

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



**OFFICE OF
AIR AND RADIATION**

November 17, 2006

Dear Ice Machine Manufacturer or Other Interested Party:

The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is interested in expanding the suite of ENERGY STAR[®] qualified commercial foodservice equipment to include ice machines. The purpose of this letter is to introduce you to ENERGY STAR and our process for developing program specifications, and solicit your interest in participating in the specification development process for ice machines.

ENERGY STAR is a voluntary partnership between government, businesses, and purchasers designed to encourage the manufacture, purchase, and use of efficient products. Energy and water efficiency – delivering equal (or better) performance while using less – helps protect the environment. The less energy and water that is used, the less energy we need to generate at power plants, which reduces greenhouse gas emissions and improves the quality of our air. Commercial and household products that earn the ENERGY STAR prevent greenhouse gas emissions by meeting strict energy efficiency guidelines. Manufacturers that design and qualify their products according to the ENERGY STAR specification are able to use the label as a marketing tool to highlight these products for their customers. To date:

- over 1,500 manufacturers are partnering with ENERGY STAR
- more than 35,000 product models carry the ENERGY STAR mark across more than 50 product categories
- more than 60% of Americans recognize the ENERGY STAR mark
- American consumers have purchased more than 2 billion ENERGY STAR qualified products

Energy efficiency helps the economy too, by saving consumers and businesses billions of dollars in energy costs. In 2005 alone, Americans – with the help of ENERGY STAR – saved 150 billion kWh or 4 percent of total 2005 electricity. This saved \$12 billion dollars on their energy bills, and reduced greenhouse gas emissions by the equivalent annual emissions of 23 million vehicles. For more information about ENERGY STAR, please visit our Web site at www.energystar.gov.

The primary objective of ENERGY STAR is to make it easy for purchasers to identify the most energy-efficient products in the marketplace by differentiating them with the ENERGY STAR mark. As a voluntary, market-based program, it is not EPA's intention to design a specification that will allow every model to qualify. When EPA sets a specification, it strives to recognize the top energy performers in the market, which offer attractive savings to the buyer at that time. For products that do not initially meet the specification, it is EPA's hope that manufacturers will redesign for efficiency over time, thus leading to more energy-efficient product choices.

Over the last year, EPA has been approached by several ice machine manufacturers, utilities, and other industry stakeholders interested in an ENERGY STAR program for ice machines. Initial market and engineering research conducted by EPA has shown that there are existing technologies available in the ice machine market today that offer superior efficiency.

Ice machines are of special interest to EPA because energy efficient models may also use water more efficiently. Efficient water use conserves existing supplies of a precious resource, reduces the burden on the nation's water and wastewater facilities as well as households and other consumers, and helps protect the environment.

Within the next several months, EPA will release a Draft proposal which will present the minimum performance, testing, and labeling requirements that ice machines would need to meet to earn the ENERGY STAR. In addition to its own research, EPA will use the following resources of information to develop the proposed requirements: the Air-Conditioning and Refrigeration Institute (ARI) database; the Energy Policy Act of 2005; research conducted by the Consortium for Energy Efficiency, the Food Service Technology Center, and the Department of Energy; and discussions with manufacturers and industry experts.

Following the release of the first draft document, stakeholders will have a 30-day comment period to provide feedback. Depending upon the feedback received, EPA may then propose an industry meeting to discuss feedback and next steps toward finalizing the specification. As needed, EPA may also propose a meeting with industry stakeholders during the National Restaurant Association (NRA) Show in May of 2007.

The exchange of ideas and information between EPA, industry, and other interested parties is critical to the success of ENERGY STAR. We hope you will actively participate in the ENERGY STAR specification development process. For more information about this process, please visit our Web site at www.energystar.gov/productdevelopment or contact me directly at 202-343-9124 or schmeltz.rachel@epa.gov. I look forward to working with you during the next several months.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rachel Schmeltz". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping tail on the final letter.

Rachel Schmeltz
ENERGY STAR Program Manager