



Information for suppliers and style guide for the New Zealand Water Efficiency Labelling Scheme



New Zealand Government

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New Zealand Government

The New Zealand Water Efficiency Labelling Scheme

The New Zealand Water Efficiency Labelling Scheme (WELS) is designed to provide consumers with clear information on the water consumption and water efficiency of new water-using products. The WELS provides standardised labelling at the point of sale.

The WELS will help consumers identify products that use less water and perform satisfactorily. For consumers, reduced water use has a number of benefits, particularly reduced hot water use and associated energy costs.

Purpose of this guide

This guide is designed to supplement the Consumer Information Standard (Water Efficiency) Regulations 2017 (the Regulations) under the Fair Trading Act 1986 and specific standards with information on what importers, manufacturers and retailers need to do to comply. This guide provides examples of all the WELS labels available including their dimensions, colours and the font used.

The Regulations refer to a number of technical standards, and it is essential these standards are read together with the Regulations and this guide for compliance purposes. This guide does not provide a legal interpretation of the Regulations. You are advised to seek your own legal advice if required.

Supplier and retailer responsibilities

New Zealand importers and manufacturers are responsible for ensuring any products they import or manufacture are tested and meet the information disclosure (labelling) requirements.

Retailers also have a role to play in ensuring products they display and supply comply with the labelling requirements. This includes WELS products for sale online. Anyone supplying or offering to supply a product covered by the Regulations must ensure products clearly display the label, that the label is legible, and that it is clear which product the label applies to.

Referenced standards

The Regulations are based on parts of the Australia/New Zealand standard AS/NZS 6400:2016, *Water efficient products – Rating and labelling*, which in turn references parts of other Australian and New Zealand standards. These standards are not included in this guide as there is a fee to obtain them to cover the cost in preparing and updating them.

To access and purchase copies of AS/NZS 6400:2016 or other standards please go to www.standards.govt.nz.

Coverage of the Regulations

The Regulations apply to the supply, or offers to supply – both in shops and online – of six classes of water-using equipment (WELS products):

- clothes washing machines
- dishwashers
- lavatory equipment
- showers
- tap equipment
- urinal equipment (except waterless urinals).

The scheme does not apply to second-hand goods, or products that are for export and that will not be sold in New Zealand or Australia.

Implementation

The WELS first came into effect on 1 April 2010. It was created by the introduction of the Consumer Information Standard (Water Efficiency) Regulations 2010 under the Fair Trading Act 1986.

The 2010 regulations were then replaced by the Consumer Information Standard (Water Efficiency) Regulations 2017, which required the use of a new label format.

The 2017 Regulations allowed for a transition period for suppliers to transition from the 2010 label format to the 2017 format. All products supplied, displayed for supply, or offered for supply on the internet must comply with the Regulations from 1 October 2019.

Use of Australian labels

Products carrying Australian WELS labels are already on the New Zealand market. The New Zealand Regulations allow this to continue because the testing, rating and information provided by the labels is essentially the same.

Under the Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition Arrangement (TTMRA) products that are physically and legally able to be sold in New Zealand can be sold in Australia, regardless of any sales-related requirements, and vice versa. This means products with the New Zealand WELS label being sent from New Zealand to Australia can legally be sold there.

New Zealand's Regulations enable products that fully comply with AS/NZS 6400:2016 to be sold in New Zealand regardless of their origin. For example, a dishwasher made in Thailand that has Australian WELS registration and displays the Australian WELS label can be shipped directly from Thailand to New Zealand and legally sold in New Zealand. This is not provided for under the Australian WELS.

Registration

For the Australian WELS system, products must be registered to comply and suppliers are charged a fee. Registered products are listed in an online comparative database.

In the New Zealand WELS system, there is no registration, either for products or suppliers. An online comparative database of registered products is not part of the New Zealand WELS system. To download the free New Zealand WELS label artwork, suppliers simply need to go to <https://wels.brandkit.io> and create a free account online. The account information provided is for monitoring label usage and not ‘registration’. Therefore, it should not be stated or implied that products or suppliers are ‘registered’ under the New Zealand WELS system.

Product classes

Each of the six product classes covered by the Regulations is defined in AS/NZS 6400:2016. Each class is further defined by reference to one or more of the additional class-specific standards. The product classes are outlined below.

Clothes washing machines and dishwashers

Essentially, all washing machines and dishwashers that require or have an energy-rating label will also need a WELS label.

Clothes washing machines intended for household or similar use, as specified in AS/NZS 2040.2, and dishwashers intended for household or similar use, as specified in AS/NZS 2007.2, are covered by the Regulations.

Showers

Only showers intended for ‘personal bathing’ as specified in AS/NZS 3662 are covered by the Regulations. Safety showers or emergency deluge showers, for example, are specifically excluded. A shower normally consists of a shower head (or shower rose) plus any associated components sold with it, such as hoses and a flow controller.

If two or more conventional shower heads are intended to be installed together in one shower cabinet, they should be rated for their total flow and labelled accordingly.

Tap equipment

Taps are defined by their intended uses. Any tap or tap outlet that is for use over a basin, ablution trough, kitchen sink or laundry tub is covered by the Regulations. Items that might be described as mixers, or using other terminology but which have the function of a tap, are covered by the Regulations if they are intended for possible use in these four types of application. Taps that are solely for use over a bath are not covered by the Regulations because the flow rate of a bath tap does not affect the amount of water used.

Lavatory equipment

Lavatory equipment comprises toilet (WC) pans and flushing devices (flushing valve or cistern). These are specified in AS 1172.1 and AS 1172.2. Lavatory equipment may be supplied as a set ('toilet suite') or as individual components that can be installed in various combinations. For the purposes of the Regulations, lavatory equipment may relate to individual components or complete toilet suites.

Urinal equipment

Urinal equipment includes the urinal and flushing mechanism (being a flushing valve or a cistern) as specified in AS 3982.

The urinal may be a continuous wall, individual stall or individual wall-hung type. The flushing mechanism may also be controlled in various ways. Urinal equipment may be supplied as a urinal suite or as components that can be installed in various combinations. Waterless urinals are not covered by the Regulations.

Testing requirements

The Regulations require the information for the WELS labels be determined in accordance with specified subclauses of AS/NZS 6400:2016. These subclauses also list a number of test procedures and performance requirements which are located in the product-specific standards. These standards specify the testing needed to produce the required information.

The product standards include performance tests, so that products tested for water efficiency will also be tested for functionality. This means labels provide consumers with information about both water efficiency and fitness for purpose.

If a product fails to meet any of the listed performance requirements, it must be given a zero-star rating. It is not necessary to carry out any further tests once it is clear the product will be zero rated.

The WELS scheme only mandates compliance with those requirements that are specified in the Regulations – full compliance with each of the product-specific standards is not necessary to rate and label a product.

The test procedures for the New Zealand WELS have been aligned with the current Australian WELS. Products that comply with Australian WELS requirements (ie, fully comply with AS/NZS 6400:2016) will comply with the New Zealand WELS requirements.

Locating an accredited laboratory for testing

The New Zealand Regulations do not specify who can carry out testing; however, it is recommended suppliers use a laboratory that can provide confidence in the results, for example has IANZ (International Accreditation New Zealand) or equivalent accreditation for the relevant testing. IANZ accreditation or equivalent is required for test reports to be accepted for registration under the Australian scheme.

You can search for accredited laboratories in New Zealand through the [IANZ website](#). Accredited laboratories in Australia are listed on the [Australian WELS website](#) and the [Joint Accreditation System of Australia and New Zealand website](#).

Clothes washing machines and dishwashers

All washing machines and dishwashers, intended for household or similar purposes that are sold in New Zealand already need to comply with the Energy Efficiency (Energy Using Products) Regulations 2002. WELS testing essentially piggybacks off that for the energy-rating regime.

