WRAP model procurement requirements for water efficiency

Consultation questions

WRAP (Waste & Resources Action Programme), working in conjunction with Zero Waste Scotland, has drafted a guide and model clauses to help clients and developers ask for water-efficient practice when procuring design, construction and facilities management (FM) services. In addition, a prototype spreadsheet-based tool demonstrates how design teams and FM contractors can quantify the water, cost and carbon savings from investing in water-efficient fittings and appliances. (Both outputs are available at www.wrap.org.uk/waterefficientprocurement.) We are seeking your views on the questions listed below.

We invite you to focus your responses in those areas where you have specific insights and views. If you have been contacted by us and do not wish to respond, please email us stating your organisation's name and a null response.

Please email your response to waterefficientprocurement@wrap.org.uk by **3rd September 2010**.

About you:

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Are the views expressed here an official response from the organisation you represent (and its members where relevant) or your own personal views?

Organisational response x
Personal views □

Overall approach: The guide sets out the importance of water efficiency (see Section 2) and summarises the opportunities to reduce consumption (in Section 4 and Appendix B). Current regulatory requirements and environmental rating methods (outlined in Appendix A) provide an incentive to take action.

1. *Do you agree that construction clients and developers should have a role in asking their project teams and facilities management (FM) contractors to increase water efficiency – by setting requirements in tender and contract documents?*

Waterwise wholeheartedly supports this principle. Water efficiency measures built into a construction project at the design stage, and sustained, will help reduce energy and water bills for clients. They will also increase resilience to climate change – the UK is already seeing more droughts, and in coming years extremes of weather will be even greater, and combined with population growth, so less water

will need to go further. The Mayor of London's recent draft Adaptation Strategy sets out good reasons for businesses to undertake water efficiency measures. Water efficiency measures will be an essential part of an organisation's adaptation plans. In the future such measures might also be linked to insurance discounts, as with flood defence. Water efficiency will also help organisations cut their carbon footprint through reduced hot water wastage.

Formulating requirements: Responses to previous Government consultation indicate a preference for defining outcome-based targets for the water efficiency of a building, and to specify water use for fittings and appliances where more practical and appropriate.

2. Do you agree with the model wording providing options for setting requirements at a whole building performance level and/or the component level?

Yes.

Practice levels: a number of assessment schemes define levels of water efficiency practice for components (e.g. Water Efficient Product Labelling Scheme, Association for Environment Conscious Building water standards, Water Technology List for Enhanced Capital Allowances, Government Buying Standards) and for buildings (e.g. Code for Sustainable Homes, BREEAM, LEED, DREAM). The guide provides indicative values to assist users rather than prescribing specific standards.

3. Do you agree with the guidance provided on practice levels? (If you disagree with any individual values for practice levels, please suggest how and why these values should be revised.)

Waterwise is broadly welcoming of this, but its effectiveness (or otherwise) in terms of water savings will result from the standards it is linked to, which should be regularly updated and reflect best available on the market, as well as government procurement standards (once they have become tighter, as per the consultation running parallel to this one).

Model wording: Experience in setting tender and contract requirements for waste management shows that users generally welcome model wording, which saves time and effort and can be tailored to individual projects.

4. Do you agree that the model wording in the guide is appropriate to each stage of procurement through the project life-cycle (Actions 1A to 4C)? (Please provide specific suggestions for text changes if appropriate.)

Overall, Waterwise is extremely supportive of the comprehensive proposals set out in these sections, which are rigorous yet practical, and should also have a positive impact on the supply chain. Waterwise does have three specific comments:

Flow rates
The document does mention that flow rates will be affected by pressure, but this could be made even clearer throughout the document, including specifically how to ensure that products meet the required specification. Many water-efficient products have regulators pre-installed in them, so correct installation should ensure this is not a problem, but it is important that actual flow-rates are measured after installation. The document could also reflect the fact that different products with the same flow rate/capacity will perform better or worse according to the technology which is used to make it water-efficient: for example a 6l shower that has had a restrictor or regulator installed in it might not perform as well as a 6l shower which has an aeration device and/or innovative spray pattern. This is mentioned in the "Checklist for design actions" box, but it could usefully be better integrated into the bulk of the document.

Washing machines
The levels for washing machines could be more stretching: according to the Waterwise washing machine rankings (which were compiled in 2007 and will therefore have been in some cases overtaken by even more efficient products), only 16.5% of the machines listed would meet the best practice standard, with 58% meeting the good practice and 21.5% the baseline standards.

