

# GreenPlumbers Workshops Debut in California

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SACRAMENTO, CALIF. -- The amount of water on planet Earth has not changed in the last two billion years – but in the last century, water use increased at twice the rate of the world population. The U.S. flushes 6.8 billion gallons of water down the toilet every day, while more than half of our states anticipate freshwater shortages in the next 10 years. These are just a few of the facts plumbers learned when they attended one of the workshops held in California this fall to introduce the new GreenPlumbers program.

The program, which originated in Australia in 2001, is giving plumbers a new image – and a new mission.

“Plumbers have long held their mission to be protecting the health of the country,” said Stephen Lehtonen, spokesperson for GreenPlumbersUSA. “Because of climate change and global warming, our new mission is to protect the resources of the planet by training plumbers to be advocates and educators in environmental protection and conservation.”

Lehtonen, who is also executive director of the California Plumbing-Heating-Cooling Contractors Association, facilitated a 15-year agreement that allows the enormously successful and effective GreenPlumbers training program of Australia to be implemented in the U.S.

“GreenPlumbers is an accreditation program that trains plumbers in water conservation and climate care issues,” Lehtonen said. “The program is designed to help save water and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.”

Intended as a comprehensive industry response to climate and water care issues, the program is open to all plumbers, regardless of affiliation or association membership.

GreenPlumbers has developed a five-course accreditation that totals 32 hours of training. The courses are Climate Care, Caring For Our Water, Solar Hot Water, Water-Efficient Technology, and Inspection Report Service. Training workshops debuted in California this fall.

The Australian model, upon which GreenPlumbersUSA is based, has been successful in reaching that goal. Since implementation of the program in 2001, more than 5,000 Green Plumbers have been accredited, representing more than 2,300 businesses throughout Australia. Water consumption in Australia has been reduced up to 50% from 1990 levels.

The goal for 2008 in the United States is to train at least 8,000 Green Plumbers. A GreenPlumbers accreditation license for contractors supports and protects the integrity of the brand.

“In the next 10 years we plan to train 15,000 green plumbers in California and 40,000 nationally,” Lehtonen said. “We want to make the training free and available to all plumbers.”

The GreenPlumbers Training and Accreditation program is run by the Plumbing, Heating, Cooling Contractors of California Education Foundation, a nonprofit 501(c)(3) corporation. While eligible for grants and donations, its primary workshop funding sources are government agencies, utilities and manufacturers.

Additional information is available at [www.greenplumbersusa.com](http://www.greenplumbersusa.com) or 888/929-6207.