more than 100,000 megalitres each year.*
- *Save more than 800,000 megalitres (more water than Sydney Harbour)*
- *Reduce total greenhouse gas output by 400,000 tonnes each year - equivalent to taking 90,000 cars off the roads each year.*

Over one third of water savings will come from more efficient showers, 34% from washing machines and 23% from toilets and urinals.

www.waterrating.gov.au

Replace your worn out appliances and fittings with water saving ones.

What this all means to you

The scheme has a number of aims, the main one being obviously the reduction in water consumption.

Another aim is to encourage and promote innovation in the design of new products that excel in conserving water whilst still producing the best results for us the consumer.

Shower

A standard domestic shower head uses approximately 15-25 litres of water per minute, whereas a 3 star rated shower head uses between 6-7 litres per minute. A water efficient shower head saves around 14,500 litres per household per year.

As well as saving water, a water efficient shower fed by a gas hot water system can save you up to 40% of your energy costs.

Toilet

Dual flush toilets were invented in 1980 by an Australian inventor and over the years their design has become more and more water efficient

Twenty two percent of water savings in homes now come from toilets.

An old style single flush toilet can use up to 12 litres per flush whereas a dual flush averages less than 4 litres.

Installing a dual flush toilet can save up to 51 litres per person per day.

Taps

Traditionally designed taps can discharge 15-18 litres of water per minute whereas some water efficient models can use as little as 2 litres depending on their use.

Washing machine

Up to 50% of the water that can be saved in the home comes from efficient washing machines.

A water efficient machine can use one third of the water used by older models.

Typically front loading machines tend to be more water efficient than top loading ones.

However, with the introduction of the WELS system you can now compare efficiency across different types and brands.

Traditionally the trade off with front loading machines was the time it took for a cycle to be completed. Many front loading machines have very long cycles that can drag out the dreaded chore of clothes washing way longer than desired.

This is not so much the case today but check the time of cycles on the machine you are considering as well as the water efficiency before purchase.

Dishwasher

Efficient dishwashers use half the water of older models. A dishwasher can use less water than manually washing up and can clean your dishes better.

A multi draw dishwasher or a smaller capacity unit can help you scale down your loads if you this suits your needs and saves more water.

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