

Guidelines for Applicants

Assessment Criteria

This is one of a series of guidelines to help applicants to the Smart Approved WaterMark, Australia's outdoor water conservation label. Applications to the Smart WaterMark are assessed by an Independent Technical Expert Panel against the following four criteria:

1. **Water Saving** - The primary purpose of the product is directly related to reducing actual water use where there is a direct correlation between the use of the product and water savings.
2. **Fitness for Purpose** - Supporting documentation (such as instructions and marketing material) helps ensure that users get the best water savings/efficiency from the product.
3. **Meeting Regulations and Standards** - The product is of high quality and meets industry standards, and customer and community expectations.
4. **Environmentally Sustainable** - The product, while satisfying the above three criteria, is environmentally sustainable i.e. that in making water savings the product will not adversely impact on the environment in other areas.

The Expert Panel needs verifiable independent evidence that the product achieves the water savings claimed in the application (i.e. through independent testing, case studies or comparative reports). Please note, unsubstantiated marketing claims are not regarded as evidence of water saving.

The Smart WaterMark stakeholder web site has further information on the application process including timetables, fees and online application forms at: <https://www.smartwatermark.org/application-form/>

If you have any questions about these guidelines or your application please contact The Water Conservancy national office. Email: info@thewaterconservancy.org Landline: 02 7229 5388

Supporting Evidence

Applications to the Smart Water Mark are assessed on the basis of independent, verifiable evidence to justify claimed water savings submitted with each application. Applications that are not supported by this information will not be considered by the Expert Panel.

Independent means that the author or compiler of the evidence has no commercial interest in the sale or promotion of the product which is the subject of the application. Evidence can be derived from any method chosen by the applicant and could include case studies, laboratory testing and product or service appraisal by independent consultants or organisations. Results from international and Australian tests are acceptable provided that data is presented in English and uses metric units.

Specific guidelines for different types of products and services are prepared to advise applicants on the sorts of testing or evidence that might be acceptable. Applicants are not obliged to follow these guidelines and can present any evidence in support of their application provided that it is independent and verifiable.

Guideline 4. Pool Covers

General

Pool Covers

There is little doubt that a pool cover used in the correct way will reduce evaporation from a swimming pool and hence save water. There is a lot of evidence, however, that suggests that amount of water saved varies greatly from cover to cover, depending on factors including the thickness and type of the material, and way in which the cover is attached to the pool. The Expert Panel has considered these issues and established the following guidelines for pool cover applications.

Water Saving

As the main aim of the scheme is to reduce water use, applications must include a demonstration of the water saving potential of the product. Applicants must be able to demonstrate that the specific product that is the subject of the application has saved water. Acceptable evidence includes:

1. A test by any independent agency such as a consulting engineer, university, CSIRO, testing facility or any other testing agency which has no commercial interest in the product. There is a standard test, American Standards Test Methods: **E96/E96M-22** which has been specifically written to test the transmission of water vapour through a material. It is a relatively simple test that can be carried out by any competent testing laboratory. The standard states:"

"These test methods cover the determination of water vapor transmission (WVT) of materials through which the passage of water vapor may be of importance, such as paper, plastic films, other sheet materials, fiberboards, gypsum and plaster products, wood products, and plastics. The test methods are limited to specimens not over 11/ 4 in. (32 mm) in thickness except as provided in Section.... Two basic methods, the Desiccant Method and the Water Method, are provided for the measurement of permeance, and two variations include service conditions with one side wetted and service conditions with low humidity on one side and high humidity on the other. Agreement should not be expected between results obtained by different methods. The method should be selected that more nearly approaches the conditions of use."

The Panel believes that the Water Method is the most appropriate method to use when determining the water saving capabilities of pool covers and blankets.

2. Once the test has been done a product must be able to demonstrate minimum water savings of **80%** compared with the open water vessel which is used as a comparison in the test. This minimum will ensure that there is a better than even chance that normal use of the cover will result in some water savings.
3. A detailed case study which demonstrates that the installation of a cover resulted in water savings will also suffice. If a detailed case study is available then testing according to **ASTM E96M-22** is not necessary. The case study should detail water use (or loss) prior to the installation of the cover and water loss following installation of the cover. The results should be verified by an independent party.
4. The evidence must be directly applicable to the product which is the subject of the application. As an example the panel will not accept a case study which relates to another product sold, manufactured or distributed by the same company.

General information downloaded from websites, such as water authority websites, which state that pool covers can save water is acceptable. The evidence must relate specifically to the product that is the subject of the application.

If a product is made from material which is supplied by a third party and the material has been awarded a Mark, there must be clear documented evidence that the material is the same and that its water saving characteristics have not been altered in any way. In this case the product will still be the subject of a separate application fee and subject to separate licence fee because it is deemed to be a different product.

Fit for purpose

Pool covers should be fit for purpose and backed by an appropriate warranty and must be in the final form in which it is available to the public. It may be cut, shaped or modified for a particular installation but the material itself should be the same as in the application.

To demonstrate Fit for Purpose, you must provide an existing Fit for Purpose Certificate [Apply Now](#). If you do not have a current fit for Purpose Certificate. Smart Approved WaterMark will assess this at the time of application.

About Smart Approved WaterMark

Since 2004, SAWM has certified water efficient products and services. As a national scheme it delivers a common home and national approach and labelling scheme for consumers and retailers. For consumers, the certification scheme is designed to provide confidence that products and services bearing the label will help them save water around the garden. For the water industry, the scheme provides a national mechanism to identify water saving products and services; one piece of the demand management jigsaw. Certificate holders – licensees - gain the ability to use the Smart Approved WaterMark for marketing advantage.

In 2022 SAWM rebranded to The Water Conservancy (TWC). We are non for profit that is leading the way as in independent knowledge resource and advisory hub for education, facilitation and adoption of a more conscious and sustainable approach to water us in Australia. SAWM is one of the 5 programs offered by TWC to find out more please visit our TWC website: <https://thewaterconservancy.org/>