

Green Products from Design & Construction Week

Show us the Green...

By Pat Lenius, special to Reeves Journal

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Even areas not threatened by drought benefit from more efficient use of water. As Plumbing Manufacturers International notes, efficient plumbing products help control the rising costs of additional water supply and wastewater treatment infrastructure. Saving water also reduces the energy required to pump, heat and treat water, PMI points out.

A study of homeowners who built or purchased and reside in National Green Building Standard certified homes, conducted by GuildQuality for the National Association of Home Builders, found that 95 percent of green homeowners said they are satisfied with the features in their home. Water usage was an important decision factor when they purchased their certified green home, according to 37 percent of respondents. After living in their green homes for an extended period of time, 52 percent cited water usage when asked about their satisfaction with the features they initially deemed important.

There were plenty of "green" plumbing products on display at Design & Construction Week, held in Las Vegas Feb. 4-6. Both the Kitchen & Bath Industry Show and the International Builders' Show, which co-located for the first time this year, were chock full of interesting new green products. We scoured the aisles of both shows to bring you these highlights:

Delta Faucet Co.

The Gold Award in the bath category in the Best of KBIS 2014 competition was presented to Delta Faucet for its Delta Temp₂O Technology. A digital temperature display features LED color indicators to signal different water temperature ranges.

The color indicator on hand showers, showerheads and tub showers with Temp₂O Technology identifies water temperatures below 80 degrees Fahrenheit with blue; 80° – 110° temperatures are designated in magenta; and all temperatures greater than 110°F are highlighted in red.

All bath solutions with this technology flow at a rate of two gallons per minute and are WaterSense labeled by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, allowing users to save between 20 and 40 percent more water than the industry standard, according to the company.

Hand showers and showerheads with this technology are hydro-powered and available in a variety of finishes, including Chrome, Brilliance Stainless and Venetian Bronze. In addition to these finishes, the built-in tub showers are offered in Polished Nickel and Champagne Bronze.

Niagara Conservation

The Stealth ultra-high-efficiency toilet with Dual Flush from Niagara Conservation was among those products honored with the Best of KBIS 2014 designation in the plumbing fixture category.

The toilet has two easy-to-use buttons — 0.5 gallons-per-flush for a flush that uses half the normal amount of water and 0.95 gpf for a full flush when needed. It meets EPA WaterSense criteria, uses an average of 0.65 gpf and can help save more than 15,600 gallons of water annually compared to 3.5 gpf toilets, the company said.

The toilet features a low-friction ceramic surface and a fully glazed two-inch trapway, which should eliminate the need for double-flushing. The large water surface helps ensure that the bowl's surface stays clean.

Earlier this year, Niagara Conservation announced plans to expand its line of UHETs by investing in a new toilet manufacturing plant in Kokomo, Ind.

ROHL LLC

Both the newest pull-down kitchen faucet by Michael Berman, created exclusively for ROHL, and the new Perrin & Rowe transitional bath collection were among those products honored with a Best of KBIS 2014 designation in the plumbing fixture category.

The Michael Berman pull-down kitchen faucet, made in the United States, combines modern elements with design inspired by American culture from the 1920s through the 1940s.

The Perrin & Rowe bath collection offers a modern interpretation of classic design, with slip, tapered lever and cross handles paired with gracefully curved spouts. The faucets are sleek and precisely engineered. Both the pull-down kitchen faucet and bath collection are available in polished chrome, polished nickel and satin nickel finishes.

ROHL takes pride in the green qualities of its products as well as its manufacturing processes, according to Greg Rohl, Eastern president. Its showerheads flow 1.75 to two gallons per minute and qualify for LEED Platinum certification. Bath faucets flow 1.5 to 1.6 gpm and kitchen faucets are 1.8 gpm.

ORION/URREA

Founded in Mexico in 1907, URREA started in business with faucets and from the beginning has focused on responsible use of water. URREA acquired Sanitarios ORION, known for its sinks and toilets, in 2011 and now is able to offer complete systems for bathroom infrastructure and design.

At KBIS the company introduced a water-free urinal that is maintained with a cartridge, to be replaced about every six months. A display of toilets reminded visitors of water consumption through the years: a 1950s toilet used 6.9 gpf; a 1970s version toilet used 3.4 gpf; in the 1980s toilets used 1.6 gpf; and in the 1990s through today, the typical toilet uses 1.28 gpf.

The ORION toilets work with a double-siphon jet to clear the bowl with 1.28 gpf. Both residential and commercial models are available. Other options offered include soft-close seats and comfort height/ADA-compliant models.

The company's line of GSK ecological toilets guarantees maximum water savings, consuming less than 1.268 gpf. ORION products are designed to save water and have earned WaterSense certification Eco Grade certification by Mexico's National Water Commission (CONAGUA).

Trutankless

The National Association of Home Builders named the winning products in its second annual Best of IBS Awards during the 2014 International Builders' Show. Best Technology Product went to Bollente Companies for its trutankless, which was described as "the world's smartest water heater that integrates with home automation systems and has its own app."

