



WaterSense, Addressing Salinity

October 27 2016

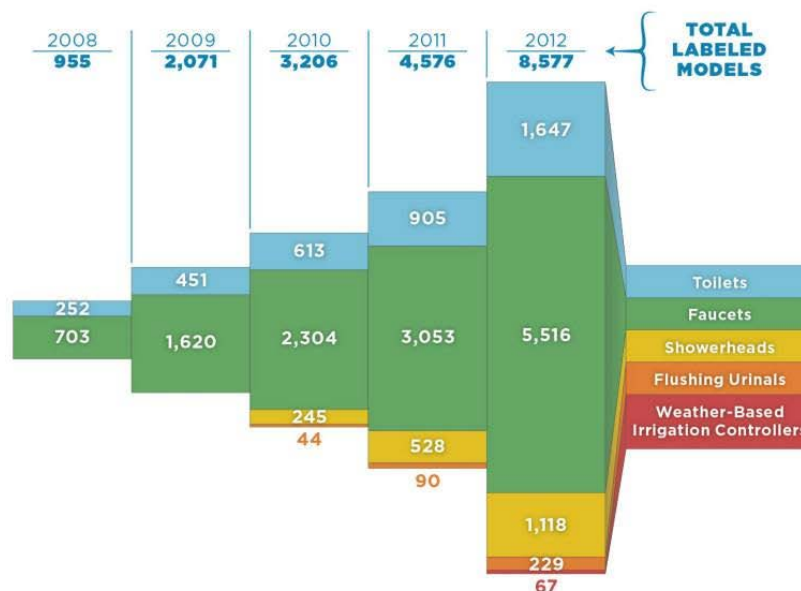
WaterSense Background

- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency managed program
- Voluntary
- In place since 2007
- Allows water efficient products, buildings, landscapes, facilities, processes and services to bear a “WaterSense” label
- Promotes efficient devices
- Marketing tool

WaterSense Labeled Products

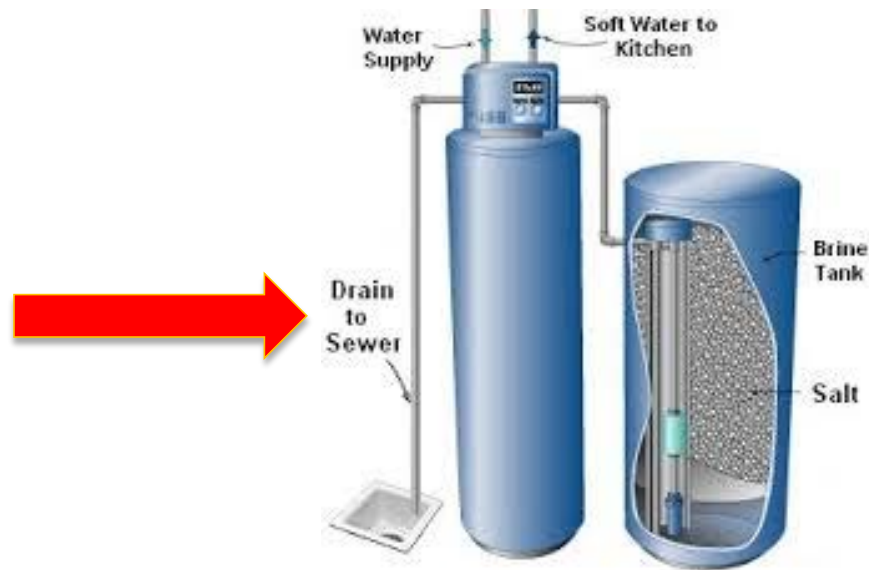


Ever since the first WaterSense labeled toilets hit store shelves in 2007, more and more product types have earned the WaterSense label, and the total number of WaterSense labeled models has continued to grow.



WaterSense Concerns, 2011

- In 2011, USEPA began process of developing WaterSense standard for self-regenerating water softeners
- Softeners regenerate on site and a brine stream is discharged into sewer
- Softener discharge: over 1 lb of salt per day into sewer system



WaterSense Concerns, Today

- In 2011, USEPA backed off due to pressure from the water and wastewater industry
- HOWEVER, water softeners are still on USEPA's action list for WaterSense

Screenshot of EPA's WaterSense webpage, October 26, 2016

The screenshot shows the EPA WaterSense website. At the top, there is the EPA logo and navigation links for 'Learn the Issues', 'Science & Technology', 'Laws & Regulations', and 'About EPA'. Below this is a search bar and a secondary navigation menu with links for 'About Us', 'Products', 'Outdoor', 'New Homes', 'Commercial', 'Our Water', and 'Partners'. The main header features the 'WaterSense' logo and the tagline 'An EPA Partnership Program'. The breadcrumb trail reads 'WaterSense / Products / In The Pipeline'. The main content area is titled 'In the Pipeline' and contains the text: 'More Water-Saving Products From WaterSense. WaterSense is continually working to expand the number of water-efficient products and service programs that qualify for the label. WaterSense is currently considering the following water-saving product categories and service programs for specification development:'. A red arrow points to the first item in the list: 'Water Softeners'. Other items include 'Soil Moisture-Based Control Technologies', 'Landscape Irrigation Sprinklers', and 'Why Isn't my product listed?'. A sidebar on the right titled 'In This Section' lists various product categories like 'Product Search', 'Showerheads', 'Toilets', etc., with 'Water Softeners' listed at the bottom.

Problems Causes by self-regenerating softeners

- Reduced quality and sustainability of water recycling
 - Removing salt from recycled water is expensive, projects not cost effective
- Salt discharged into sewer system can cause non-compliance with permits limits and discharge standards
- Many crops are salt sensitive
- Salts build up in groundwater over time
- Removing salt is expensive
 - Brackish desalination programs
 - Exporting brine
 - Brine minimization



Seeking a Solution

- Seeking a technical amendment that simply requires USEPA to ensure that any WaterSense labelled product does not cause or contribute to water quality impacts
- EPA has dual charges under the Clean Water Act and Safe Drinking Water Act
 - Help ensure the EPA's WaterSense conservation efforts do not conflict with EPA's other objectives of promoting recycled water, and water quality, etc.

Current Efforts to Address Problem

- Technical amendment that simply requires USEPA to ensure that any WaterSense labelled product does not cause or contribute to water quality impacts
- Report language
- Potential vehicles:
 - Water Resources Development Act
 - Energy Bill

How WestCAS and WestCAS members can help

- Weigh in:
 - House Energy and Commerce Committee
 - Senate Environment and Public Works



Contact Information

Jolene Walsh

Senior Director of Public and Governmental Affairs

951-928-3777 ext 4347

walshj@emwd.org