

Water Efficiency Standards for Toilets

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Toilet efficiency standards ensure that all new units include proven designs to reduce unnecessary water waste. Testing shows that today's efficient models can provide excellent performance while saving households money.

Toilets account for about [a quarter](#) of a typical American household's indoor water use, more than any other product. By reducing water waste, efficiency standards for toilets save households money and help protect scarce water supplies.

Congress established the first national toilet standards in a bipartisan law signed by President George H. W. Bush in 1992. Toilets at the time commonly used 3.5 to 6 gallons of water per flush. The standards, which took effect in 1994 and remain in place today, require all new models to use no more than 1.6 gallons.

"Even some of the lowest-flow toilets can do a fantastic job," Consumer Reports' testing has found.

Twelve states—California, Texas, Georgia, Colorado, Washington, Nevada, New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Maine, Maryland—and Washington, DC, have adopted standards that are more stringent than the national requirements. By ASAP's count of a federal database, more than three-quarters of toilets on the market use at least 20% less water than the maximum allowed by federal law.

Today's consumers have enormous choice of high-performing models

Toilet standards have [spurred manufacturers to innovate](#). Advances in flushing mechanisms and bowl shapes have enabled stronger water flow, resulting in models that work well while using less water.

Independent testing by [Consumer Reports](#) and by [Maximum Performance Testing](#) confirms that today's toilets can provide excellent performance. The [top five models](#) that Consumer Reports recommends all use no more than 1.28 gallons—20% less than allowed under the national standards—and rate highly for solid waste removal, noise, and bowl cleaning. Consumer Reports says, "The best toilets in CR's tests can clear out solid waste and clean the bowl well with one flush." Maximum Performance Testing recognizes 445 models that achieve excellent flushing scores and use no more than 1.1 gallons.

Toilet standards save consumers money and protect water supplies

Replacing old, inefficient toilets with models that use 1.28 gallons can save the average family more than [\\$110 annually](#) on utility bills. An increase in the upfront price of more-efficient toilets disappeared within just two years of the standards taking effect in 1994. In addition to reducing household costs, the standards are vital in protecting [U.S. water supplies](#) threatened by severe droughts in much of the West and growing demand.

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