

# GO green

## Save Water with Dual Flush Toilets

Contributed by Jon Reed, Owner, Sportsman's Supply Campground & Cabins, Pagosa Springs, CO

As operating an ecologically sustainable business finally becomes more important, we as campground owners are in a position to lead by example. Water, used in copious amounts by campgrounds and becoming more precious every day, is a resource we can begin conserving immediately. A long time standard in Europe, Australia and other water starved regions of the world, dual flush toilets offer an easy, cost effective way to conserve water.



For eight years I have owned and operated Sportsman's Supply Campground and Cabins in the mountains of southwest Colorado and understand firsthand the importance of conserving water. Last summer I replaced the two toilets in our lodge where most campers use the bathrooms and one toilet in our largest cabin with dual flush toilets made by Caroma. The day after I replaced the toilets water use declined by almost 30%. Water consumption declined by more than 25% for the season while our camper nights were up almost 15%.

Skeptical at first about the durability as well as our guests' ability to properly use the new toilets I was quickly impressed. Each toilet in the lodge gets used between 90 and 100 times a day during the summer and after almost four months of use, including use during hunting season where hunters can be exceptionally hard on things, the toilets were still operating perfectly.

Since solid waste and liquid waste do not need the same amount of water to effectively flush down the drain, dual flush toilets use two buttons - usually located on the top of the tank- to flush different amounts of water. Most

dual flush toilets use 1.6 gallons for solid waste and .8 gallons for liquid waste. Since most flushes are for liquid waste this quickly adds up to substantial water savings. Toilets manufactured prior to 1994 generally used 3.6 gallons per flush (gpf), the standard since 1994 has been 1.6gpf and now dual flush toilets reduce the current standard by about 30%. Studies have shown that a dual flush toilet will save an average family of four up to 10,000 gallons of water a year. Apply that math to a campground with several hundred campers a day for 5 months - that's a lot of water.

Unlike standard toilets that create a siphon in the trapway to evacuate waste, dual flush toilets use wash down technology. With a steep pitched bowl, an open rim design and a four inch trapway (compared to less than two inches in a standard toilet) water is pushed quickly through the trapway forcing waste down first followed by the water. Several advantages to wash down toilets include the fact that the trapways are larger resulting in fewer clogs (none were reported in our toilets in four months) and superior line

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carry. Dual flush toilets also use flapper-less technology virtually eliminating leaks.

Though more expensive than standard toilets, dual flush toilets more than make up for their cost in water savings, less impact on septic and sewage facilities and peace of mind knowing that your business is leaving less of a footprint on our environment.