

FIXTURES 101:

KNOW YOUR LOW-FLOW SHOWERHEADS

01 WHAT ARE LOW-FLOW SHOWERHEADS?

Low-flow showerheads have a **maximum flow rate** that is less than the current federal standard of **2.5 GPM (gallons per minute)**. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)'s WaterSense program requires that flows be less than **2.0 GPM**; California requires that flows from newly installed showerheads use no more than **1.8 GPM**. Efficient showerheads may come with a **flow restrictor**—these can also be purchased separately to adjust the flow of non-conforming models.

02 TYPES OF SHOWERHEADS

There are two types of low-flow showerheads:

+ Aerating showerheads: Water is mixed with **air**, creating a misty spray that makes the water flow feel more substantial.

+ Laminar-flow showerheads: Water is separated into **individual streams**. Laminar-flow models are more suitable for **humid climates**; they may cost more but produce less steam than aerating ones.

03 TO REPLACE OR NOT TO REPLACE?

Did you know: before 1992, showerheads had flow rates as high as **5.5 GPM!** Here are some steps you can take to check the maximum flow rates of older shower fixtures in your home:

1. Place a **bucket or container marked in gallon increments** under your shower head.
2. **Turn on the shower** as you would normally do.
3. Measure the time it takes to fill the bucket with **one gallon of water**. If it takes **less than 20 seconds** to fill one gallon, consider switching to a low-flow showerhead.

04 WHY LOW-FLOW SHOWERHEADS?

Pros

- + **Energy & water-efficient**
- + **Cost-effective**
- + Generates **fewer carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions**
- + Available in **multiple styles & price points**

Cons

- + **Less intense shower stream**
- + Aerated showerheads: water **cools more quickly**
- + **Water temperature adjusts more slowly**

