



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

OFFICE OF
AIR AND RADIATION

May 5, 2011

Dear ENERGY STAR® Stakeholder,

In October 2010, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released a proposal to pilot a new ENERGY STAR program element to identify and advance highly efficient products in the marketplace (“top tier”). The goal of this new effort – an extension of the ENERGY STAR brand – is to drive more energy-efficient products into the market more quickly. The proposal was informed by our commitment to maintain the credibility and value of ENERGY STAR to the general public while investigating opportunities to do more with this successful program.

In March 2011, EPA distributed for comment proposed 2011 recognition criteria for seven product categories: Clothes Washers, Air-source Heat Pumps, Central Air Conditioners, Furnaces, Geothermal Heat Pumps, Refrigerator-freezers, and Televisions. We have carefully reviewed stakeholder comments on these proposals and are now, with this letter, sharing final recognition criteria, along with instructions for obtaining recognition in 2011.

EPA thanks the nearly 40 individuals and stakeholder groups that submitted comments on both the program overall and proposed product recognition criteria. EPA appreciates the constructive input provided and has given careful consideration to a range of suggestions encouraging adjustments to the criteria to allow a broader selection of recognized products and improved harmonization with existing programs. In considering these comments, the Agency sought to balance the interests expressed with the fundamental principles of this pilot program. In particular, criteria must recognize truly exceptional efficiency performance. ENERGY STAR qualified products recognized as “most efficient” must represent more than an incremental improvement in energy efficiency. They must demonstrate efficiency performance that is truly exceptional, inspirational, or leading edge – consistent with the interests of environmentally-motivated consumers and early adopters. Additionally, in designing this pilot, the EPA committed to the concept that recognition may not be available for all configurations or sizes. Given the role Most Efficient recognition is intended to play relative to the ENERGY STAR label and given the target audience, it is not the goal of the program to ensure that there are qualifying models in all configurations or sizes. As such, the recognition criteria may be established at levels where extra-large products, or those with more energy-intensive configurations or features, are unable to achieve recognition.

That said, EPA did conclude that some amount of adjustment was appropriate, recognizing the opportunity provided by this pilot year to test and refine our approach.

- The maximum annual energy criterion for refrigerator-freezers has been changed from 403 to 422 kWh/year, enabling a set of very efficient, slightly larger models to also be eligible for recognition.
- For clothes washers, a separate category – washers with volume of 2.5 cubic feet or smaller – has been established with criteria set at $MEF \geq 2.3$ and $WF \leq 4.5$. In addition, the water factor criterion for the mid to large washers has been relaxed slightly, enabling additional clothes washers to be eligible.
- To address the fact that the proposed HVAC requirements did not allow for complete systems to earn recognition, EPA has adjusted some of the HVAC criteria. In addition, in response to

requests for greater clarity regarding the definition for communications and diagnostics, EPA has, with input from stakeholders, refined the definition.

- Finally, the criteria for smaller televisions screen sizes have been modified slightly, increasing the number of eligible inherently less energy-intensive, smaller TVs.

EPA was also asked to consider additional product categories, such as windows, lighting and boilers. Should the program move forward, following evaluation of the 2011 pilot program, EPA will potentially select additional product types and develop recognition criteria that will be shared with stakeholders for comment. In addition, concern was expressed regarding potential consumer confusion caused by this pilot program, as well as a possible negative impact on the ENERGY STAR program. EPA shares commenters' interest in ensuring clear messaging to consumers regarding the 2011 pilot program and its relationship to the ENERGY STAR program. While implementing this pilot program, EPA will maintain its investment in the ENERGY STAR program and the important role the Agency plays with a wide range of partners in helping consumers find efficient products.

FINAL PILOT 2011 RECOGNITION CRITERIA

The final recognition requirements for 2011 are summarized in the table below. In addition to meeting these performance requirements, products must be certified as ENERGY STAR by an EPA-recognized Certification Body. Additional details about each product area are included in the requirements documents attached to this letter. Please submit questions to mostefficient@energystar.gov.

Category	Requirements		
Clothes washers	Clothes Washer Volume	MEF	WF
	≤ 2.5 cubic feet	≥ 2.3	≤ 4.5
	> 2.5 cubic feet	≥ 3.0	≤ 3.3
Air-source heat pumps	≥18 SEER, 12.5 EER, & 9.6 HSPF for split systems; 16 SEER, 12 EER & 8 HSPF for packaged systems; communications, diagnostics and automated configuration		
Central air conditioners	≥18 SEER & 12.5 EER for split CAC, 16 SEER & 12 EER for packaged CAC; communications, diagnostics and automated configuration		
Furnaces	97% AFUE; communications, diagnostics and automated configuration		
Geothermal heat pumps	Equivalent to Tier 3 levels established in the ENERGY STAR Program Requirements; communications, diagnostics and automated configuration		
Refrigerator-freezers	≤422 kWh per year; at least 30% better than Federal standard		
Televisions	$A < 400: P_{max} = (0.046 * A) + 13.0$ $400 \leq A \leq 1068: P_{max} = (0.073 * A) + 2.0$ $A > 1068: P_{max} = 80$ P_{max} = maximum On Mode power consumption; A = viewable screen area in sq. inches		

OBTAINING MOST EFFICIENT RECOGNITION

Partners interested in receiving recognition for their products in 2011 are asked to take the following steps:

1. Ensure you are an ENERGY STAR partner in good standing.

2. Ensure product performance has been certified with an EPA-recognized Certification Body. As with all ENERGY STAR products, ENERGY STAR Most Efficient-recognized products must be certified.
 3. Confirm model(s) meets applicable recognition criteria. Review the attached recognition requirements and confirm that model(s) is eligible for 2011 recognition. Inform EPA of your interest in having your product recognized as Most Efficient by submitting to mostefficient@energystar.gov a description of the product that includes the following information:
 - a. Brand, base model number and all derivative models (if applicable);
 - b. Product description for use on ENERGY STAR Most Efficient website (i.e., key features and functionalities). The first 50 words will be displayed beside product photo on Web page; additional text will link to a separate Web page;
 - c. For relevant HVAC products, installation and maintenance manuals for the system using an appropriate controller, confirming communications, diagnostic and automated configuration capability. Documentation associated with the controller is acceptable, if it can be associated with specific HVAC equipment models submitted for recognition;
 - d. Product photo in a jpg file of at least 200 pixels for the Web. For HVAC, please include picture of appropriate system controller; and
 - e. Certification Body name and date certified.
- Submissions for 2011 recognition will be accepted through November 30, 2011.***
4. Once EPA has confirmed a product's eligibility for recognition, the Most Efficient designation will be provided along with Most Efficient designation use guidelines. The Most Efficient designation is intended for use on point of purchase material, product literature and websites and may not be applied to products or product packaging. Failure to abide by these guidelines may result in loss of recognition.
 5. EPA will highlight recognized products on the ENERGY STAR 2011 Most Efficient Web page through December 30, 2011 and provide the partner access to the 2011 Most Efficient marketing template shown below.



Additional information regarding this program offering, including a summary and response to comments on the March 2011 proposal, can be found at www.energystar.gov/me-criteria. EPA looks forward to recognizing your 2011 Most Efficient products and to helping consumers find them.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ann Bailey".

Ann Bailey, Director
ENERGY STAR Product Labeling