Two of the performance tests specified in AS/NZS 6400:2016 are optional because they do not affect the water consumption of the appliances. These tests are:

- for clothes washing machines, the water extraction index test, which assesses the effectiveness of the machine's spin cycle or equivalent in removing water from the wet clothes
- for dishwashers, the drying index which assesses the effectiveness of the machine at drying the clean dishes.

The Regulations state the water consumption must be calculated in accordance with subclauses 9.2 (for clothes washing machines) and 8.2 (for dishwashers) of AS/NZS 6400:2016. This means water consumption must be determined when testing the same machine-operating programme (and any other relevant conditions) used for the energy consumption and energy rating. The appliances must also meet the performance requirements to receive a rating greater than zero.

The details of the testing procedures are specified in AS/NZ 2040.2 (for clothes washing machines) and AS/NZS 2007.2 (for dishwashers).

Lavatory equipment

The Regulations refer to subclauses 6.4.2 of AS/NZS 6400:2016, which specify the performance and water consumption tests that lavatory equipment must undergo.

If the results of the testing show the lavatory equipment has a water consumption (flush discharge volume for single flush and average flush volume for dual flush) of more than 5.5 litres, the product must be zero rated. This means both single flush toilets with a flush volume greater than 5.5 litres, and dual flush toilets with an average flush volume greater than 5.5 litres, receive a zero rating. Under the Australian WELS, these same products cannot be labelled nor legally sold. The actual details of the performance requirements, and the testing procedures to determine them, are listed in the product-specific standards AS 1172.2 and AS1172.1.

For lavatory equipment, the water consumption depends on the type of cistern. For single flush systems, the flush volume equals the water consumption because that is the only option. For dual flush systems, the water consumption is calculated as the average of one full flush and four reduced flushes. The label provides for all three flush volumes to be provided and this must be done for dual flush models. Single flush models need to list zero for the half-flush value.

The standards also provide some guidance on which components need to be tested individually or in combination, and nomination of other components that must be installed with them.

Showers

The Regulations refer to subclauses 3.4 of AS/NZS 6400:2016 which specify the performance and water consumption tests that showers must undergo.

The details of the testing procedures are specified in AS 3662 *Performance of showers for bathing*. These tests relate to effectiveness and function (eg, flow rate, spray angle, temperature drop, watertightness and endurance) of the shower.

Some showers can be used in both mains pressure and low pressure applications. For example, showers may be supplied with a flow restrictor that should be installed for mains pressure use and left out for low pressure use. A shower like this can display labels for both pressure applications so long as it has been tested and rated for each application. Advice on use of the flow restrictor, and installation instructions, must also be provided when the product is supplied.

A shower head that is supplied as a stand-alone product may be tested and rated on its own, and the flow controller endurance test is not relevant. If a shower head is supplied with a flow controller or any other components that could affect the flow performance, it must be assembled with those components and according to the manufacturer's instructions for the flow-rate test.

AS/NZS 6400:2016 sets out a 'not star rated' category for showers that meet the 4-Star water consumption limit but do not meet spray force and/or coverage tests. Showers that are not star rated must be displayed with a 'not star rated' label.

Tap equipment

The requirements for taps are similar to those for showers. The Regulations refer to subclauses 4.4 of AS/NZS 6400:2016 which specify the performance and water consumption tests taps must undergo.

The details of the testing procedures are set out in AS/NZS 3718 *Water supply – Tap ware*. These relate to effectiveness and function (eg, hydraulic strength, endurance, watertightness, torque, flow rate).

Urinal equipment

The Regulations refer to subclauses 7.4 of AS/NZS 6400:2016 which specify the performance and water consumption tests that urinal equipment must undergo.

The details of the testing procedures required for urinals (ie, the receptacle part, excluding the flushing control mechanism) are set out in AS/NZS 3982 *Urinals*. These relate to effectiveness and function (eg, discharge, flushing, splash tests, watertightness, hydraulic strength or endurance).

NOTE: AS/NZS 3500.1 specifies that the quantity of water discharged for sanitary flushing should be not more than 2.5 litres for each single stall or each 600 mm length of continuous urinal wall.

As for lavatory equipment, components may be tested individually or in combination, and where there is a need to nominate other components that must be installed with them.

Determining star ratings

The star rating for WELS labels must be calculated in accordance with AS/NZS 6400:2016.

Failure to meet any of the performance requirements specified for the product will result in an automatic zero rating regardless of the product's water consumption.

For clothes washing machines and dishwashers, half-star ratings are included so there are 12 possible ratings for these products – zero if they fail a performance requirement or have more than a base level of water consumption, then one star, one and a half, two, and so on up to the maximum of six stars.

There are no half-star ratings for showers, tap equipment, lavatory equipment or urinal equipment.

Showers are the only product class that are not to be offered the full range of possible star ratings at this time. Five- and six-star ratings will be provided for in the AS/NZS 6400:2016 once the performance tests for very low-flow showers have been developed.

Additional information – ancillary components
Where lavatory, urinal and tap equipment, and showers, require an ancillary component or components to achieve their stated rating, they must be supplied with additional information that sets out what these components are and instructions for their installation or assembly.

For example, this applies to showers that can be used on either mains or low/unequal water supply systems with the installation, or not, of a flow restrictor. The product must be supplied

with additional information stating where and how the flow restrictor must be installed. If the shower had both a high and low/unequal water-rating label, then it should also be supplied with the flow restrictor. In the case of lavatory and urinal equipment components in supplier-nominated combinations, information must be supplied about what ancillary component(s) are required to achieve the stated rating and any necessary assembly/installation instructions.

Compliance and enforcement

Manufacturers, importers and retailers of WELS products in New Zealand have responsibilities under the WELS Regulations.

The Commerce Commission is responsible for enforcement of Consumer Information Standard Regulations under the Fair Trading Act 1986, including the WELS Regulations. Offences under the Fair Trading Act may in relation to Consumer Information Standards attract fines of up to \$30,000 for a company and \$10,000 for an individual per offence.

Anyone, including consumers and competitors, can inform the Commerce Commission if they suspect breaches. The Fair Trading Act also enables individuals to take prosecutions through the courts for suspected breaches of the Regulations.

Labelling

Label design

The WELS label displays two main pieces of information:

- a star rating (out of six) indicating relative water efficiency
- a water consumption or water flow figure.

Note that while the dimensions, font and colour scheme of the New Zealand labels are the same as the Australian labels (as specified in the Australian/New Zealand Standard AS/NZS 6400:2016 – the Standard), the New Zealand WELS labels differ slightly.

For more information about the Water Efficiency Labelling Scheme and the Regulations please visit the [Ministry for the Environment website](#).

Labelling requirements

The Regulations have different labelling provisions depending on the product type, whether it is unpackaged or packaged, and special provisions for items offered for supply online.

Schedule 2 of the Regulations specify the information required and the form a WELS label must follow. Product labels must include the following:

- brand name
- model identifier
- star rating
- water consumption
- rated load capacity (for clothes washing machines)
- rated capacity (for dishwashers)
- stated wash programme (for clothes washing machines and dishwashers).

Schedule 3 of the Regulations sets out labelling options for each product class. The information must be displayed in a way that is easily readable and clearly visible and attributable to the equipment when the products are on display for sale or physically on display for promotional purposes. The options are outlined in Table 1.

There are different-sized labels specified to facilitate use on larger and smaller products and packaging, and together with the energy-rating label. There is a separate warning label design for zero-rated products and not star rated products (for showers).

