

## **DRAFT**

### **TUCSON AMA SAFE-YIELD TASK FORCE ISSUE OUTLINE 4/26/00**

#### **ISSUE: INDUSTRY STANDARDS**

The efficiency of appliances and water-using fixtures affects the ability of the community and the state to reach its water management goals. Clear, effective “Industry Standards” need to be established for all water using technologies to ensure efficient water usage.

#### **BACKGROUND**

Many water-using products are not evaluated for water use efficiency or effectiveness over time. There is a need to review and revise current industry standards to focus on long-term conservation objectives. Additional regulatory standards may be required to limit the use of inefficient technologies and practices.

In some cases, low water-using appliances and fixtures are not achieving the water use rate that is advertised. For example, some low water use toilets are not achieving the savings that were expected over time. Some brands have design flaws, including the need for multiple flushes, and in some cases it is difficult to find replacement parts.

A second problem is that even if people have state of the art appliances, they are buying more water using appliances than they previously did. Examples of such trends include multiple-head showers, jacuzzi tubs, misting systems, and high bleed-off swamp coolers. Many of these products are sold as luxury items to people who clearly can afford higher water bills. However, if they had access to better up-front information regarding water use and efficiency of these devices they might be less apt to purchase them.

#### **SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED**

The following ideas have been considered . Additional ideas may be added to this list.

- Establish a statewide action group to evaluate manufacturers’ performance standards for water using appliances, performance over time, availability of replacement parts, and emerging technologies in order to make recommendations for revisions or improvement. Since some standards are federal, a cooperative approach with other states or federal agencies may be required.
- Identify current testing protocols, additional testing needs and funding source(s) to test and research water using fixtures and appliances over time.
- Develop an education program to encourage consumers to make wise choices relative to water-using appliances, and to encourage decision-makers to implement appropriate standards.

- Evaluate tradeoffs between energy and water use, perhaps with other state and federal interests.
- Evaluate conflicts between various state and/or federal regulations that result in higher water use or discourage conservation.
- Establish a state tax credit for purchase of approved devices that save water, similar to the program in Oregon.

## **PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Establish a statewide action group to evaluate manufacturers' performance standards for water using appliances, including performance over time, availability of replacement parts, and efficiency of emerging technologies in order to make recommendations for revisions or improvement. Since some standards are federal, a cooperative approach with other states or federal agencies will be required. The action group could evaluate testing protocols, identify testing needs and funding sources, evaluate tradeoffs between energy and water use, and evaluate regulatory conflicts that result in higher water use or discourage conservation.
- Develop an education program to encourage consumers to make wise choices relative to water-using appliances, and to encourage decision-makers to implement appropriate standards.
- Establish a state tax credit for purchase and/or installation of approved devices that save water, similar to the program in Oregon.
- Implementation of these recommendations could be facilitated by ADWR in the role of regional/statewide conservation coordinator, if ADWR's role in conservation activities is expanded.

## **OBSERVATIONS**

Additional regulation of water using fixtures may not be popular, in part due to resistance to regulation in general and problems with existing standards. Incentives may be more readily accepted. Concerns have been expressed regarding the impacts of the existing plumbing codes at both the State and Federal level (e.g. problems resulting from poorly designed plumbing fixtures).