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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Securing Clean, Abundant Water for all Communities**

MADISON – During week three of Building Safety Month the Alliance for Regulatory Coordination joins the International Code Council in encouraging you to be aware of safeguarding our water resources.

Clean water is the world's most precious commodity. The World Health Organization estimates 844 million people lack basic drinking-water service. Building, plumbing and green codes help guard this precious commodity for future generations through proper construction, conservation and safe disposal.

Code officials are vigilant protectors of our water supply. Because of their dedicated service, you can turn on the tap in your home and draw sufficient, clean water. They take nothing for granted, so you can.

As a homeowner or renter, you need to pay attention to the water supply to your home even if your community offers water and sewage treatment. If there are faulty or no backflow protectors in your home, cross-contamination can happen even while residents are filling their backyard swimming pools, drawing some of the pool's chlorine into the home.

### **Water Efficiency**

Water conservation and efficiency has become increasingly important in recent years due to water scarcity, droughts and water contamination in many areas of the world.

In the United States, California droughts fostered water conservation rules, based in part on irrigation standards developed by the International Code Council. Regulations included using drought-tolerant plants on lawns for new homes with more than 500 square feet of landscaped area, and limiting turf grass to 25 percent of landscaping, down from a third.

The Code Council and the Residential Energy Services Network have partnered on a new water ratings standard, known as HERSH20, that builders can use in the U.S. to evaluate and market a

home's water usage efficiency. Real estate agents are beginning to take notice of the value of such water efficiency ratings, not just in California, but in other areas where potable water may be a concern. HERSH20 guidelines are currently being field tested by various national production builders.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) WaterSense Program is a major water efficiency initiative based in the U.S. This important initiative was developed to help consumers identify water efficient products that meet EPA's criteria for efficiency and performance. Since its creation in 2006, WaterSense has conserved more than 2.7 trillion gallons of water and saved American families \$63.8 billion in water and energy bills, according to the EPA. WaterSense has also helped reduce the amount of energy needed to heat, pump and treat water by 367 billion kilowatt hours, which is equivalent to a year's worth of power for more than 34.1 million U.S. homes.

*The [Alliance for Regulatory Coordination](#) is a consortium of 18 business, professional, trade and advocacy organizations involved in building design, construction and regulatory services in Wisconsin. The Alliance seeks regulatory services provided in the most efficient manner possible to effectively promote the health, safety and welfare of Wisconsin citizens and visitors.*

*The [International Code Council](#) is dedicated to developing model codes and standards used in the design, build and compliance process to construct safe, sustainable, affordable and resilient structures. Most U.S. communities and many global markets choose the International Codes.*