Table 1: Summary of labelling requirements by product class

Equipment	Unpackaged	Packaged	Websites
Clothes washing machines	Unpackaged clothes washing machines and dishwashers must either carry their WELS label on the product itself or on both sides of a swing tag affixed to the product.	If the product is packaged, the WELS label for that product must be displayed on the packaging.	For products offered for sale online, either a reproduction of the product's WELS label must be displayed or, text information may be used which:
Dishwashers			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • for products with one or more stars includes the phrase 'water efficiency' together with the star rating and the phrase 'water consumption' together with the water consumption • together with the water consumption • for products with a zero star rating includes the phrases 'WATER WARNING' and 'NOT WATER EFFICIENT when tested in accordance with AS/NZS 6400:2016'.
Lavatories	The WELS label for these products must either:		
Showers			
Taps			
Urinals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be on the product itself, or • be on both sides of a swing tag affixed to the product, or • be placed adjacent to the equipment on a display for the equipment, or • be text information which: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - for products with one or more stars includes the phrase 'water efficiency' together with the star rating and the phrase 'water consumption' together with the water consumption - for products with a zero star rating includes the phrases 'WATER WARNING' and 'NOT WATER EFFICIENT when tested in accordance with AS/NZS 6400:2016'. 		
			The stated wash programme and rated load capacity/ rated capacity for clothes washing machines and dishwashers must also be displayed online.

How to access the labels

The label artwork can be downloaded from <https://wels.brandkit.io>. The artwork files are supplied in editable PDF, INDD and IDML formats in the spot colours, dimensions and font specified in the Regulations. The style guide (available online at <https://wels.brandkit.io>) has a step-by-step guide to downloading the files and examples of all the label types with their dimensions and font point sizes. Examples of all the label types are also included in this guide.

The label files need to be opened in a graphics programme such as Adobe Illustrator or InDesign to enter the variable data (eg, brand, model, water consumption). This is probably best done by a professional designer or the prepress department of a printer. Once the variable data has been entered, the labels can be prepared either for print or for online use in brochures, advertisements and so on.

Colour

The colour palette for the labels is as specified by the Australian/New Zealand Standard AS/NZS 6400:2016 in Pantone colours, and is as follows:

Pantone 299	CMYK 79/9/0/0	RGB 0/163/224	HTML 00A3E0
Pantone 290	CMYK 25/1/0/0	RGB 185/217/235	HTML B9D9EB
Pantone Warm Red	CMYK 0/83/81/0	RGB 249/66/58	HTML F9423A
Process Black	CMYK 0/0/0/100	RGB 0/0/0	HTML 000000

The labels are intended to be printed on a white background. Pantone White is to be used if labels are printed on coloured background.

For digital printing, the CMYK (Cyan, Magenta, Yellow and Black) breakdown of the Pantone colours may be helpful. However, this is not necessary as the label artwork has been set up in spot colours to correctly convert to CMYK for digital printing.

Monochrome (eg, black and white labels) are only acceptable when the label is fixed to packaging or displayed in specifications, brochures, magazines and websites and the rest of the packaging, or specifications, brochures, magazines and websites are also printed in monochrome. Monochrome labels shall remain faithful to the design of the label and the message of the label shall remain clear and unambiguous.

Fonts

The font used in WELS labels must be Gill Sans, Humanist 521 or Hammersmith. The preferred font is Gill Sans as illustrated in the sample labels. Only one font shall be used on a label.

Gill Sans Regular

AaBbCcDdEeFfGgHhIiJj
KkLlMmNnOoPpQqRrSs
TtUuVvWwXxYyZz
1234567890

Gill Sans Bold

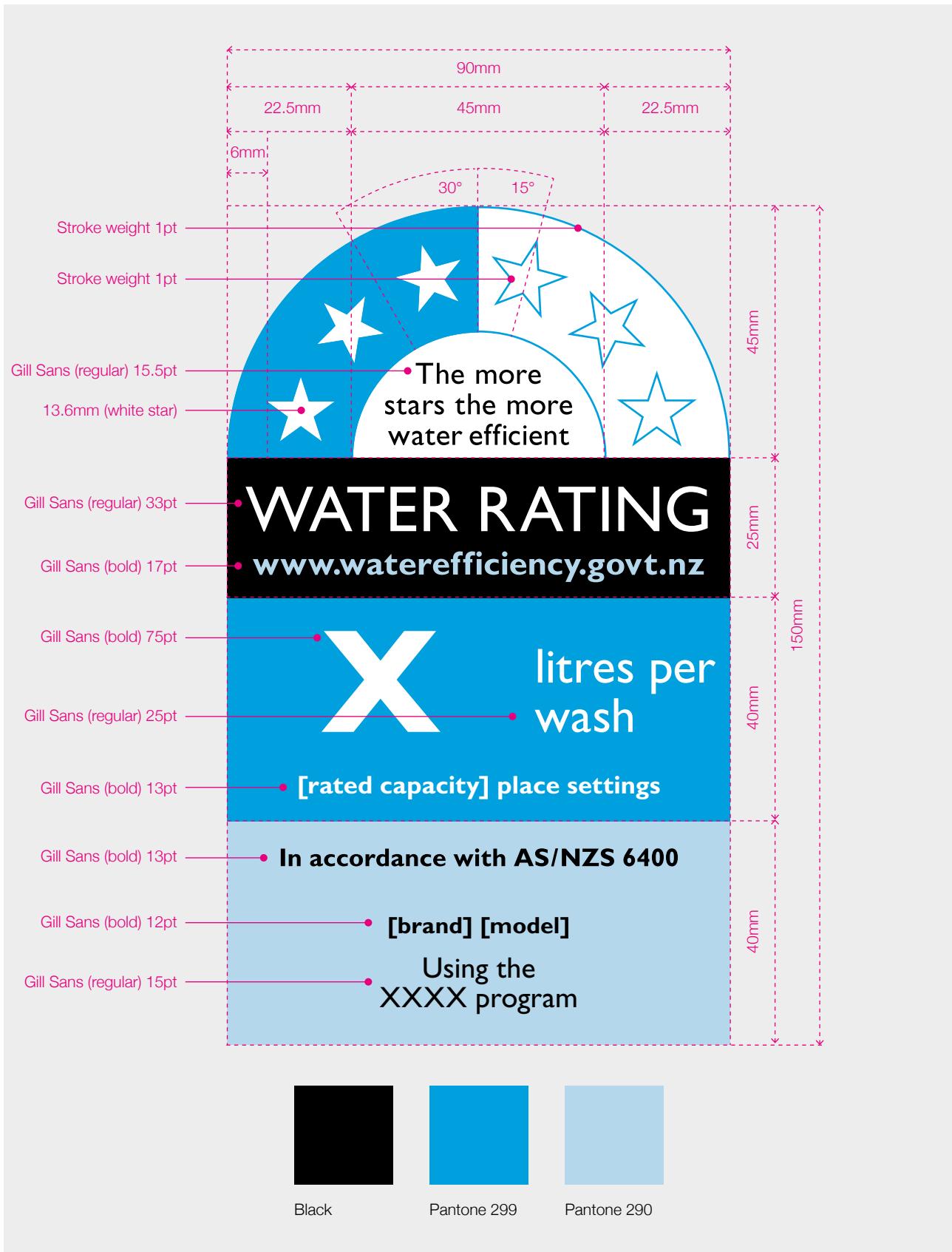
**AaBbCcDdEeFfGgHhIiJj
KkLlMmNnOoPpQqRrSs
TtUuVvWwXxYyZz
1234567890**

