

WaterSense fixtures save water, money

Oct. 2 -- Consumers soon will be able to select bathroom sink faucets that use up to 30 percent less water than conventional models.

It's part of the Environmental Protection Agency's WaterSense program geared to help communities save money, energy and water, spokeswoman Enesta Jones said Monday.

"Water efficiency is the wave of the future and WaterSense bathroom faucets will turn a trickle into a stream of savings without sacrificing performance," assistant administrator for Water Benjamin H. Grumbles said about new product specifications for sink faucets.

Faucets must be independently tested and certified by a licensed certifying body to meet EPA's water-efficiency and performance criteria. For instance, faucets and accessories such as aerators cannot flow at a rate of more than 1.5 gallons per minute (gpm), or less than 0.8 gpm.

WaterSense is an EPA partnership program launched in 2006. The label already appears on more than 60 high-efficiency toilets, which use 20 percent less water than standard models. Bathroom sink faucets with the label should be available in 2008.

Half of total indoor water use occurs in bathrooms. Installing a high-efficiency toilet and faucet or aerator, can save more than 11,000 gallons each year. Running a conventional faucet for 5 minutes uses about as much energy as letting a 60-watt light bulb burn for 14 hours.