



Plumbing Regulation *News Update*

Building Standards and Regulation

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Plumbing Regulation News Updates are issued as and when necessary, to keep the Tasmanian Plumbing Industry informed of developments occurring in the industry, Tasmanian Plumbing Code and its referenced documents and legislation.

Water Efficiency Labelling and Standards (WELS) Scheme

TASMANIA

Purpose

The purpose of this news update is to inform industry and consumers of:

- the progress of developing the Water Efficiency Labelling and Standards Scheme (WELS) legislation and how it will affect Tasmania; and
- coming information sessions being delivered to familiarise industry with the WELS Scheme and the Scheme requirements.

Background

The Water Efficiency Labelling and Standards Scheme (WELS), the first of its kind in the world, has passed through the Australian Parliament. The scheme will require a range of water-using appliances or products such as dishwashers, washing machines and toilets to carry an efficiency-rating label.

The Tasmanian scene

The States and Territories have also enacted or agreed to enact complementary legislation to ensure that the WELS Scheme has comprehensive national coverage. The Department of Primary Industries, Water and Environment (DPIWE) are responsible for developing and administering such legislation. DPIWE in consultation with the other States and Territories have prepared a [Tasmanian WELS Bill](#). The Bill has been passed by the House of Assembly and is awaiting consideration by the Legislative Council. The passage of the Bill in other States has been uneventful and highly supported, with Victoria, NSW and the ACT now having passed legislation to complement the Commonwealth Bill. You can monitor the passage of the Tasmanian Bill on the Internet at: http://www.parliament.tas.gov.au/bills/11_of_2005.htm

The Tasmanian legislation will fill constitutional gaps and potential loopholes that could arise between States if nationally consistent legislation is not in place. As such, the Tasmanian legislation will assist in securing better water management across all Australian jurisdictions, particularly in both mainland and Tasmanian regions where water metering already occurs. As many Councils in Tasmania have already introduced water metering and two-part pricing, the WELS legislation will lead to immediate benefits, especially in rural and regional areas where town water supplies are under pressure from growing populations and increased tourist numbers.

The WELS Scheme will also provide benefits in non-metered areas: it will provide a minimum mandatory water efficiency standard for toilets, which will itself save substantial water independent of water metering, and it will provide better consumer information for items such as showerheads, washing machines, dishwashers and taps. This will enable Tasmanian customers to make more

informed choices on what they buy for their homes, and will support the willingness of many Tasmanians to voluntarily adopt responsible water use practices.

It is estimated that the WELS scheme will reduce total national water consumption by about 87,200 million litres (about 5%) per annum below current trends by 2021. The Regulatory Impact Statement: *Proposed National System of Mandatory Water Efficiency Labelling Standards for Selected Products* reported the following projected water savings:

By the year 2011

- 339 million litres of water per year conserved in Tasmania;
- 18,900 million litres of water per year conserved nationally.

By the year 2021

- 1,495 million litres of water per year conserved in Tasmania;
- 87,200 million litres of water per year conserved nationally.

Reducing urban water consumption will:

- a) ease the burden on stressed urban water catchments;
- b) delay the need for increased storage capacity;
- c) allow more effective water demand management;
- d) increase resource surety;
- e) provide the potential for increased environmental flows;
- f) reduce wastewater discharges into the environment;
- g) reduce water treatment and sewage treatment requirements; and
- h) reduce the need for infrastructure spending.

Increasing the efficiency of hot water use in washing machines and dishwashers will lead to reductions in household energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions. Further greenhouse savings will result from reduced energy use for water and sewerage treatment.

Significant annual net benefits are expected across Australia from both a resource supply perspective and a retail price (consumer) perspective. The projected net benefit for Australia from WELS is approx \$240 to \$260 million per annum, with a “retail” projected benefit for water customers of about \$625 to \$670 million per annum. As Tasmania has a smaller area and population, the projected *pro rata* net benefit from WELS is approx \$3.6 million per annum, with a “retail” projected benefit for water customers of about \$9.7 million per annum.

Commonwealth sponsored WELS information sessions

Information sessions

Information sessions are planned to familiarise manufacturers, importers and retailers with the Water Efficiency Labelling and Standards (WELS) Scheme, its requirements, the online registration system, and the resources available to assist with compliance. Additional information sessions may be held in the future, however initial sessions are aimed at the groups with legal obligations during the phase-in period for WELS. The information sessions series form part of the overall communication strategy for the WELS Scheme and will be supported, inter alia, by electronic mail-outs, the WELS website, advertisements, WELS inspections and so on. All involved in the plumbing industry in this State are urged to attend the information session to be held in Hobart if at all possible.

Scope and format

The WELS information sessions will be delivered in the capital city of each State and Territory. Industry groups are requested to assist in promoting these sessions and also to suggest/help arrange any supplementary meetings that may be requested by local officials and suppliers. The sessions will be advertised in the local press and through other appropriate means.

The format for the sessions is as follows:

- A morning session, in seminar format, will involve a presentation to familiarise attendees with the WELS Scheme, its requirements, the online registration system, and the resources available to assist with compliance. General questions will also be fielded.
- An afternoon session, in meeting format, will be scheduled for discussions with officials or groups to workshop any matters of particular interest.

Registration

Those wishing to attend the sessions are asked to register prior to attending via the internet at www.waterrating.gov.au or via email or phone, so that they can be added to a database of contacts, to be sent future information on the WELS Scheme and any updates. They will also be asked to record their details in a register on arrival at the venue.

Dates and times:

The following dates and times are proposed, which coincide with the first planned Determination under the WELS Act and the launch of the WELS website in June 2005.

DESTINATION	VENUE	DATES	TIMES
Canberra, ACT	John Gorton Building, King Edward Terrace, Parkes	Thursday, 16 June	Morning session: 10am to 12.30pm
Sydney, NSW	Rydges North Sydney, 54 McLaren Street	Monday, 20 June	Morning session: 10am to 12.30pm Afternoon meetings: 2pm to 5pm
Hobart, Tas	Rydges Hobart, Corner of Argyle and Lewis Streets	Wednesday, 22 June	Morning session: 10am to 12.30pm Afternoon meetings: 2pm to 5pm
Melbourne, Vic	Rydges Melbourne, 186 Exhibition Street	Thursday, 23 June	Morning session: 10am to 12.30pm Afternoon meetings: 2pm to 5pm
Adelaide, SA	Rydges South Park Adelaide, 1 South Terrace	Monday, 27 June	Morning session: 10am to 12.30pm Afternoon meetings: 2pm to 5pm
Perth, WA	Rydges Perth, Corner of King & Hay Streets	Tuesday, 28 June	Morning session: 10am to 12.30pm Afternoon meetings: 2pm to 5pm
Darwin, NT	Crowne Plaza Darwin, 32 Mitchell Street	Thursday, 30 June	Morning session: 10am to 12.30pm Afternoon meetings: 2pm to 5pm
Brisbane, Qld	Rydges South Bank Brisbane, Corner of Grey and Glenelg Streets	Friday, 1 July	Morning session: 10am to 12.30pm Afternoon meetings: 2pm to 5pm

For more information:

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