

## DOCKETED

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**Kohler Company Comments Related to Docket # 15-WATER-03**

*Additional submitted attachment is included below.*



June 10, 2015

To Whom It May Concern:

Kohler Company understands the water shortage that California is currently facing, and we are encouraged at the significant financial resources that have been allocated towards the rebate program that was mandated by Governor Brown's executive order (B-29-15). While the proposed rebate program is a good long term approach to support the continued reduction of water use, one must acknowledge that California is experiencing a crisis and the citizens of California must act now. Data collected by GMP Research (which has been submitted to California Energy Commission [CEC] by Plumbing Manufacturers International [PMI]) indicates little is being done to encourage savings. According to the GMP Research data, less than 6% of all toilets installed in the state of California meet the WaterSense requirements of 1.28 GPF, less than 22% of residential lavatory faucets installed in California meet the WaterSense requirements of 1.5 GPM, and less than 24% of the showerheads installed in California meet the WaterSense requirements of 2.0 GPM. Californians are seeking new ways to save water, while allowing significant savings that are already available to flow down the drain without consequence. We believe that these statistics prove, that in order for significant water savings to be realized, CEC focus on immediately mandating savings that are already written into law by putting an emphasis on removing all inefficient plumbing fixtures and fittings from use and replacing them with WaterSense listed products. SB 407, which was authored by then-Senator Alex Padilla, has requirements for replacement of non-efficient products by 2017 for single-family residences and 2019 for multi-family and commercial residences. Kohler Company would encourage CEC to work with the California Legislator to move the required implementation dates so a prompt reduction in water is possible. Additional action could be taken by tying the CEC rebate program to SB 407, by implementing a tiered system which grants greater rebates to those who act now, and lesser or no rebates to those who wait to replace their product.

Further, having participated in the Webinar presented by CEC Staff on May 28, 2015, we are concerned that two important categories have been excluded from this program – not including toilets, and not including non-residential facilities such as hotels.

CEC staff made it clear during the Webinar that they have not included toilets in their rebate program because the California Department of Water Resources [DWR] received money to implement a separate toilet rebate program. As a manufacturer of both plumbing fixtures and fittings this is concerning to us. As these products are installed into the same space, we believe that two separate programs will create undue confusion for the consumer – it would be inconceivable for there to be separate programs for your TV and DVD player, or washer and dryer, so why is this acceptable for plumbing fixtures and fittings? Kohler Company strongly encourages CEC to partner with DWR to create a "one stop shop" for customers to receive their rebate to eliminate the potential for confusion.

Tourism is an important part of the California economy, and many of these tourist stay in a hotel while visiting. In fact, the American Hotel & Lodging Association states that there are approximately 500,000 hotel rooms within the state. While many of these hotels utilize the newest, most efficient plumbing fixtures and fittings available, there are still many more that don't. Even using conservative estimates, if all hotel rooms were outfitted with efficient plumbing products they provide the potential to save

hundreds of thousands of gallons per day. Given this potential for savings, we feel that non-residential facilities must be included in the CEC rebate program.

Kohler Company would like to also take this opportunity to provide feedback, from a manufacturer's perspective, on some of the suggestions that were given during the May 28, 2015 WebEx.

- As simple as they may seem, toilets are very complex devices that require a great deal of engineering to ensure that they provide consistent results with every flush. It was suggested that CEC (or DWR) provide retrofit pressurized flushing devices for toilets, as they use less water and are easy to install. By flushing a toilet with less water than it was designed to flush with there is a greater risk of improper waste removal, clogging, and failure to return to the correct seal height – allowing sewer gas to vent into the home. Further, the use of such a device will void any warranty from the toilet manufacturer. Given the opportunity for these problems to exist, we strongly discourage the use of this type of device in any of our toilets.
- During the call, it was implied that a showerhead must be matched with the appropriate thermostatic mixing valve. ASME A112.18.1/CSA B125.1 and ASSE 1016/ASME A112.1016/CSA B125.16 state that showerheads must be paired with the appropriate *automatic compensating valve*, for which there are three different types – thermostatic, pressure balanced, and combination pressure-balancing and thermostatic compensating valves. All of these valves automatically maintain the water temperature selected, but will not reduce the amount of water that flows from the showerhead.
- Similarly, it was suggested that Temperature Actuated Flow Reduction [TAFR] devices provide reduced flow to showerheads. In actuality, a TAFR device is attached to a showerhead and only reduces the flow if there were a sudden surge in temperature. A TAFR device by itself will not reduce the flow of water from the showerhead.

We believe that Californians have the ability to save several hundred million gallons of water per day simply by replacing older plumbing products with new, efficient WaterSense fixtures and fittings. As a WaterSense Partner Kohler Company wants to work with Californians to realize these savings immediately. Together we can achieve the much needed water savings that will bridge the gap in water supply during this drought and for years to come.

Sincerely,



Shabbir Rawalpindiwala  
Manager, Codes & Standards – Kohler Company

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