Size

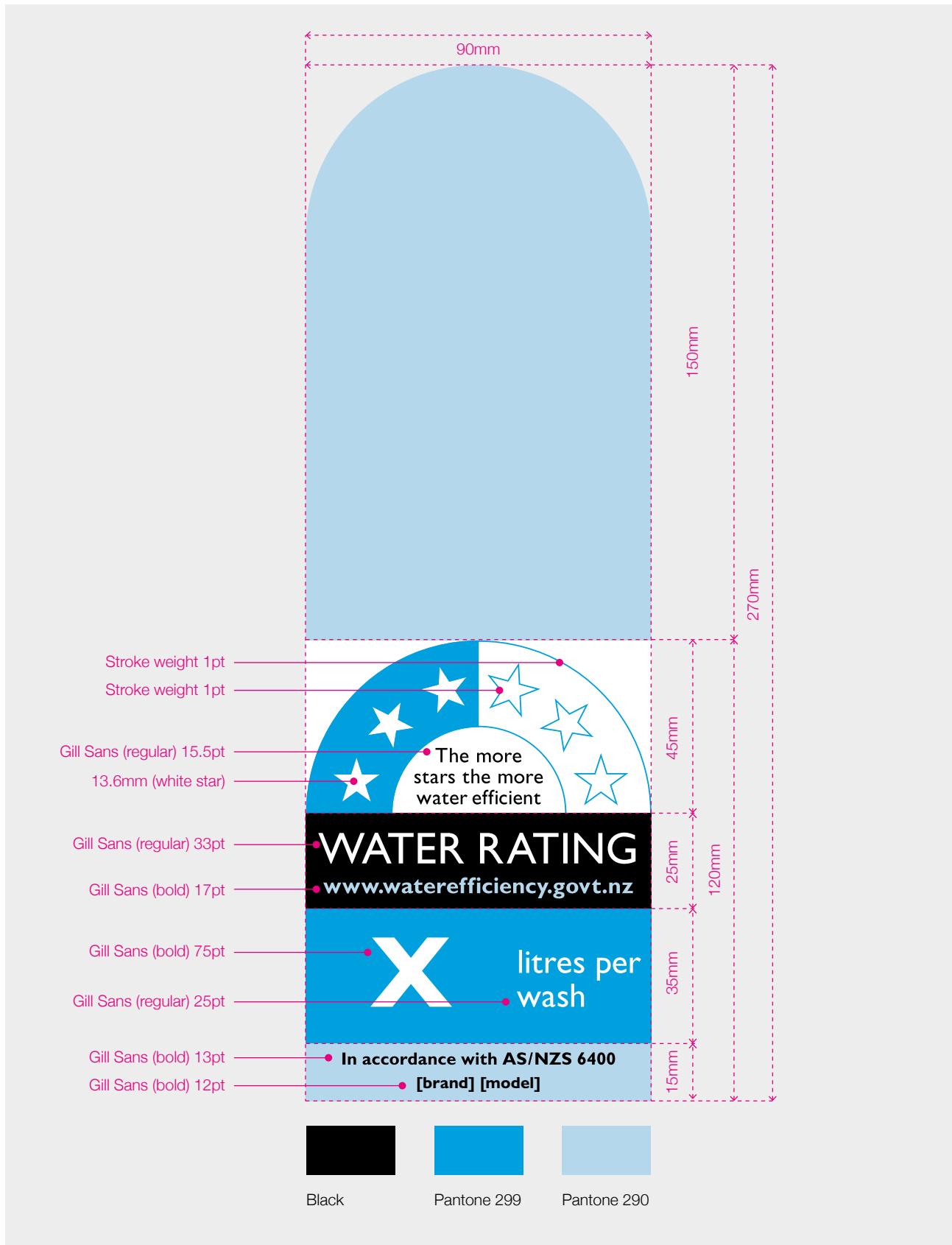
For products other than whitegoods, the WELS label may be scaled proportionally, between 30mm and 150mm in height, while maintaining the correct aspect ratio, and complying with the requirements of Sections 3 to 7 of the Standard.

