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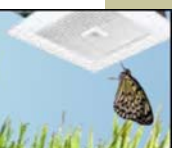
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The Maker Says: Kleber and Associates

This time around, "The Maker" is actually 11 manufacturers represented by Kleber & Associates PR firm. Several of those companies, including [Gerber](#), [KWC America](#), [Hansa](#), and [Cifial](#) are focusing on water efficiency. An important topic in this green day and age.

According to a [Wall Street Journal article](#) from May that [Kleber & Associates](#) account executive Nikki Harmon referenced during the presentation, certified-green homes in Seattle are selling at an 11% premium over "regular" homes on the market. The article acknowledges that it's just one city, and one that's been eco-conscious from the get-go, but Harmon (pictured at right in white, with colleague Alicia Diaz-Verson in red) was taken with the statistic.



"Homeowners are clearly interested in being green and looking for ways to incorporate green living into their homes," she said in a meeting with product editors on June 10. "Manufacturers are realizing this too, so we're seeing a lot of our clients take a green approach to their product lines, especially when it comes to water use. People see water as a finite resource depending on where you live, so decreasing water use is getting a lot of attention."



Harmon's colleague Lyndsey Forster (not pictured) says plumbing products manufacturer Gerber already has 16 high-efficiency toilets (HETs) on the market and is coming out with two more, including the Ultra Flush 1.1 gallon per flush (gpf) model (left). Additionally, she notes that "Gerber is a WaterSense partner, and they're committing to have their entire faucet product line WaterSense certified by the end of 2008."

Like EnergyStar for other building products, the WaterSense program is sponsored by the Environmental Protection Agency and is designed to have manufacturers voluntarily lower their products' water usage below national standards. In order to be WaterSense certified, a lavatory faucet's water flow must not exceed 1.5 gallons per minute (gpm), and HETs must not use more than 1.28 gpf.

The key is that users shouldn't notice a difference between their standard plumbing products and a WaterSense-certified product. For faucets, Hansa's bath faucets, such as HansaStela are also WaterSense-approved, and the company is also incorporating low-flow technology into its HansaCuisine and HansaMix kitchen faucets with its ECO Cartridge technology. When "clicked" into place, the two-step ECO Cartridge restricts the flow of water in the faucet, providing water savings of 16% to 40%, the maker says.

WaterSense research, quoted by Hansa, says that an average home retrofitted with water-efficient fixtures can save 30,000 gallons of water per year. This could amount to as much as 300 billion gallons and nearly \$2 billion in savings if just 10 percent of U.S. homes upgraded to water-efficient fixtures. To incentivize such change, Hansa is offering the Hansa Challenge. By filling out a form at <http://www.hansachallenge.com/>, installers can receive a complementary ECO Cartridge upgrade when they specify a HansaMix faucet (right).



KWC America, Hansa's sister company, also offers water-smart faucets, such as the ONO highflex (left). Like the ECO Cartridge, ONO incorporates a two-stage operating system. The spout produces a low-pressure stream that automatically switches to a pressurized stream when the spray lever is completely depressed.


Also looking into refining their product line for optimized water use is manufacturer Cifial. The company's Quadra 25 faucet and Techno 25 faucet (below) are now being produced as 1.8 gpm models. Harmon says the company is looking into ways to move more of their faucets toward lower water usage while maintaining the strong water pressure that users expect.

Harmon and Forster agree that with its "eco-appeal," WaterSense is going to become a standard for plumbing products manufacturers. "People see water as a finite resource, depending on where you live," Harmon said.


Beyond water savings, several other Kleber & Associates clients are keeping their eye on green building and natural living. Check out the following manufacturers to see what other eco-conscious and lifestyle-friendly products are available from rooftop to countertop.

- [Mr. Steam](#) - Steam showers and towel warmers
- [Cucine Lube](#) - "Affordable luxury" Italian design kitchens
- [Grand Hall - Eternal Hybrid](#) - Hybrid water heater
- [Koma Trimboards](#) - PVC trim
- [Nichiha](#) - Fiber cement siding
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