

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Standing Committee on Environment and Heritage

MEDIA RELEASE

Issued: 20 September 2007

Chair: Mal Washer MP Deputy Chair: Jennie George MP

## Managing the flow Regulating plumbing product quality to save water

Improving the water efficiency of plumbing products by better enforcement of mandatory labelling laws has been recommended in a new parliamentary report released yesterday.

The *Managing the Flow* report by the House of Representatives Environment and Heritage Committee stems from an inquiry into the regulation of plumbing product quality in Australia.

Committee Chair Dr Mal Washer said the *Managing the Flow* report is a "timely examination of an area of regulation that performs the crucial functions of conserving precious water resources and safeguarding public health from avoidable contamination of these resources".

The report explores a number of deficiencies in the current regulatory arrangements for controlling plumbing product quality.

"Overall, the Committee found there is a pressing need for improvements to be made to the cohesion, consistency, understanding and enforcement of the current regulatory arrangements," Dr Washer said.

The Chair stated that there are a number of actions that the federal government can, and should, take to improve the way in which plumbing product quality is managed in Australia. Accordingly, the report made recommendations to:

- improve coordination between the state/territory jurisdictions and the national mandatory Water Efficiency Labelling Standards (WELS) and Water Mark Schemes;
- establish minimum water efficiency standards for all WELS products; and
- review and improve upon current enforcement practices for the mandatory schemes.

"This has been an expeditious inquiry for the Committee, which I hope will help to direct Australian Government action to address some of the problems that the industry and consumers are experiencing," Dr Washer said.

For **media comment**, contact: Dr Mal Washer, House Environment Committee Chair, on (02) 6277 2114

The report is available on the Committee's website: <u>http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/environ/regulation/report.htm</u>, or from the Committee secretariat on (02) 6277 4580 or <u>environment.reps@aph.gov.au</u>.