Example labels start overleaf →

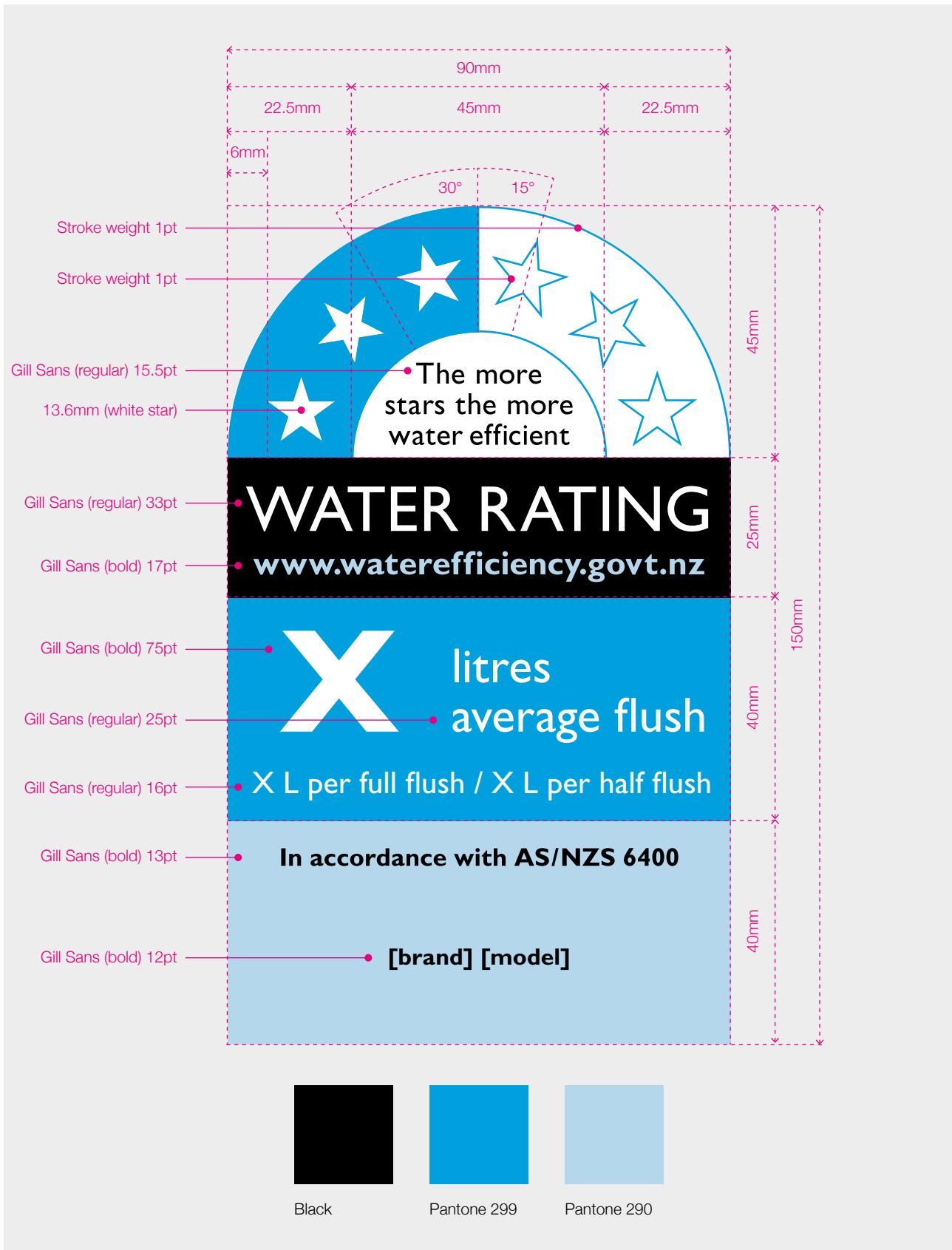
Dishwasher



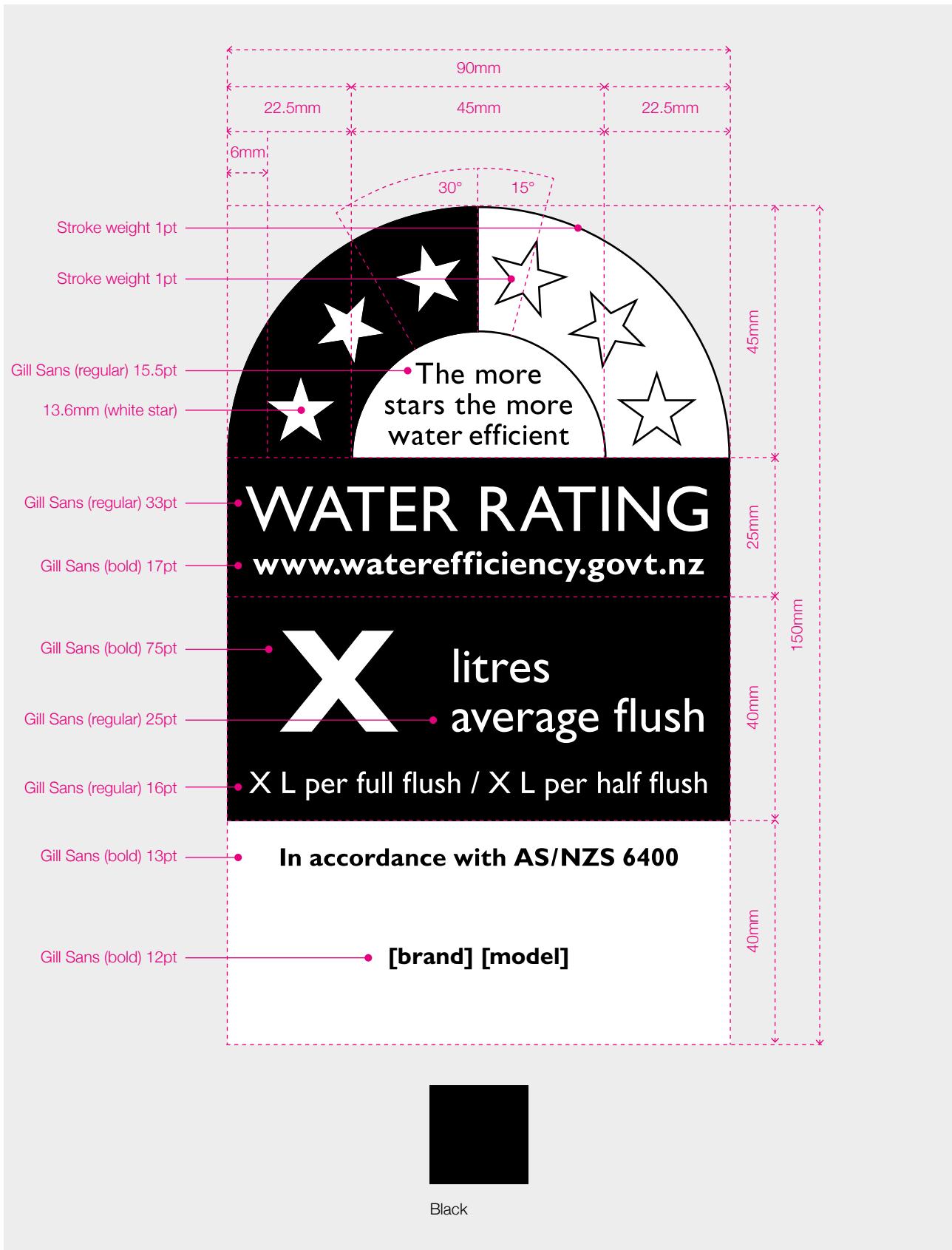
Dishwasher combo



