



A newsletter devoted (primarily) to new water-efficient products and technologies.

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MORE myths about water using products....

In the last WaterLogue issue, we took on some prevailing myths that water efficiency and "green building" advocates face on a repeated basis. To continue this thread, this issue's myths are focused on toilet fixtures.

Myth: *"The 1.6-gallon toilets just don't work!" OR "The 1.6-gallon toilet is today's failure that the government forced upon us!"*

Reality: The early problems of the 1.6-gallon toilet were acknowledged and corrected by the plumbing manufacturers long ago. While those early fixtures from 1992 were NOT stellar performers, by the late 1990s, many manufacturers had already abandoned those early designs and were bringing their second generation products to market. Improved performance and durability yielded satisfied customers! The customer satisfaction surveys conducted by the water utility industry clearly proved that.

Remarkably, today's third generation fixtures are a vast improvement over those excellent toilets of the late 1990s. The plumbing industry must be commended for the improvements in fixture flushing performance that have occurred in these last 5 years. While some "marginal performers" may still occasionally be found in the marketplace, the consumer, specifier, contractor, and others now can have confidence that they can make good fixture choices, because they have access to authoritative information on flush performance that did not exist in the 1990s. Today, Maximum Performance (MaP) testing of toilet fixtures is a widespread and important measure of flush performance for tank-type toilet fixtures for residential and commercial applications. For the latest MaP report, consult - www.cuwcc.org/maptesting.lasso.

Myth: *"The new high-efficiency toilets (HETs) are not a proven product and we will repeat the problems of 1992 all over again!"*

Reality: HETs are fixtures whose average flush volume is less than 1.3 gallons. Nearly 200 models of HETs are now available in the marketplace from 21 different manufacturers. Over the past 8 years, many thousands of HETs have been installed in residential and light commercial applications in North America...45,000 in California alone! Unlike the situation in 1992-94, when new 1.6-gallon designs came into the market "untested" by the public, HETs have a solid performance history and exceptional customer satisfaction....they are NOT a new product! MaP performance data for HETs may be downloaded from the above website, while a current listing of all HETs in the marketplace may be viewed on www.cuwcc.org/toilet_fixtures/HET.pdf.

It should be noted that all of the HETs listed in the above downloadable documents are of the tank-type variety. The plumbing industry has begun introducing flushometer valve HETs that will be listed and tested in the near future. Expect a wide variety of new HET models of all types in 2008!

Myth: *"Double-flushing my water-efficient toilet totally eliminates all the water savings!"*

Reality: Double-flushing has been with us since the flush toilet was invented. It occurred with the 5-gallon toilet of 25 years ago, with the 3.5-gallon toilet of 15 years ago, and with the 1.6-gallon toilet of 10 years ago! (Similarly, the toilet plunger has probably been around just as

long. Remember, the plunger and toilet brush were probably used by your grandparents!) It is most interesting to note, however, when we survey customers as to their satisfaction with their new 1.6-gallon and high-efficiency toilet fixtures, a vast majority tell us that they double-flush THE SAME OR LESS with their new efficient fixture than with their old water-waster.

Field studies were conducted in the 1990s of "before" and "after" residential water use by over 20,000 toilet fixture installations where water-wasting 3.5 and 5.0 gallon toilets were replaced by first-generation 1.6-gallon fixtures. Those field studies (which tracked actual water use) clearly showed that, irrespective of the double-flushing with both the old and the new fixtures, daily water consumption declined an average of 22 gallons per toilet replaced (single-family dwellings) and 40 gallons per toilet replaced (multi-family dwellings). And, remember, these were first-generation 1.6-gallon tank-type toilets, which did not perform as well as today's models. Second- and third-generation fixtures perform even better and experience less double-flushing and greater water savings!

Again, we caution you to question what you hear or read about a supposed "water-efficient" product. Continue to be a skeptic, check out the statements, ask questions, and look for a scientific basis behind the efficiency claims!

Next time: Even more "myths" dispelled!

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