



## Abstract

Title: New boost for Standardisation of dry toilets with CE –marking

Standardisation of dry toilets is not the first priority in sanitation work, when all those billions of people lack basic sanitation needs. But for the same reasons there are quality standards for freezers, cucumbers or windows, there should be one for dry toilets as well. When we move from the immediate relief of sanitation needs to a wide commercial market the need for standards becomes urgent. The standards bring:

- **Stability to the market**, “wild” entrepreneurs aiming for short-term profits will be eliminated and new products will be of better quality before release to the market.
- **Guarantee for the buyer**, the product meets at least minimum standards and is evaluated by third party.
- **Credibility for dry toilets** as a viable option to water systems that already are standardized.
- **Guidelines for product design**, helps to design the new products to already meet the standard values.
- **Unified terms for legislation, education and discussion**, e.g. no more composting toilets that don't actually composts.

At the same time, the standards should not be an obstacle for the innovation and product development or for the small enterprises to enter the market.

The standards are usually constructed on the request of manufacturers but at the moment, the manufacturers of dry toilets have not shown any interest in the subject. There exist standards only for low electricity dry toilets. The new EU directive (89/160/EC) for CE –marking of construction products has brought new prospects for the standardization of dry toilets. Although it concerns only EU the commercial pressure can trigger off standardization of dry toilets in countries outside EU as well. Once European CE –marked products come to the market, the consumer behaviour will guide other countries to establish standards.

The directive requires that all products installed inside houses have to be CE –marked so it concerns only dry toilets to be used inside houses The CE –marking is like a passport for the product. With it, the producer can assure that the product conforms with all the EU regulations and there is no need for national testing or approvals. CE – marking can be obtained if:

1. The product is proven to conform with the requirements of EN standard OR if there is no standard
2. The product is proven to conform with the requirement of the European Technical Approval Guideline (more flexible than standard) OR if there is no



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3. After application from the producer, the European Commission finds the product to fulfil the quality requirements

As there are no EN standards or European Technical Approval Guidelines, the option number three is the prevailing one. If there is enough interest in the market the Guideline or the Standard will be constructed. Currently, the CE –marking on the few dry toilets on the market are based on only the electricity standards, which is not in accordance with the directive.

The most difficult and controversial part of the CE –marking is the attestation of conformity. Should there be testing and if yes what kind of testing? Is constructional testing enough or should there be some kind of evaluation of the function? The CE –marking lists as general requirements mechanical strength, fire safety, health-, hygiene-, and environmental factors, operational safety and the consistency of these qualities. The benefit in the current situation is that in the lack of guidelines and standards the producer can suggest a way they will assure the product will comply with the previously mentioned general requirement. European Commission and the member countries will then comment the proposal and grant the right to use CE –marking after possible modifications.

When more manufacturers become interested in the CE –marking, the development of Standard or Guideline will be initiated. As CE –marking is mandatory in most of the EU countries; the standardization is more of a matter of time. We, the Dry Toilet Club of Finland, hope that it will rather be short than long.