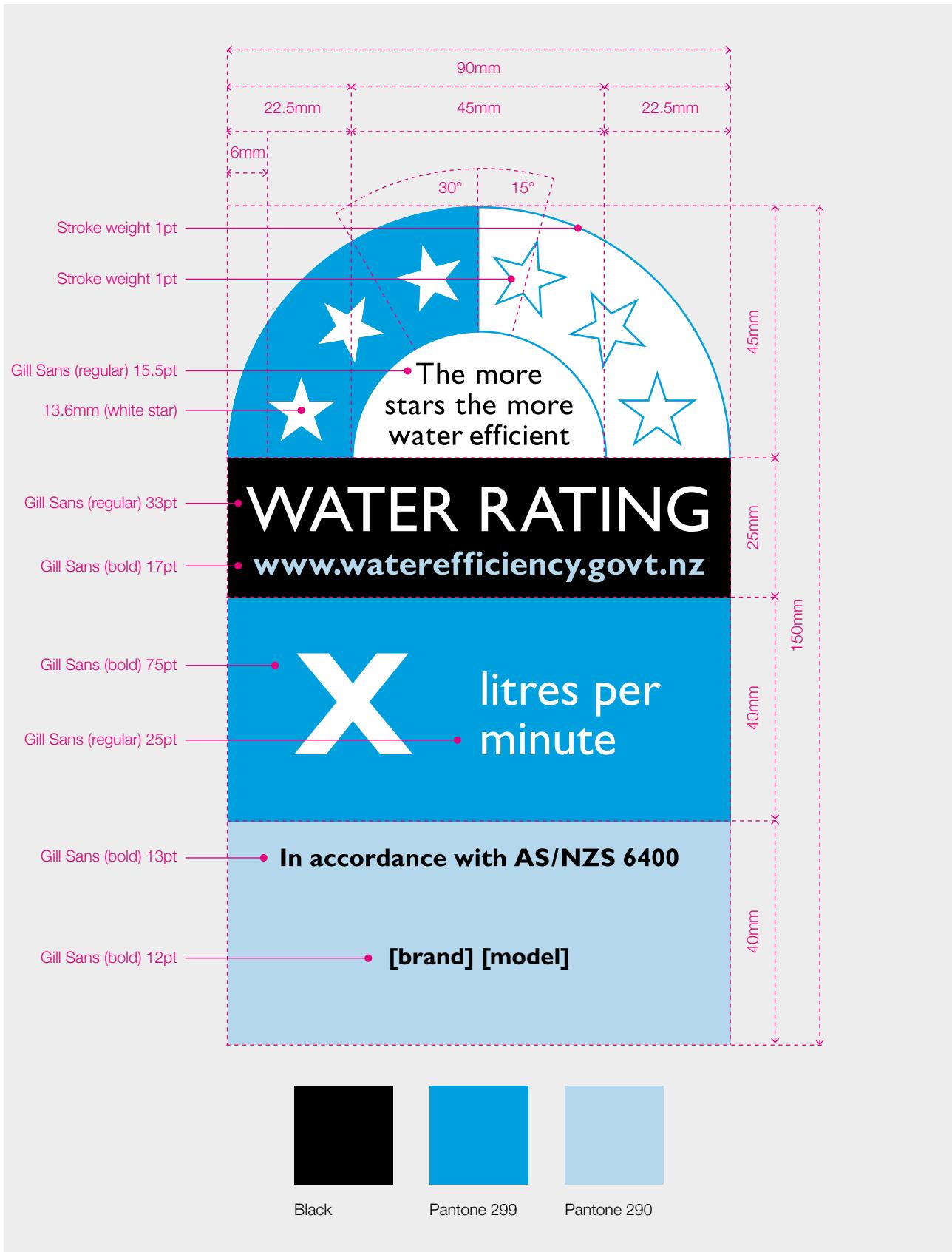
Lavatories



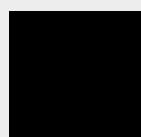
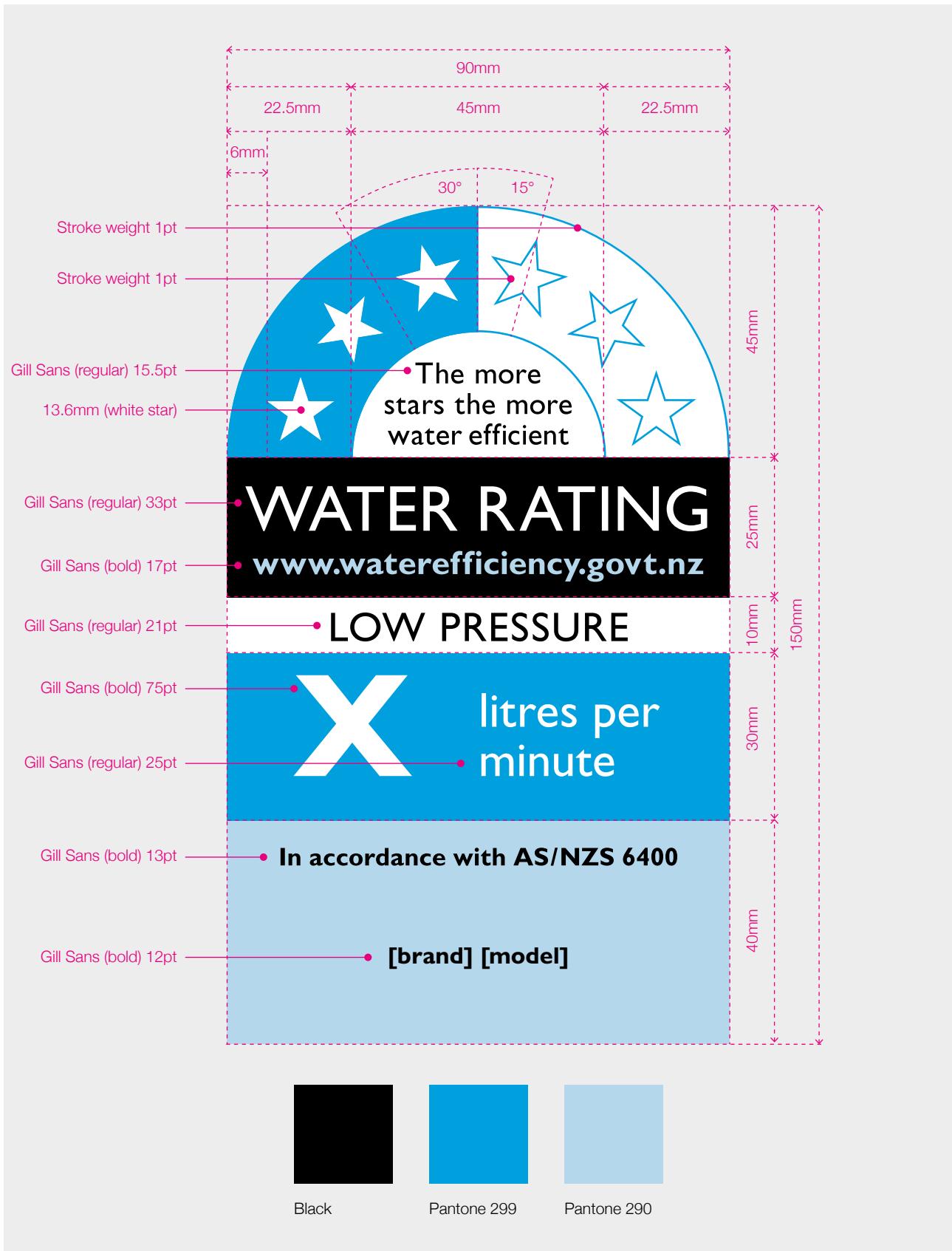
Lavatories Mono



