

TECHNICAL SERVICES



GARRY KWOK - ASSISTANT DIRECTOR - TECHNICAL SERVICE

The WELS Scheme is coming... National Water Efficiency Labelling & Standards scheme

WELS (National Water Efficiency Labelling & Standards) is a new water efficiency labelling scheme for domestic and commercial appliances that is similar to the existing 6 Star Energy Efficiency Labelling scheme, but awards star values for Water Efficiency instead of Energy Efficiency.

It is a Federal Government initiative backed by the *Water Efficiency Labelling and Standards Act (2005)* and supported by NSW State Legislation.

The objective of the scheme is to encourage manufacturers to develop and market appliances and fittings that are more water efficient and to help consumers clearly identify and purchase water efficient products.

For NSW, the WELS Scheme will also be incorporated into the BASIX Scheme. Star-rated appliances and fixtures will be recognised in BASIX.

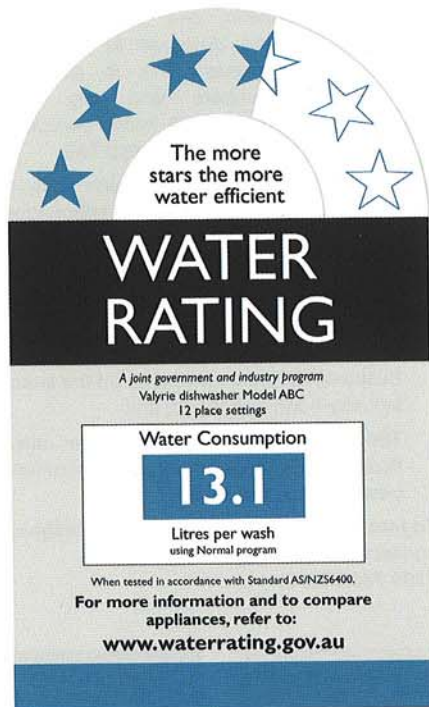
WHAT DOES IT COVER?

The WELS scheme covers dishwashers, washing machines, toilets, urinals, showers and taps intended for use over a kitchen sink, bathroom basin, laundry trough or ablution trough - registration and labelling of flow monitors used with taps is optional.

Manufacturers and importers of products covered by the scheme must test, register and label their products in accordance with the WELS standard - AS/NZS 6400:2005 *Water efficient products - rating and labelling*, which covers:

- WELS product definition and performance/rating requirements;
- Product compliance requirements;
- Registration requirements;
- Labelling specifications - including requirements for packaging, swing tags and product displays, and publicity and product specification paperwork; and
- commencement of the scheme and specified transitional arrangements.

The requirements of the WELS Scheme generally only apply to new products and not to second-hand products. However, products that are imported second-hand to be supplied in Australia will be subject to the requirements.



WHEN DOES IT COME INTO AFFECT?

The WELS scheme became mandatory on 1 July 2006, replacing the AAAA water efficiency rating system. It is now illegal to manufacture/import and retail appliances that are not registered and labelled in accordance with the WELS standard.

The WELS regulator monitors compliance - penalties for non-compliance will apply.

There are interim provisions for stock that was imported or manufactured before 1 July 2006. Dishwashers and washing machines may be sold unregistered and unlabeled until 31 March 2007 and all other WELS products may be sold unregistered and unlabeled until 31 December 2006.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU?

For Builders & Contractors:

Under the WELS scheme, providing products as part of selling new buildings or plumbing services is deemed retailing. In other words, builders and plumbers who sell WELS appliances or fittings are retailers and are required to ensure that the products are correctly labelled. This would not apply if the customer purchased the appliances and fittings directly.

As an alternative to placing complying labels on the WELS products, it will be acceptable for a

builder to erect a display panel at the entry to a home or village with the labels for the WELS products posted on it.

For Manufacturers:

Manufacturers or their agents (e.g. importers in the case of imported products) need to ensure that their products are correctly registered, labelled and comply with the standard.

THE WELS WATER RATING LABEL

The WELS Water Rating label has two main features:

- A star rating that gives a quick comparative assessment of the model's water efficiency, and;
- A water consumption figure that provides an estimate of the water consumption of the product based on its tested water consumption.

Labels will display from 1 to 6 stars, with more stars meaning the product is more water efficient. Some products may also be labelled with a 'Zero Star Rated' label, which indicates that the product is either not water efficient or does not meet basic performance requirements.

**For more information contact
HIA Technical Services on 1300 650 620
or log onto www.waterrating.gov.au.**

