

Position paper

On the occasion of the World Water Day on March 22, 2010 Hansgrohe AG publishes five propositions on saving energy and water in the home.

“Climate protection starts in the shower”

Five propositions by Hansgrohe AG on saving energy and water in the home

Following the prohibition of the incandescent globe last year, the European Union (EU) is planning to enact additional regulations designed to reduce energy consumption as part of the revision of its Eco Design Directive. In doing so, the EU is currently examining products that consume energy only indirectly. Among these are mixers and showerheads, since they are usually operated using hot water that is heated using energy.

As a leading manufacturer of mixers, showerheads and shower systems, Hansgrohe AG (www.hansgrohe.com) basically welcomes the efforts of policy makers in working toward a sustainable, efficient use of the resource water, and hence a reduction in energy consumption. Changing hot water consumption patterns of private households is undoubtedly an important step toward reducing energy consumption and improving climate protection. The push forward by the EU in this field also has another positive side for us, since the entire complex of water and energy savings represents an enormous opportunity for the sanitation, heating and air-conditioning industry and trades sector.

Hansgrohe AG has been developing water and energy-saving technologies successfully for over 30 years. Moreover, as part of its responsibility toward society as a whole, the company is committed to promoting a conscientious and sustainable use of the precious resource water among the wider public.

The following propositions reflect the position of Hansgrohe AG on the subject of “Saving energy and water in the home”:

Propositions

1. The key to fostering more efficient use of water in private homes lies in intensive education: is the responsibility of government, social organizations and enterprises in the sanitation and water industry to promote a change in attitude in society through strategies aimed at achieving sustainability. In this context, creating an awareness – especially in relation to the use of the life element of water – among broad sections of the population, and to do so effectively and at an early stage, is of great importance.
2. Climate protection starts with the daily shower and with washing our hands. Business – especially those in the sanitation industry – face the challenge of

introducing innovations capable of achieving significant water and energy savings without diminishing convenience and quality of life, for example, when washing hands or taking a shower.

3. Political fundamentals, educational measures and technological innovations must all coincide to promote the ecologically sustainable use of the resource water.
4. Regulations focusing merely on limiting water flow rates in mixers and showerheads lag behind the current state of technological development and therefore do not make an effective contribution towards reducing the consumption of hot water and energy in private homes, since they are liable to result in a loss of convenience. Moreover, a regulation imposing a simple restriction on flow rates would flood the market with hastily engineered products incapable of meeting either consumer or policy requirements.
 - Relying on smaller and smaller water flow rates cannot be the solution in the long term. It is a matter of finding the right balance between saving water and shower comfort. To put it differently: if the shower is reduced to a trickle, people will spend more time in the shower, for example, to rinse the shampoo out of their hair. If people spend more time in the shower in order to get clean, there will be no net gain.
 - In the United States, where regulations restrict the flow rate of showerheads to 2.5 gallons/9.5 liters per minute, the average water consumption is approx. 340 liters per person per day, which is significantly higher than the corresponding figure for Germany (approx. 125 liters per person per day).
5. As it happens, the technological means for efficient and energy-saving use of water that are already available today far exceed the flow rate limits proposed by the EU Directive.
 - In 2010, Hansgrohe set a new benchmark for wash basin mixers with the launch of an innovative aerator that reduces the water flow by a further 30 per cent, to five liters per minute. The flow rate of these mixers is now about 65 per cent lower than that of conventional wash basin mixers without an aerator.
 - The EcoSmart technology from Hansgrohe reduces water consumption of handheld and overhead showers by up to 60 per cent compared with conventional products by employing a clever combination of flow restriction, specially designed jets and by enriching the water with air (AirPower technology) – without any compromise in convenience and comfort. This is one of the reasons the showerpipe “Raindance Connect EcoSmart” from Hansgrohe was awarded the Design Prize of the Federal Republic of Germany in 2010.
 - With its Pontos AquaCycle system, Hansgrohe AG is the only mixer and shower manufacturer in the world to offer a proven technology for recycling waste water from showers, bathtubs and hand basins – so-called gray water – for secondary use, for example for flushing toilets. The second generation of the Pontos system, available in the second half of 2010, will be capable of combining water recycling with an effective heat recovery system: the heat energy contained in the waste water from the shower is extracted and used to heat the mains water supply to the house, in the process reducing the amount of energy needed for the hot water system.

About Hansgrohe – the original from the Black Forest

During its almost 109-year history, the company Hansgrohe (www.hansgrohe.com), with headquarters in Schiltach in the Black Forest, has acquired a reputation in the sanitation sector as one of the innovative leaders in technology and design. With its fittings, showers and shower systems, Hansgrohe creates the original products that make the bathroom more functional, more comfortable and more beautiful. It is no coincidence that they can be found in prominent prestige projects such as on the giant cruiser “Queen Mary II”, in Terminal 5 of Heathrow Airport in London, in the German Reichstag and at the Chancellor's office in Berlin, in the Yoo luxury apartments in New York or at the Masdar City Institute of Science and Technology in Abu Dhabi. In 2008, the company generated sales of about EUR 668 million with its Axor, Hansgrohe, Pharo and Pontos brands (2007: EUR 661 million). The Hansgrohe Group currently has a global workforce of about 3,200 employees, with about two-thirds of them working in Germany. The company, which takes tough action against product piracy and intellectual property theft, manufactures its products in six German plants, in France, the Netherlands, in the U.S. and in China.



Germany's most beautiful shower 2010: the showerpipe Hansgrohe Raindance Connect EcoSmart wins the silver design award of the Federal Republic of Germany.

Further information:

www.hansgrohe.com/design-award or
www.hansgrohe.com/award

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