Shower High-Pressure



Shower Low-Pressure



Black

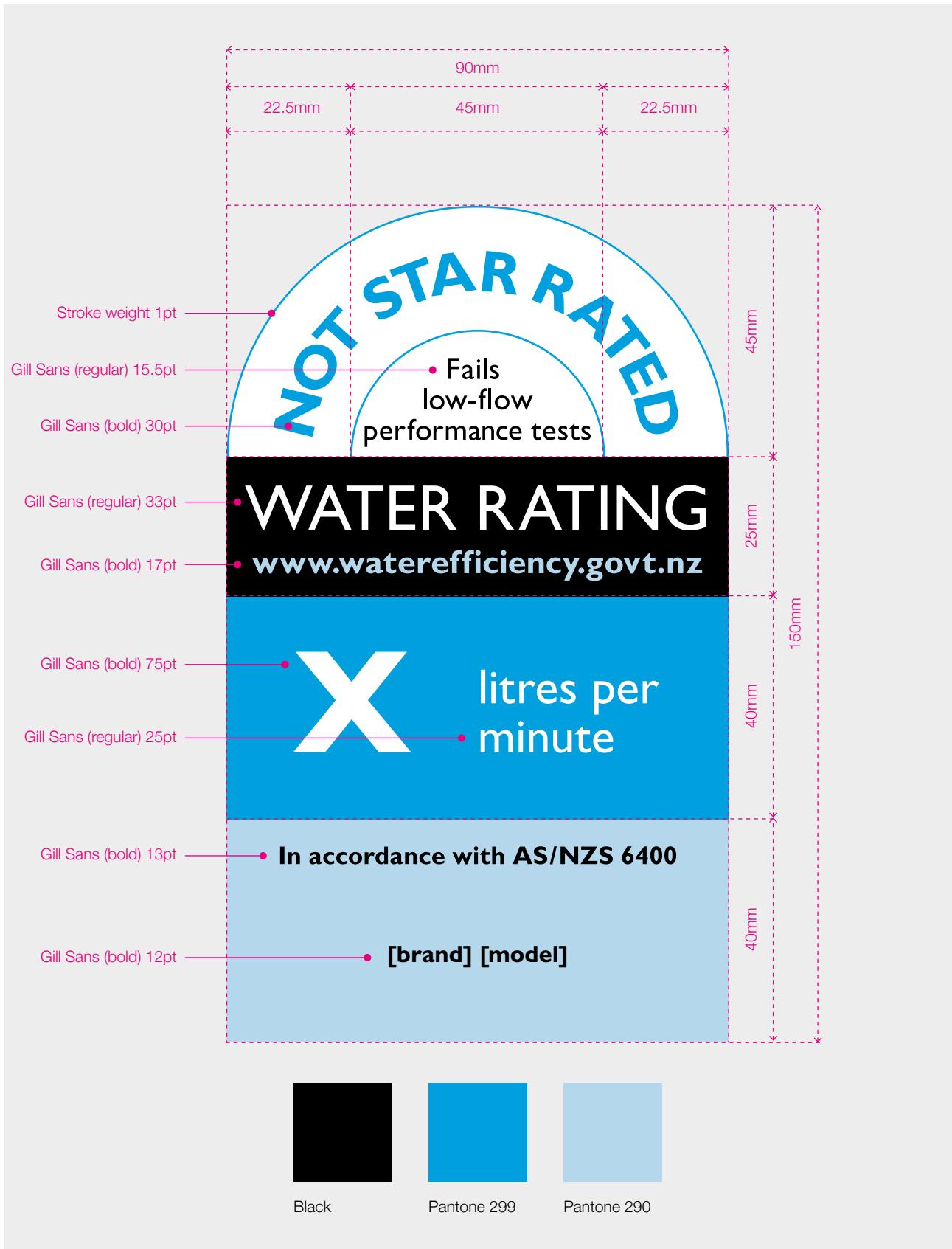


Pantone 299

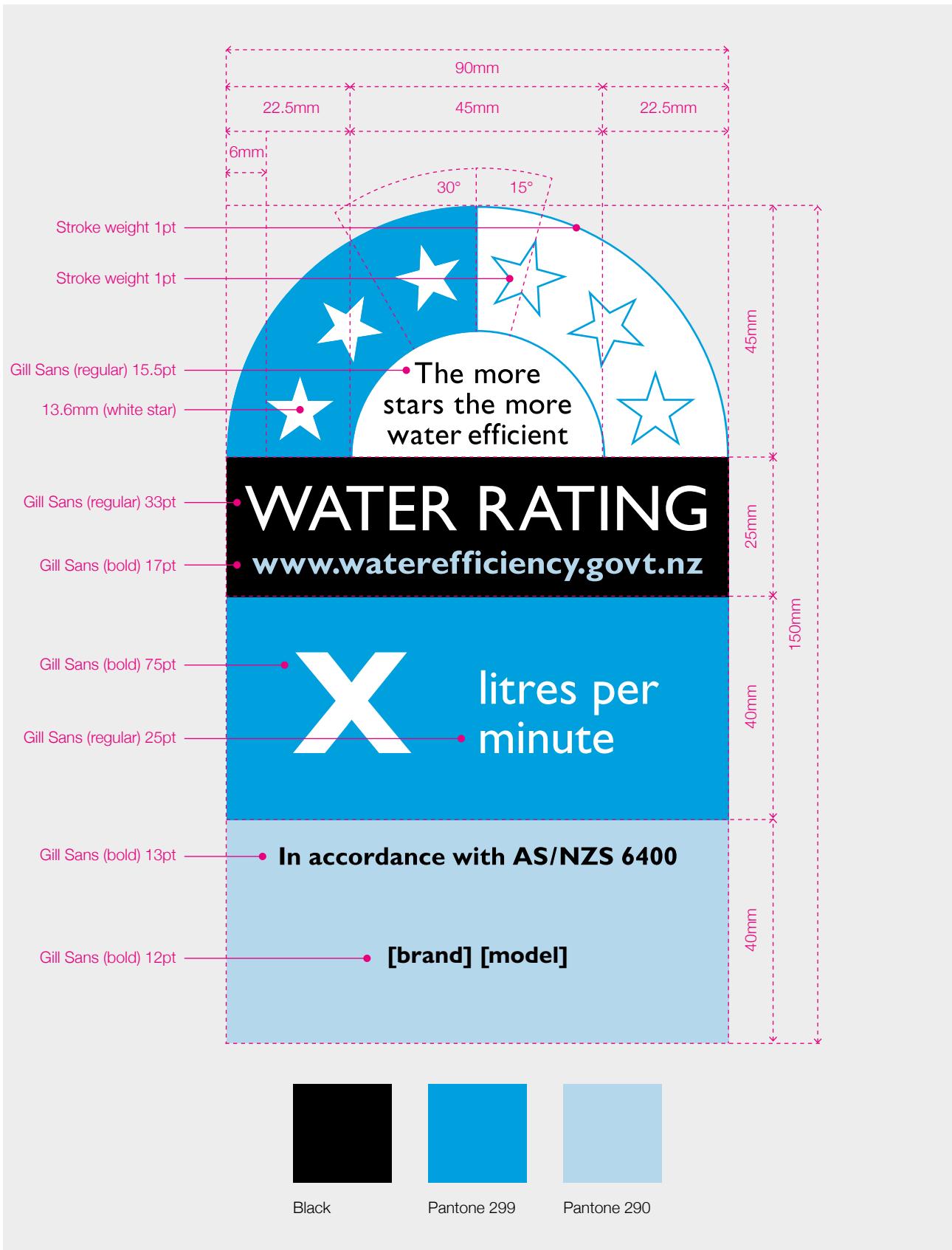


Pantone 290

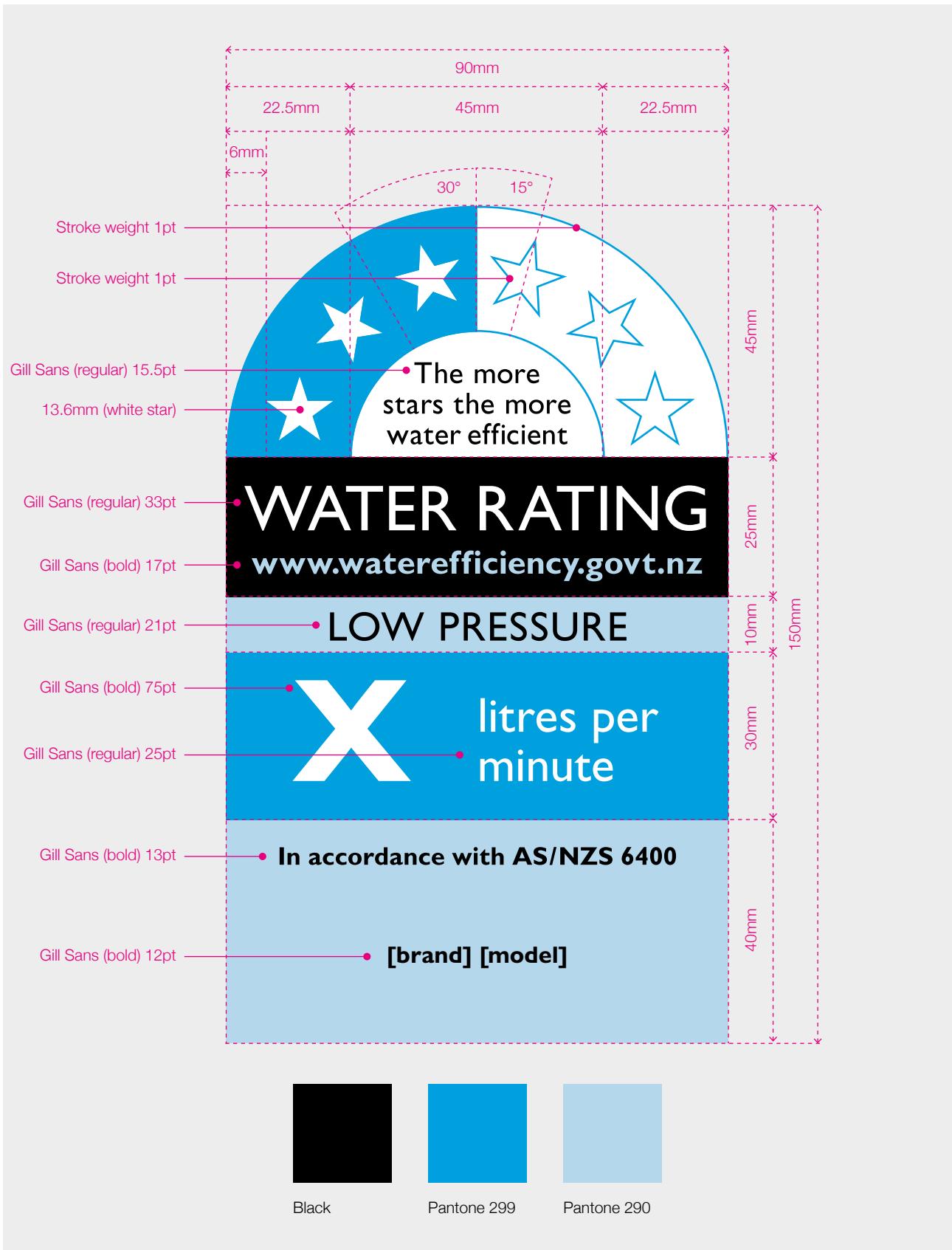
Shower Not Star Rated



Tap High-Pressure



