NYC GREEN CODES
LEGISLATION AT A GLANCE

GCTF Proposal
Enhance Water Efficiency Standards

Implemented
Local Law 57 of 2010

Summary

Although New York City receives substantial rainfall, the city is still vulnerable in dry years and has experienced seven droughts in the last 45 years. Fortunately, the need for water can be easily reduced with more-efficient plumbing fixtures.

Local Law 57/2010 increases efficiency standards for various plumbing fixtures and fittings, and allows the option of dual-flush toilets. The requirements apply to the Plumbing Code and prohibit the sale of non-complying fixtures and fittings.

New Requirements or Changes

Effective: July 1, 2012. These changes do not apply retroactively; they are only triggered when construction activity requires a permit for work covered by this section of the Plumbing Code.

Amendments to Sections 202 and 604.4 of the Plumbing Code:

- Adds definitions for “Dual Flush Water Closet” and “WaterSense Program”
- Showerheads, private lavatory faucets, water closets (toilets) and urinals are required to meet the water efficiency standards of the WaterSense program. These fixtures are also required to bear a WaterSense label, except for water closets in public restrooms.

Table 604.4 is changed as follows to comply with WaterSense (changed standards in bold):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plumbing Fixture or Plumbing Fitting</th>
<th>Maximum Flow Rate or Quantity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lavatory, private</td>
<td>1.5 gpm at 60 psi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lavatory, public, (metering)</td>
<td>0.25 gallon per metering cycle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lavatory, public (other than metering)</td>
<td>0.5 gpm at 60 psi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shower head</td>
<td>2.0 gpm at 80 psi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sink faucet</td>
<td>2.2 gpm at 60 psi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urinal</td>
<td>0.5 gallon per flushing cycle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water Closet</td>
<td>1.28 gallons per flushing cycle or equivalent dual flush</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- A dual flush toilet is permissible in lieu of a 1.28 gpf toilet, provided that one third of the sum of the high flush volume plus twice the low flush volume does not exceed 1.28 gpf. A 1.6 gpf toilet with a 0.8 gpf low flush, for example, would meet this standard:
Amendments to Section 20-689 of the Administrative Code (Consumer Affairs):

- The Consumer Affairs code makes it unlawful to sell or offer to sell any plumbing fixture that does not comply with the standards in the Plumbing Code.

Enforcement

These new and revised provisions are a standard part of the Plumbing Code. They will be enforced by the Department of Buildings in the same manner as any other element of the Construction Codes.

Once the law is effective, construction suppliers are only permitted to sell compliant fixtures.

Implementation

There should be no challenges to implementing this law. WaterSense compliant products are already widely available from all major manufacturers, and manufacturers requested that the law's effective date be shifted to 2012 to allow time to ramp up production.

*Special thanks to Hershel Weiss (Ashokan Water Services), member of the NYC Green Codes Task Force Committee on Water Efficiency, for his assistance in preparing this summary.*