The compact size and turnkey voltage range (208-240) of trutankless water heating units allows for a variety of uses, including whole house (up to four bathrooms); point-of-use for home additions (such as a single bathroom or one fixture or appliance); recreational vehicle or marine; workshop/garage or light commercial application.

Patent-pending Velix technology heats water as it flows rapidly through 24 linear feet of heating element. The length, combined with the horizontal orientation and ceramic thermal insulation, maximizes output and prevents element failure. The horizontal design also creates a self-flushing effect to avoid compromising efficiency with mineral buildup.

According to the company, trutankless delivers a robust 7.5 gpm output and there is no loss of pressure when multiple fixtures/appliances are run simultaneously.

Kohler

The Awaken collection by Kohler has been expanded to include water-conserving single-function showerheads and a hand shower with Eco-Assist technology, which provides an intensified spray.

In addition to conserving water, the new Awaken hand shower offers the convenience of a richer spray for tasks such as hair rinsing, according to Leslie Bronson, Kohler performance showering product manager. Pressing and holding a button to activate the Eco-Assist technology increases water flow from 1.5 gallons per minute to 2.0 gallons per minute.

The new single-function Awaken showerhead touts a spray engine engineered for maximum performance at a water-conserving 1.5 and 1.75 gpm, still delivering full, rich rinsing coverage. Like the hand shower, it features an easy-to-clean spray face.

The Awaken collection is offered in two series to complement transitional and contemporary aesthetics: Series B, organic in design, is inspired by forms found in nature; Series G takes design cues from classic modern design with simple, architectural form. The products are available in two finishes: polished chrome and brushed nickel.

The company noted this collection has been popular with the trade for its quality and affordability and with consumers for its sleek design and premium performance.

Gerber Plumbing Fixtures

The Blaze Suite is a new collection of vitreous china products from Gerber Plumbing Fixtures, which has expanded its suite of bathroom offerings. It features a pedestal sink in a clean rectangular shape with deck space for soap and lotion, and a matching two-piece toilet. Each piece is designed in simple, distinctive lines with flair. The high-efficiency 1.28 gpf toilet has a Fluidmaster fill valve, three-inch flush valve, and a fully glazed trapway for quick, thorough waste removal and bowl cleaning. The pieces are available in white and biscuit.

Gerber also introduced the Ziva high-efficiency toilet for residential use. It has a one-piece configuration and a concealed trapway for easy cleaning. The Ziva is available in white and offered as an ErgoHeight (ADA compliant) elongated toilet. It operates at 1.28 gpf, is WaterSense approved, and has a Fluidmaster fill valve, three-inch flush valve and dual siphon jet.

JD Item TX Inc.

Focused on distributing advanced green products to the commercial and retail markets, JD Item TX showed Airjet showerheads and hand showers. These WaterSense-approved products provide up to 40 percent water savings while maintaining a guaranteed high-pressure experience, according to the company.

Founded in 1997, JD Item TX serves as certified product consultants for the South Korean government. Its goal is to manufacture products that can help preserve the environment while also enhancing people's lives. Its client base covers the United States, Mexico and Canada. The company distributes to major retail companies and works with hotels, apartments and universities.

Opus International

The water-conserving Aroma Sense showerhead from Opus International emits Vitamin C and aromatherapy during the shower, promoting healthier skin and hair while generating anti-oxidants, according to the company.

Technology in the showerhead helps remove chlorine and other contaminants from tap water, according to the company. Its triangle-shaped spray plate holes enable the showerhead to generate up to 421,000 negative ions per cubic centimeter of water through the Lenard effect to help revitalize the user's mind and body, the company said. Negative ions are said to relieve stress, increase blood flow, balance pH and improve breathing.

Those triangular holes in the showerhead also reduce water consumption by about 25 percent while optimizing water pressure 1.5 times more than a regular showerhead, according to the company.

The Vitamin C cartridge filter that comes with the showerhead lasts between 45 and 60 days, depending on use.

Isenberg

The model 100.1404 single-lever pull-out kitchen faucet from Isenberg features solid brass construction, a dual-function pull-out sprayer, flexible knitted hose with 3/8-inch compression fittings and a single lever to control volume and temperature.

Available in brushed nickel or chrome, it has ZeroDrip technology and is low flow capable.

The company produces a full range of decorative brass kitchen and bath plumbing fixtures. Its faucets and bath systems use the Ecomatic System, in which an air bubble enters into a water droplet, then the water droplet enlarges and breaks into two. Neoperl aerators and the Ecomatic System enable these products to use half the amount of water while maintaining a luxurious feel.

Every Isenberg faucet undergoes more than 100 hand inspections during the manufacturing process to ensure the final product exactly matches design and finish requirements. The company offers a comprehensive seven-year warranty, service help line and a nationwide pre-sales and after-sales service network.