



**ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY**

**[EPA-HQ-OW-2006-0408; FRL – 10020-68-OW]**

**Proposed Information Collection Request; Comment Request; EPA’s WaterSense Program (Renewal)**

**AGENCY:** Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is planning to submit an information collection request (ICR), “EPA’s WaterSense Program (Renewal)” (EPA ICR No. 2233.08, OMB Control No. 2040-0272) to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review and approval in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act. Before doing so, EPA is soliciting public comments on specific aspects of the proposed information collection as described below. This is a proposed extension of the ICR, which is currently approved through June 30, 2021. An Agency may not conduct or sponsor and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

**DATES:** Comments must be submitted on or before **[insert date 60 days after date of publication in the Federal Register]**.

**ADDRESSES:** Submit your comments, referencing Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OW-2006-0408 online using [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) (our preferred method), by email to [OW-Docket@epa.gov](mailto:OW-Docket@epa.gov), or by mail to: EPA Docket Center, Environmental Protection Agency, Mail Code 28221T, 1200 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20460.

EPA's policy is that all comments received will be included in the public docket without change including any personal information provided, unless the comment includes profanity, threats, information claimed to be Confidential Business Information (CBI) or other information whose disclosure is restricted by statute.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Tara O’Hare, WaterSense Branch, Water Infrastructure Division, Office of Wastewater Management, Office of Water, (Mail Code

4204M), Environmental Protection Agency, 1200 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20460; telephone number: 202-564-8836; email address: ohare.tara@epa.gov.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

Supporting documents which explain in detail the information that the EPA will be collecting are available in the public docket for this ICR. The docket can be viewed online at [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov). The telephone number for the Docket Center is 202-566-1744. For additional information about EPA's public docket, visit <http://www.epa.gov/dockets>.

Pursuant to section 3506(c)(2)(A) of the PRA (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*), EPA is soliciting comments and information to enable it to: (i) evaluate whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the Agency, including whether the information will have practical utility; (ii) evaluate the accuracy of the Agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (iii) enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (iv) minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, e.g., permitting electronic submission of responses. EPA will consider the comments received and amend the ICR as appropriate. The final ICR package will then be submitted to OMB for review and approval. At that time, EPA will issue another Federal Register notice to announce the submission of the ICR to OMB and the opportunity to submit additional comments to OMB.

*Abstract:* WaterSense is a voluntary program designed to create self-sustaining markets for water-efficient products and services via a common label. The program provides incentives for manufacturers and builders to design, produce, and market water-efficient products and homes. The program also encourages consumers and commercial and institutional purchasers of water-using products and systems to choose water-efficient products and use water-efficient practices.

As part of strategic planning efforts, EPA encourages programs to develop meaningful performance measures, set ambitious targets, and link budget expenditures to results. Data collected under this ICR will assist WaterSense in demonstrating results and carrying out evaluation efforts to ensure continual program improvement. In addition, the data will help EPA estimate water and energy savings and inform future product categories and specifications. All shipment and sales data submitted by WaterSense manufacturer and retailer/distributor partners are collected as confidential business information (CBI) using the procedures outlined in the WaterSense CBI security plan under the Clean Water Act.

On April 10, 2020, EPA published a Federal Register document (85 FR 20268) that sought input on whether and how the program could better understand and collect information on consumer satisfaction with labeled products. Based on the comments received on the notice (and summarized in the supporting statement), there is no support for conducting a survey or study on consumer satisfaction for use in future product reviews. There is, however, support for a general survey that would help to provide information to improve awareness of the WaterSense label and brand, which is covered under the existing ICR.

*Form Numbers: \*Forms not yet finalized in italics.*

#### Partnership Agreement

- Builders 6100-19
- Licensed Certification Providers 6100-20
- Manufacturers 6100-13
- Professional Certifying Organizations 6100-07
- Promotional partners 6100-06
- Retailers/distributors 6100-12

#### Application for Professional Certifying Organization Approval

- *Professional Certifying Organizations 6100-X3*

#### Annual Reporting Form

- Builders 6100-09
- Professional Certifying Organizations 6100-09
- Promotional partners 6100-09

Annual Reporting Form—Online and Hard-copy Confidential Business Information (CBI) Forms

- Plumbing Manufacturers 6100-09
- Non-plumbing Manufacturers 6100-09
- Retailers/Distributors 6100-09

#### Provider Quarterly Reporting Form

- Licensed Certification Providers 6100-09

#### Award Application Form

- Builders 6100-17
- Licensed Certification Providers 6100-17
- Manufacturers 6100-17
- Professional Certifying Organizations 6100-17
- Promotional Partners 6100-17
- Retailers/Distributors 6100-17

#### Consumer Awareness Survey

- *Survey form 6100-X2*

*Respondents/affected entities:* Respondents will consist of WaterSense partners and participants in the consumer survey. WaterSense partners include product manufacturers; professional certifying organizations; retailers; distributors; utilities; federal, state, and local governments; home builders; licensed certification providers; and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

*Respondent's obligation to respond:* Voluntary.

*Estimated number of respondents:* EPA estimates the total number of respondents (over 3 years) to be 2,561.

*Frequency of response:* Once a prospective partner organization reviews WaterSense materials and decides to join the program, it will submit the appropriate Partnership Agreement for its partnership category (this form is only submitted once). Professional Certifying Organizations must include additional documentation to begin their partnership by completing an Application for Professional Certifying Organization Approval (this form is only submitted once). Each year, EPA also asks partners to submit an Annual Reporting Form and Awards Application (voluntarily at the partner's discretion). Licensed certification providers for WaterSense-labeled new homes are asked to submit a Provider Quarterly Reporting Form four times each year. EPA also may conduct two Consumer Awareness Surveys over the three-year period of the ICR.

*Total estimated burden:* 6,830 hours (per year for both respondents and EPA). Burden is defined at 5 CFR 1320.03(b).

*Total estimated cost:* \$598,527 (per year for both respondents and EPA), includes \$1,578 annualized capital or operation & maintenance costs.

*Changes in Estimates:* There is a decrease of 2,096 hours in the total estimated respondent burden compared with the ICR currently approved by OMB. This decrease is due to changes in program requirements including using online forms for all non-CBI related data, discontinuing the individual irrigation partner category, and simplifying the quarterly provider reporting requirements, which have reduced operation & maintenance costs and lowered the estimated burden. EPA also better understands how long it takes partners to complete program forms and has better historical data to project new partners/forms over the next three years.

Dated: February 18, 2021.

Andrew D. Sawyers,

Director, Office of Wastewater Management.

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