



Landlords go and stay green with tamper-proof shower regulator

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Landlords really do want to be green, doing their part to conserve water, protect the environment and lower energy usage. Some building owners, however, have been hesitant to do so - even if it's a notion they support - due to concerns about cost, time and potential objections from tenants.

One of the simplest ways to "green" a building is to install low-flow showerheads. Federal regulations restrict new showerhead flow rates from exceeding 2.5 gallons per minute (gpm), saving thousands of gallons of water per year. Water and energy savings amount to up to 40% annually.

But landlords complain that after installing a low-flow showerhead, some tenants tampered with, replaced or altogether removed the appliance, hence thwarting any efforts to conserve. A new shower and sink regulator, The Water Scrooge, combats that problem.

The Water Scrooge is described as a "maintenance-free, tamper-proof" system designed to prevent tenants from removing or altering water saving appliances. Rather than a showerhead, easily changeable by anyone with a wrench, The Water Scrooge is hidden from tenants' view, installed behind the shower wall.

Excess water usage costs roughly \$1,000 per year per apartment or half million dollars for a 500-unit building. However, 40% of wasted water can be saved providing a wide range of economic and environmental benefits.

The system is designed to create a steady water flow at the desired level, maintaining consistent water pressure while reducing water usage. Set to a flow rate of 1.5 gpm, there is no noticeable difference in pressure or water flow that that of a conventional 2.5 gpm showerhead; yet the savings in terms of gallons of water and costs are almost halved:

* 365 days per year x 10 minutes per day x 2.5 gpm (conventional shower head) = 9,125 gallons per year.

* 365 days per year x 10 minutes per day x 1.5 gpm (low-flow shower head) = 5,475 gallons per year.

Installation takes about seven minutes. Landlords can choose to pay for the system outright or they can opt for the \$0 down option and share the water and energy savings with The Water Scrooge.

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