Tap Low-Pressure



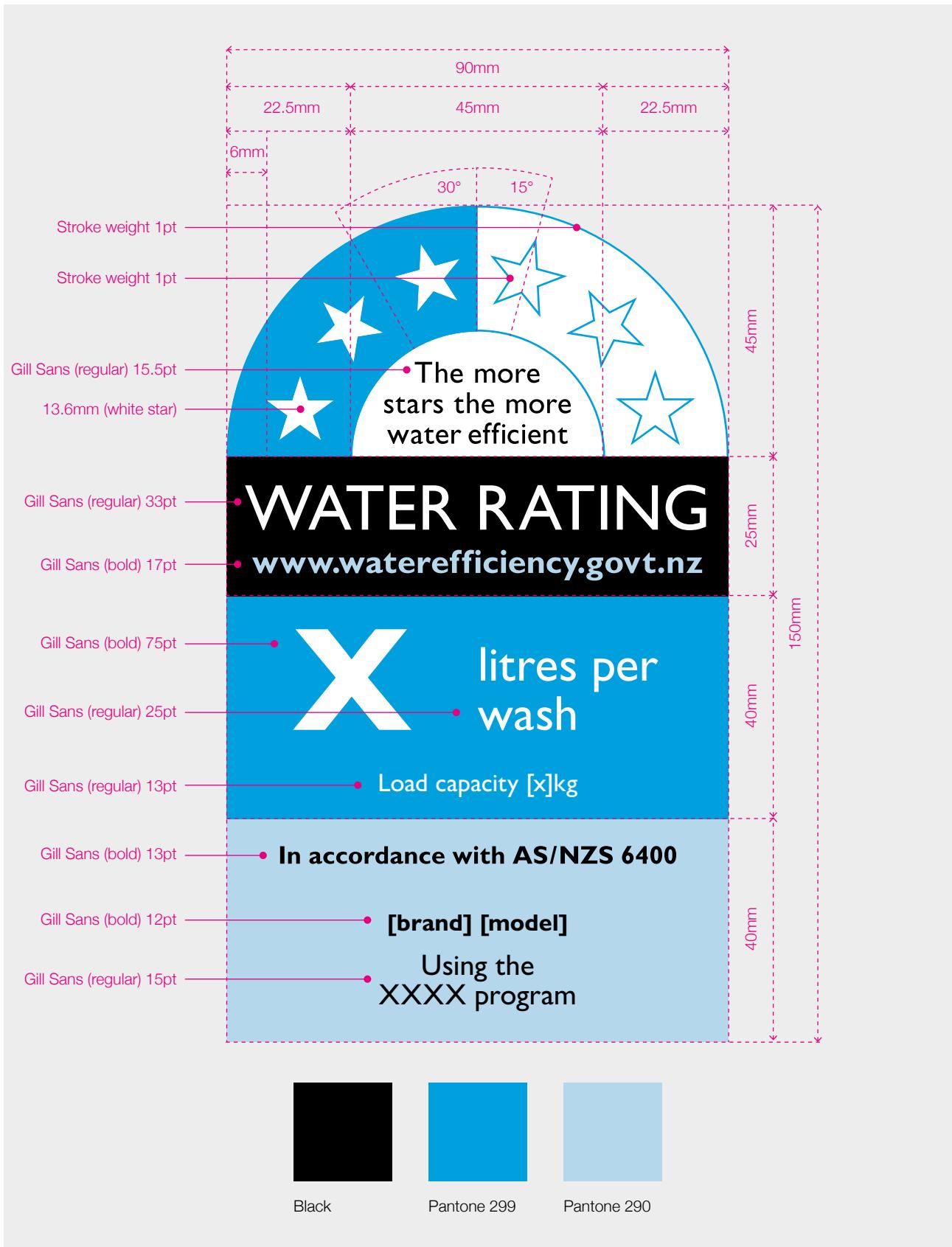
Urinals



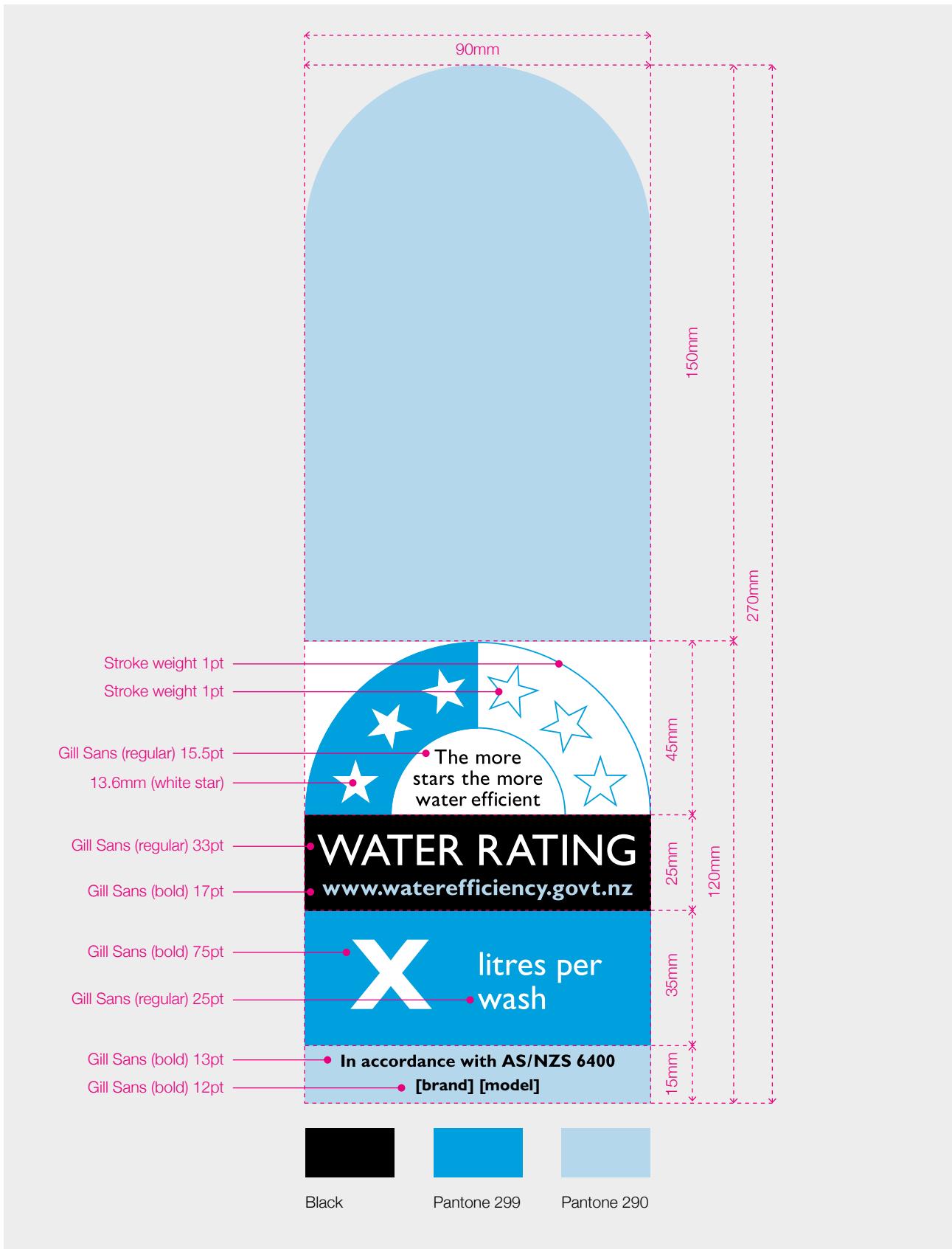
Urinals Zero Star Rated



Washing Machine



Washing Machine Combo





The more
stars the better

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