



Water Ratings: Oh, the Data They'll Bring

Mike Collignon
Green Builder® Coalition

Water Ratings



Water ratings are on-site analyses of properties that subsequently forecast future water usage.

Ratings do not mandate anything. They simply assess the design & materials of the property.

They can be more comprehensive than a water audit.



Inputs

- Indoor:

- Faucets
- Showers/Tubs
- Clothes & Dish Washers
- Fridge w/ Water Dispenser
- RO/Water Softeners
- Hot Tubs/Fountains/ Pools
- Reuse Systems (Rain, Gray, Black)
- Structural Waste

- Outdoor:

- Irrigation Systems
- All Plantings
- Soil Type/Grade
- Roof Type
- Pervious & Impervious Surfaces
- Pools
- Rainwater & Graywater Systems

The background of the slide features a vertical strip on the left side showing a close-up of ocean waves with white foam, transitioning into a dark teal gradient that covers the rest of the slide.

How Do Water Ratings Differ from Prescriptive/Hybrid Programs?

- EPA WaterSense, LEED for Homes, Florida WaterStar
 - Prescriptive, minimum compliance level
 - Pass/Fail, not quantitative
 - Points-based systems that may not reflect value or ROI
 - Administrative requirements, documentation and validation
 - Aspects of project not covered by program (evap cooler, RO filter)
 - Alternative source water, re-use credits not measured
 - Limited-to-no flexibility on product and/or design choices

How Water Ratings Differ from MWELO, QWEL, EPA Outdoor

- Irrigation only
- Does not account for alternative water sources
- Does not credit using outdoor water inside the home

The screenshot shows the 'WaterSense' website header with the logo and 'An EPA Partnership Program' text. Navigation links include 'Product Search', 'Meet Our Partners', 'Contact Us', and 'FAQ'. A breadcrumb trail reads 'WaterSense / The WaterSense Water Budget Tool / Interactive Water Budget Tool'. Below is a banner image of a person kayaking on a lake with the text 'Interactive Water Budget Tool'. The main content area is divided into three steps: 'STEP 1 Location and Area', 'STEP 2 Plants and Irrigation', and 'STEP 3 The Results'. Step 1 is active and contains a congratulatory message, a list of required information (location, area, plants, irrigation), and a 'NEXT STEP >' button. Step 2 includes questions about the tool's purpose (with a dropdown menu showing 'LEED Project'), the number of sites (with radio buttons for 'Development of Multiple Landscapes' and 'Single Site'), and the presence of an irrigation system (with radio buttons for 'Yes' and 'No'). Step 3 includes input fields for 'Enter Zip Code', 'Enter Landscaped Area for a Single Home or Site' (with a 'Sq. Ft.' label), and 'Enter Multi-Home/Development Landscaped Area Range' (with 'to' and 'Sq. Ft.' labels).

WaterSense® An EPA Partnership Program

Product Search | Meet Our Partners | Contact Us | FAQ

WaterSense / The WaterSense Water Budget Tool / Interactive Water Budget Tool

Interactive Water Budget Tool

STEP 1 Location and Area | **STEP 2** Plants and Irrigation | **STEP 3** The Results

Congratulations on choosing to design a locally appropriate water-efficient landscape! The WaterSense water budget tool will help you determine if your landscape meets EPA's criteria for efficient outdoor water use in your area.

In order to use the water budget tool, you will need to know some basic information about your landscape:

- The location and zip code
- The total area of applicable landscape
- Types of plants and the total coverage
- Methods of Irrigation (if any)

Your landscape will receive a pass/fail based on local climate, plant selection, irrigation methods, and size of the landscape. Follow the instructions on screen to find out if your landscape meets the WaterSense criteria.

For what purpose is the tool being used?
What are you landscaping?
LEED Project

How many sites?
 Development of Multiple Landscapes Single Site

Is there an irrigation system?
 Yes No

Enter Zip Code

Enter Landscaped Area for a Single Home or Site¹
 Sq. Ft.

Enter Multi-Home/Development Landscaped Area Range¹
 to Sq. Ft.

NEXT STEP >

What Are the Benefits of using a Water Rating?

- Long term conservation of a precious, essential resource
- Financial Incentives
 - Tax Credits
 - Rebate Programs
- Codes/regulations
- Green Building Programs
 - Alternative path for water efficiency
- **Potential financial incentives**
 - Reduced storm water impact fees
 - Reduced tap fees
 - Shortened permit review time



HERS H₂O

- Applicability
 - New or Existing Homes
 - Single Family or Duplex
 - Any Climate or Location
- Scoring System
 - Compares rated home with a hypothetical reference home of the same size and location
 - Reference home approximates a standard new home built c. 2006, and assigned a score of 100.
 - Rated home score may be lower or higher than the reference home.
 - Outputs include --
 - Annual water use volume
 - Annual water bill savings
- Attributes
 - Models grounded in robust field data.
 - Has “look and feel” of HERS.
- What’s Covered
 - Plumbing fixtures, major appliances, water softeners, landscape irrigation systems.
 - Additional factors: house size, location, number of bedrooms, excess water pressure, hot water distribution layout, lot and landscape size, pool or spa.
 - Not yet included pending more data: humidifiers, water filtration systems, alternative water sources.
- Current Status
 - Initially completed as a RESNET technical guideline in 2017
 - Undergoing field testing by home builders
 - Now being refined and reissued as an ANSI standard
 - Public Comment draft expected this month

Water Efficiency Rating Score (WERS)[®]

- Applicability
 - New or Existing Properties
 - Single Family or Multifamily
- Outputs
 - Score: 0-100
 - Projected usage in gallons: Daily, monthly and yearly
 - Projected water costs: Daily, monthly and yearly
- Adopted/Implemented
 - State of New Mexico: SBTC since January 1, 2017
 - City of Santa Fe: RGBC since March 2017
- Partner Discounts
 - 45% - TSV showerheads
 - 20% - rainwater or graywater
 - 20% - irrigation controllers
- Future
 - 4 green building programs incorporating into water chapter
 - WaterSense for Homes: Under consideration for dual certification

Questions?

Contact Us for More Info

Green Builder® Coalition
info@greenbuildercoalition.org



Thank you!

www.wers.us