



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

OFFICE OF
AIR AND RADIATION

March 16, 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. We have reviewed stakeholder comments and are now taking the next step by introducing proposed recognition criteria and the Most Efficient point-of-purchase marketing template.

For 2011, recognition of the "most efficient" products will be available, on a pilot basis, for clothes washers, heating and cooling equipment, televisions, and refrigerator-freezers. Each product category was reviewed on a case-by-case basis, and the proposed criteria adhere to a common set of recognition principals:

- *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.
- *Geographically appropriate requirements.* For some products, such as heating and cooling equipment, performance depends upon geographical location and climate zone. Performance-based criteria that deliver high efficiency in one region may not necessarily guarantee high efficiency in others. Therefore, for products such as these, recognition requirements must be tailored to deliver top performance wherever products are installed.
- *No compromise in performance.* Consistent with EPA's guiding principles for ENERGY STAR, recognition criteria must reflect products that perform as well as or better than standard products in the market.
- *Not 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 energy-intensive configurations are unable to achieve recognition.

Later this year, EPA will initiate a process to evaluate the 2011 pilot and consider additional product categories (e.g. windows) for potential inclusion in 2012.

The proposed recognition requirements for 2011 are summarized in the table below. In addition to meeting these performance requirements, products must be ENERGY STAR qualified and certified by an EPA-recognized Certification Body. Additional details about each product area are included in the requirements documents attached to this letter. Please submit any comments to

mostefficient@energystar.gov no later than April 6, 2011.

Category	Requirements
Clothes Washers	MEF ≥ 3.0 ; WF ≤ 3.0
Air-source heat pumps	≥ 20 SEER, 13 EER, & 9.3 HSPF for split systems; 16 SEER, 12 EER & 8.5 HSPF for packaged systems; built-in diagnostics
Central air conditioners	≥ 21.5 SEER & 14 EER for split CAC, 16.5 SEER & 12.4 EER for packaged CAC; built-in diagnostics
Furnaces	98 AFUE; built-in diagnostics
Geothermal heat pumps	Equivalent to Tier 3 levels established in the ENERGY STAR Program Requirements; built-in diagnostics
Refrigerator-freezers	≤ 403 kWh per year ; at least 30% better than Federal standard
Televisions	$A \leq 1068 = P_{\max} = (0.073 * A) + 2.0$; $A > 1068 = P_{\max} = 80$, P_{\max} = max On Mode power consumption; A = viewable screen area in sq. inches

To assist ENERGY STAR partners' efforts to distinguish products that are among the most efficient, EPA has developed a point-of-purchase marketing template (see below). EPA will be distributing guidelines for the use of this template. It will be made available for use in association with models meeting the recognition criteria for as long as the model remains on the market. Recognized products will also be featured on the ENERGY STAR website for the duration of the recognition period, e.g., from the program start date until December 31, 2011.



Partners interested in receiving recognition for their products in 2011 will be asked to take the following steps to confirm eligibility:

1. **Confirm models meet requirements.** Review the attached recognition requirements and confirm that model(s) is eligible for 2011 recognition.
2. **Submit product information to EPA.** Document that your product meets all applicable requirements and submit a description that includes the following information to your ENERGY STAR account manager or primary contact:
 - a. Base model number and all derivative models (if applicable)
 - b. Product features
 - c. Picture of product suitable for web and print materials
 - d. Certification Body and date certified
3. **Abide by Most Efficient Designation use guidelines.** Review the guidelines, which will be provided once product is approved for recognition. Failure to abide by these guidelines may result in loss of recognition.
4. **Advertise eligible products.** Upon reviewing product submissions, EPA will add eligible products to the 2011 Most Efficient list and provide the partner access to the 2011 Most Efficient marketing template.

Additional information regarding this program offering, including a summary and response to comments on the initial proposal, can be found at www.energystar.gov/toptier.
Thank you for your support of ENERGY STAR.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ann Bailey". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ann" and last name "Bailey" clearly distinguishable.

Ann Bailey, Director
ENERGY STAR Product Labeling