



The WaterSense® Blueprint

Issue V, Spring 2015:

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IN THIS ISSUE

Spring is right around the corner, and it's time for a new issue of the *WaterSense Blueprint*!

With tough competition the name of the game in the residential construction business, many builders are earning green certifications for their homes to help differentiate their product. Earning the WaterSense label signifies that a home is water-efficient and convenient. But did you know that there are several certifications from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) that homes can earn? In this issue, we take a look at three different EPA certifications that help builders take advantage of green building trends.

We also have a new section that highlights news about WaterSense and trends and issues that are affecting the green building industry. Finally, our calendar of events lists items of interest for WaterSense partners and stakeholders.

As a reminder, we want the *Blueprint* to cover the topics you're most interested in, so please don't hesitate to let us know what future topics you'd like us to address. Email those and other comments to watersense@epa.gov.

MARKETING CORNER: OPEN THE DOOR TO SAVINGS WITH EPA'S TRIO OF CERTIFICATIONS!

WaterSense labeled homes are independently certified to be high-performing and save at least 20 percent more water than standard models. Compared to a traditional home, a WaterSense labeled home can save a family of four 50,000 gallons of water and \$600 on utility bills each year. But the savings and performance are enhanced even more when the WaterSense label is combined with EPA's other labels—ENERGY STAR® and Indoor airPLUS®.

Why WaterSense and beyond?

Capitalize on consumer demand. Green building has grown from a niche market to a savvy business strategy. According to a McGraw-Hill Construction *SmartMarket* Report, nearly 75 percent of builders report that customers are willing to pay more for a green home. What's more, 47



percent of single-family builders and 59 percent of multi-family builders believe marketing green homes is easier than marketing traditional homes.¹

How does WaterSense work with other green building certifications?

Offer government-backed performance. EPA has developed a trio of voluntary home labels that together deliver better quality, better comfort, better health, and better savings: WaterSense, ENERGY STAR, and Indoor airPLUS. The EPA label trio gives homeowners three times the confidence that a home will perform as advertised in the areas of energy efficiency, water efficiency, and indoor environmental quality. Builders who have constructed ENERGY STAR certified homes will find the WaterSense labeling process similar and are often able to use the same rater for all three labels. If you and your customers want to know a home is safe, healthy, high-performing, and efficient, building to EPA's suite of labels will help you pass along that added value and confidence to your home buyer.

Fulfill whole-home efficiency requirements. When developing the WaterSense new home specification, EPA considered how its criteria could harmonize with the water efficiency criteria of other green building programs, such as the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED® for Homes, International Code Council's 700 National Green Building Standard™, and U.S. Department of Energy's Zero Energy Ready Home. If your company is already constructing homes to these certifications, the WaterSense label could be only a few extra steps away. Building a home to the WaterSense specification can also earn you points for these certifications, as well as many regional, state, or local green building programs.

Both single-family homes and some units in multi-family buildings are eligible for the WaterSense label. Builders interested in earning the WaterSense label can **partner with WaterSense** for free and gain access to tools to help promote their efforts.

Learn more about WaterSense labeled homes and other certifications.

IN THE NEWS

In this issue of the *WaterSense Blueprint*, we unveil a new section highlighting news about WaterSense and its partners, as well as news about trends and issues affecting the green building industry.

WaterSense News

February 9, 2015: *Builder Online*, "**Builders Can Tap Into \$1,000 Rebates for Water-Conserving Homes**" (an effort led by WaterSense partner, Cascade Water Alliance)

February 6, 2015: *Contractor Mag*, "**WaterSense Releases New Specifications for Water Efficiency of Flushometers**"

June 15, 2014: *The Desert Sun*, "**Drought Affects Landscaping in New Desert Communities**"

Trends and Issues Affecting Green Building

February 15, 2015: *Vail Daily*, "**Buying and Building**"

Connect Drops to Watts

The performance and efficiency of WaterSense labeled homes affect more than just water. Energy efficiency is the top reason buyers request green homes, yet not everyone realizes the connection between saving water and saving energy. Homes with electric water heaters, for example, typically spend one-fourth of their total electric bills just to heat water. The drops-to-watts connection adds a powerful appeal to WaterSense labeled homes, which feature an efficient hot water distribution system and WaterSense labeled showerheads and faucets. By using less hot water, WaterSense labeled homes save more energy.

Careful planning and thoughtful design can provide efficient distribution systems without significantly increasing costs or installation time. Installing a high-performing plumbing system and water-efficient products ultimately saves the homeowner money and allows builders to deliver a better product to their customers. After all, nobody likes paying to heat water they'll never get to use, and nobody likes waiting for their morning shower to heat up.

¹ McGraw-Hill Construction. 2014. *SmartMarket Report—Green Multifamily and Single Family Homes: Growth in a Recovery Market*. www.nahb.org/fileUpload_details.aspx?contentID=230193.

February 14, 2015: *Sacramento Bee*, “**State’s Population Growth Expected to Outstrip Water Conservation in Coming Years**”

February 6, 2015: *Manteca Bulletin*, “**DeBrum: Drought is Serious, Mayor Wants New Landscape Rules in 90 Days**”

February 5, 2015: *Digital Journal*, “**Green Building Trends to Look Out for in 2015**”

December 15, 2014: *Providence Business Journal*, “**EPA Launches Online Tool to Help Consumers Improve Home Energy Efficiency**”

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

March 24, 2015: WaterSense Partner Marketing Webinar

Join the next partner marketing webinar to learn how to promote the water, energy, and cost savings from WaterSense labeled homes and multi-family units. You’ll hear how WaterSense promotional partner Cascade Water Alliance has partnered with Built Green to successfully promote WaterSense labeled homes in today’s evolving green building marketplace.

Register to receive call-in information.

March 27, 2015: Q1 2015 WaterSense Quarterly Reporting Deadline

Make sure your licensed certification providers **report** to WaterSense on any of your homes that earned the WaterSense label during the first quarter (Q1) of 2015. The Q1 2015 reporting deadline is Friday, March 27. Visit the **WaterSense partner website** to learn more.

June 7-10, 2015: AWWA ACE¹⁵

Save the date for the **American Water Works Association (AWWA) Annual Conference and Exposition (ACE¹⁵)**, which will take place in Anaheim, California. This year’s program presents solutions to water-sector challenges in defined tracks of professional sessions. **Register** before March 27 to save on fees, and stop by booth #1711 to say hello to WaterSense!