



Frequently Asked Questions

WaterSense® Certification and Labeling of High-Efficiency (Bathroom Sink) Lavatory Faucets

How does my high-efficiency lavatory faucet or faucet accessory earn the WaterSense label?

If your company is not already a WaterSense manufacturer partner, the first step toward obtaining the WaterSense label is to enter into a partnership agreement with EPA. A copy of the manufacturer partnership agreement can be found on the WaterSense Web site at www.epa.gov/watersense. Under the partnership agreement, you have 12 months to obtain certification for a product that conforms to the WaterSense High-Efficiency Lavatory Faucet Specification. If you are already a manufacturer partner that has qualified under a different product specification (e.g., WaterSense High-Efficiency Tank-Type Toilets), you do not need to sign another partnership agreement.

The second step is to have your product certified for conformance to the WaterSense High-Efficiency Lavatory Faucet Specification by a licensed product certifying body that has been approved for that purpose by EPA. A list of product certifying bodies approved to certify high-efficiency lavatory faucets and accessories to EPA's specification can be found on the WaterSense Web site at www.epa.gov/watersense/basic/cert_bodies.htm.

How do I submit my product to a licensed product certifying body?

Contact the licensed product certifying body of your choice directly and follow its application procedures. Upon product certification, please notify

EPA directly by submitting a WaterSense product notification form, which is available on the WaterSense Web site. [add link to form]

Can I use a WaterSense labeled high-efficiency lavatory faucet accessory to meet the flow rate criteria contained in the specification? Does my faucet still need to be tested?

A lavatory faucet is considered to meet the flow rate requirement contained in the specification if it is equipped with a lavatory faucet accessory that meets the flow rate requirement. In this case, it is up to the discretion of the licensed product certifying body to determine whether the entire faucet needs to be tested. EPA anticipates that in most cases, further testing may not be necessary. The licensed product certifying body may still conduct a review and may require you to produce specification evidence that you are using a high-efficiency lavatory faucet accessory that meets the specification criteria. All high-efficiency lavatory faucets, regardless of whether the entire faucet is tested or just the faucet accessory, must be evaluated, certified, and listed by a licensed product certifying body in order to be WaterSense labeled and listed on EPA's WaterSense Web registry.

What criteria must a licensed product certifying body meet in order to certify products?

Initially, EPA will approve a product certifying body to certify products and authorize the use of the WaterSense label, provided it meets each of the following criteria:

- Shall demonstrate that it is accredited by ANSI in accordance with ISO/IEC Guide 65, General requirements for bodies operating product certification systems;
- Shall have plumbing products or other product categories directly related to WaterSense specifications included in its scope of accreditation;
- Shall declare that the laboratories used by the product certification body have the competence and capability to conduct tests in accordance with relevant WaterSense specifications;
- Shall declare that it has the technical expertise required in the evaluation of relevant WaterSense products;
- Shall declare that its ongoing surveillance requirements for WaterSense labeled products will be equivalent to current surveillance requirements for the certification of similar products;
- Shall indicate which WaterSense specification(s) are relevant to its current ANSI accredited scope; and
- Shall sign a licensing agreement with EPA related to the conditions for authorizing the use of the WaterSense label.

Who authorizes the use of the WaterSense label?

Product certifying bodies licensed by EPA to certify high-efficiency lavatory faucets to the WaterSense specification will authorize the use of the WaterSense label in accordance with EPA requirements. This means that the licensed product certifying body will provide you with the WaterSense label

graphic artwork and usage guidelines. Use of the WaterSense label must be in accordance with the WaterSense label guidelines and should never occur before product certification is complete.

How much will product certification cost?

The cost structure for product certification is determined by the licensed product certifying bodies. EPA anticipates that the testing fee and cost for certification of high-efficiency lavatory faucets, which may include opening a certification file or adding models to an existing file, will be in line with the current cost structure for faucet certification by an accredited product certifying body.

How long will certification take?

The exact process and timing will be determined by the licensed product certifying body conducting the certification. Product certifying bodies recognize that time to market is an important consideration and will compete for a manufacturer's business in this area. EPA anticipates that the time to achieve product certification to WaterSense specifications will be similar to the time it takes to get plumbing products certified to American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) or other relevant standards.

How will EPA know my product has been certified?

Licensed product certifying bodies are required to maintain a listing of all products they certify on their respective organization Web sites. They will periodically submit an updated list to EPA so the WaterSense Web registry remains as current as possible. However, manufacturers should also use the WaterSense product notification form available on the WaterSense Web site to notify EPA when each model is certified to the WaterSense specification. This process will ensure that EPA has the most current list of certified products possible on the WaterSense Web site.

How will consumers know my product has been certified?

Only products certified to WaterSense specifications are allowed to bear the WaterSense label, and EPA provides a labeling tool kit for manufacturers to use in marketing their labeled products. In addition, EPA will maintain a master list of certified WaterSense products on the WaterSense Web site. Promptly sending your product notification form to EPA speeds this process.

How does EPA maintain the integrity of the label?

EPA maintains the integrity of the WaterSense label through several mechanisms:

- Through the independent third-party certification process, the licensed product certifying bodies provide surveillance for the proper use of the WaterSense label for the products that they certify—typically through periodic store audits or warehouse inspections.
- WaterSense encourages its partners to be vigilant and report any suspected label misuse issues to EPA. If you see a product you believe to be improperly labeled, please contact the WaterSense helpline at (866) WTR-SENS (987-7367), or e-mail watersense@epa.gov.

- WaterSense encourages partners to submit pre-press and Web materials. EPA provides prompt review and ensures that the use of the label is consistent with WaterSense guidelines.
- WaterSense conducts periodic reviews of partner Web sites to ensure that the label is used properly.
- WaterSense conducts periodic Google image searches to detect misuse of the label by non-partners.

When label misuse occurs by a WaterSense partner, EPA contacts the relevant licensed product certifying body who handles necessary corrective actions. If a non-partner misuses the label, EPA engages in corrective action directly with the infringing party. In all instances, EPA strives to resolve matters quickly and fairly in order to preserve public confidence in the WaterSense program.