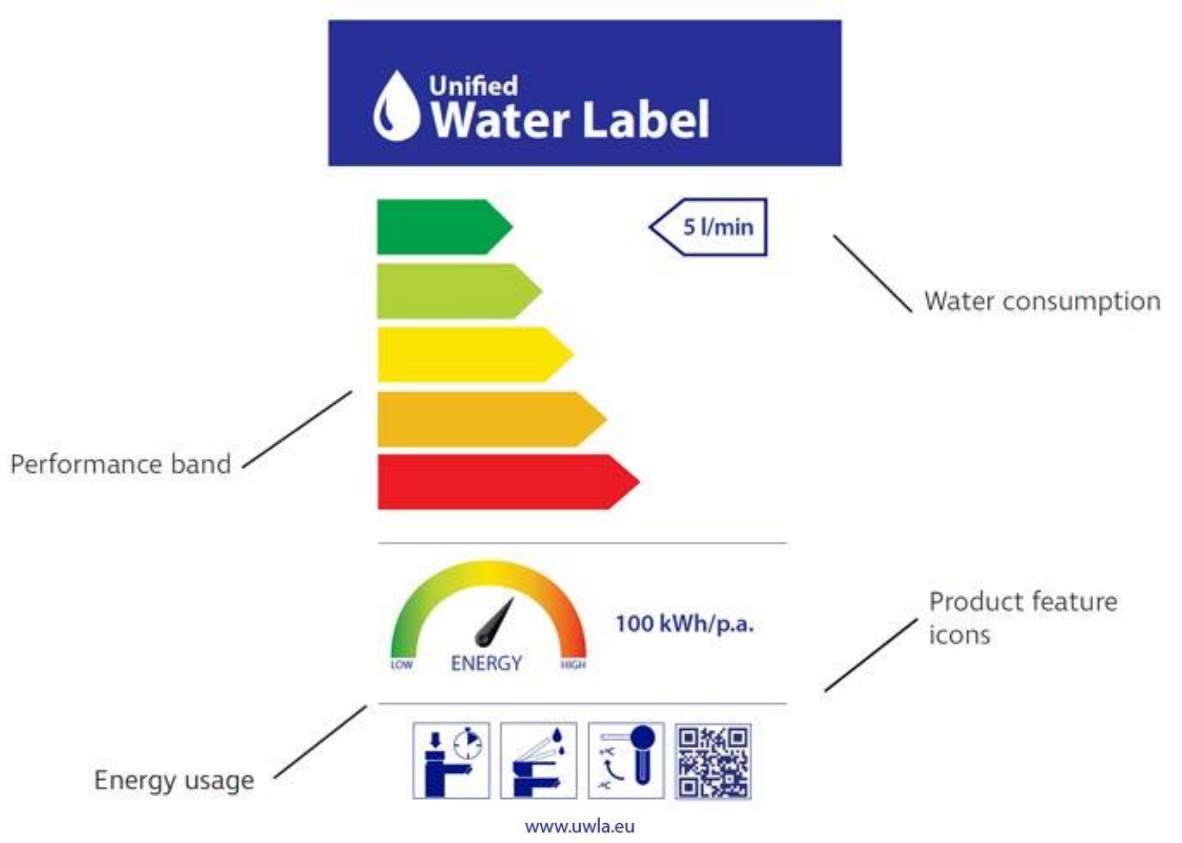
Water Efficiency and the Unified Water Label

What is the Unified Water Label?

The Unified Water Label is European wide initiative by companies involved in the bathroom industry. It's a smart tool that provides a means to identify water using products with a common label that offers clear, concise and easy to understand messaging about water energy usage.



Water and energy at a glance

Why does it matter?

Consumers need to be aware of efficient bathroom products that work with their water and heating systems, that they are fit for purpose and deliver no less performance but use less water and energy

What products are covered?

The UWL includes 14 different categories for water using bathroom products that covers:

- Shower heads
- Shower control
- Taps
- WC suits
- Baths

Who support it?

Hundreds of registered brands support the label, promoting it on their websites, in their newsletters, magazines and adverts. Consumers are seeking sustainability and environmental information and are now looking for the label, making it a strong marketing tool. In addition, over 10000 architects and specifiers use the database of products on a regular basis for new projects across the globe

Why should retailers support it?

Retailers can play an important role in educating consumers and bringing these products to their attention. Using water wisely helps conserve energy associated with heating water and decreases carbon emissions. With 11 % (EPA, 2019) of all carbon emissions generated from domestic environment, water using bathroom products have a significant role to play.

What should you do?

- Train your staff to understand and communicate water efficiency
- Display the water label of the products you are selling
- Speak with your suppliers to ensure the products are registered on the label scheme: it will help to increase awareness and necessity but also stop rogue traders using the label when they shouldn't.

More info:
https://uwla.eu/
http://www.europeanwaterlabel.eu/thelabel.asp
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c53ErlCUyGI

How do you know if a product is water efficient and doesn't have a Water Label?

The water calculator

The water calculator is designed for anyone involved in the development of new homes, e.g. developers, Housing Associations and others. It is designed make it quicker and easier to comply with the water aspect of Building Regulations and/or sustainability certification. The Water Calculator contains information on water consumption for hundreds of products,

enabling quick and easy specification. For products not on the list you can also enter data manually. See here for more information:
http://www.thewatercalculator.org.uk/default.asp

Water consumption can be also estimated using this
https://www.seai.ie/publications/DEAP-Water-Efficiency-Calculator_v.0.xlsx

BREEAM, Home Performance Index, LEED and EU Taxonomy

The main Environmental Assessment Methods for New Construction in Ireland, BREAAM, Home Performance Index and LEED all have minimum mandatory requirements with regard potable water use. The EU taxonomy is a classification system, establishing a list of environmentally sustainable economic activities. They all use different methods for measuring and calculating water efficiency which are summarised in the table below. Further reference should be made to the technical manuals in the links below.

	BREEAM (Maximum flow/flush rates)	Home Performance Index (HPI) – Maximum water use aggregate 125l/person/day	LEED (Maximum flow/flush rates + 20% reduction on aggregate consumption)	EU Taxonomy (Maximum flow/flush rates)
WC (litres / flush)	12	6/4 *	6	6
Wash hand basin taps (litres / min)	12	6 *	1.9 public 8.3 private	6
Showers (litres / min)	14	9 *	9.5	8
Baths (litres)	200	170 *	Not available Not available	Not available Not available
Kitchen Taps (litres / min)	12	9 *	8.3	6

*The figures for Home Performance Index are indicative as the calculation does not set maximum flush/flow but focuses on the overall consumption figure.

https://www.breeam.com/BREEAMInt2016SchemeDocument/#08_water/wat01_nc.htm

https://homeperformanceindex.ie

https://www.usgbc.org/credits/new-construction-core-and-shell-data-centers-new-construction-warehouse-and-distribution-0?view=language&return=/credits/New%20Construction/v4.1/Water%20efficiency

https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:d84ec73c-c773-11eb-a925-01aa75ed71a1.0021.02/DOC_2&format=PDF