Greywater and rainwater
The table on p16 states that greywater or rainwater recycling will be essential to reduce consumption to below 1.5m^3, but this could in some cases be achieved through smart specification, so the text should reflect that.

Water Efficiency Plan: The concept of a Water Efficiency Plan is an important element of the proposed client requirements, to encourage design teams and FM contractors to assess potential savings and define actions in a structured way at an early stage.

5(a) Do you agree that a Water Efficiency Plan can be beneficial, practical and cost-effective?

Yes. A Water Efficiency Plan is an essential part of any organisation's economic and business continuity strategy, in the context of climate change and economic constraints.

Waterwise wholeheartedly supports the principle that a Water Efficiency Plan can be beneficial, practical and cost-effective. Water efficiency measures built into a construction project at the design stage, and sustained, will help reduce energy and water bills for clients. They will also increase resilience to climate change – the UK is already seeing more droughts, and in coming years extremes of weather will be even greater, and combined with population growth, so less water will need to go further. The Mayor of London's recent draft Adaptation Strategy sets out good reasons for businesses to undertake water efficiency measures. Water efficiency measures will be an essential part of an organisation's adaptation plans. In the future such measures might also be linked to insurance discounts, as with flood defence. Water efficiency will also help organisations cut their carbon footprint through reduced hot water wastage.

The model Water Efficiency Plan set out in the document is strategic and rigorous and likely to be very effective in cutting costs and ensuring resilience to climate change, for any organisation.

5(b) Above what project/contract value would you consider a Water Efficiency Plan to be worthwhile?

x	£200k	□	£2M	□	Other (please state)
□	£500k	□	£5M		_____
□	£1M	□	£10M		

See answer to 5 (a). A Water Efficiency Plan will cut costs and help ensure resilience to climate change for any organisation, whatever its size.

5(c) Do you agree with the guidance on the content of a Water Efficiency Plan (see Section 5.2 of the guide)? (Please provide specific suggestions for text changes if appropriate.)

Yes. The guidance is comprehensive and rigorous, but practical.

Overall guidance: The main purpose of the guide is to provide model wording for procurement, and sufficient supporting explanation – without going into detail on topics (such as design and product choice) which are addressed by other guidance and organisations.

6(a) Do you find the guidance fit for purpose?

Yes. The guidance is comprehensive and rigorous, but practical.

6(b) What are your top three recommendations for including additional information in the guide or in other documentation?

Non-domestic consumers of water, over a certain threshold, are entitled to choose their water supplier, under competition (unlike domestic consumers). Organisations could approach different water companies and select those with the best offer in terms of water efficiency services, and associated billing.

The document could state even more clearly that water efficiency helps cut costs through reduced energy and water bills, and that procurement of water-efficient fittings should not increase capital costs.

Organisations could make use of the Enhanced Capital Allowance scheme which gives tax breaks to companies who buy products listed on the Water Technology List.

Quantifying the savings: The prototype tool estimates life-cycle cost, water and carbon savings from investments in water-efficient technologies, and helps client teams and facilities managers identify the most significant actions to take.

7. Do you agree that the tool is worth developing into a publishable format?

Yes.

Sector commitment: Procurement practice is a major element of the sector-wide voluntary agreement to halve construction waste to landfill by 2012, which has more than 400 signatories (see www.wrap.org.uk/construction). As another example, the Federation House Commitment aims to reduce overall water usage across the food and drink industry by 20% by 2020 (see http://www.fhc2020.co.uk). Such 'Responsibility Deals' or voluntary agreements have Government support.

8. Do you agree that Responsibility Deals could play a role in accelerating the move towards greater water efficiency in the built environment? What would be your top recommendations for any new Responsibility Deals (e.g. in which market segments, with what target outcomes)?

Yes - this is an effective way to drive change through sectors. Building and retail sectors might be a good first port of call.

Other feedback: If you wish to comment on other aspects of the guide, please do so.

Thank you for your comments.

Please note:

- *Representative groups are invited to identify who they have consulted in reaching their conclusions when they respond.*
- *Information provided in response to this stakeholder review may be published or disclosed in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000. If you want the information that you provide to be treated as confidential, please explain the reasons and we will do all we can to exclude the information.*