

## Hotels Add a Splash of Elegance by Going Waterless

Water conservation is increasingly becoming a critical concern for environmentally—and financially—responsible hotels.

By utilizing low-flow fixtures and spotting heavy water-using areas, most hotels and motels worldwide now make a concerted effort to reduce total water usage.



A typical hotel's three primary water "hot spots" are:

1. Hotel guestrooms and lobbies
2. Food service and public areas
3. Laundry installations

Additionally, many hotel guests are now offered the option to decide when room linens should be washed. Although some facilities claim only about five percent of guests utilize this conservation measure, other more successful programs report as much as 40 percent of guest participation.

However, by installing waterless no-flush urinals, some hotels are going a step further in their water conservation efforts in an attempt to save money and be environmentally responsible.

Waterless urinals, which have been common for many years in Europe, are becoming increasingly popular in the U.S. Unlike traditional flush urinals, which can use more than four gallons of water per flush and more than 35,000 gallons of water annually, waterless urinals—as the name implies—do not use any water. Nor do they require the plumbing and components necessary to bring water to the urinal, such as flush handles or electric sensors.

Except for the lack of water usage, these urinals work similar to conventional ones, according to Klaus Reichardt, Managing Partner of Waterless No-Flush™ Urinals.

“With a flush urinal, urine flows down the drain. To prevent odors, conventional urinals have a ‘trap’ in the drain that retains a small amount of water. This liquid trap prevents odors and sewer gases from escaping into the restroom,” says Reichardt. “As long as the urinal is flushed, cleaned, and maintained, there should not be an odor problem.”

A waterless urinal also uses a “trap,” but in this case, it is a cylinder containing a thin layer of liquid or sealant and sits atop the urinal’s drain area. As urine passes through the trap a barrier is formed, which prevents odors from escaping. Eventually, the urine flows under the barrier layer into a central tube and down the drain. Reichardt adds the sealant as well as the cylinder inserts must eventually be replenished on most waterless urinals.

## **Health Issues and Costs**

Some hotels find that waterless urinals save more than water—they can help prevent the spread of infection as well. “Germs and bacteria, even in the best-maintained hotels, can be found on many restroom surfaces, such as counters, fixtures, and faucet handles,” says Reichardt. “With a waterless urinal, because there are no handles to touch, it helps prevent the possible spread of germs and bacteria.”

Reichardt does caution that hotel managers evaluate the different no-flush brands’ features and benefits available in today’s market. “Although the urinal itself is moderately inexpensive, some use relatively pricey cylinders that must be changed as often as once per month, wiping out any cost benefits,” he says. “Other models have less expensive cylinders that can be replenished with a liquid sealant, so the cylinder lasts longer and savings are increased.”

Today, hotel guests are more cognizant of water usage, particularly in the restroom. Waterless urinals are adding elegance, innovation, and, most of all, showing signs of responsible facility management ... while saving money and the environment in the process.