

11/25/2009

Hi Christina,

Many of the points made on the call are important for the EPA to consider.

Ease of use by the consumer should be a priority and this includes a large display with a timed back light and default settings. Put some focus groups together and give them different designs so the consumer is the one that picks the design. This must also include a simple manual with large print. (I'm the only one in my household that can set up our thermostat and I need a magnifying glass to read the manual.)

The back light should time out after about 30 - 60 seconds of inactivity. You could also limit power consumption of the back light.

One-size doesn't fit all and there should not be a single thermostat that tries to cover every type of HVAC system on the market.

There clearly is a need for a basic thermostat for the basic unit found in most homes. The ES specification can differentiate itself from the standard models by requiring it to be user friendly; easy to see, easy to program, advanced options like the ability to allow humidity levels to drive AC usage.

Cost of the unit must be contained. There already is concern that setback thermostats are not a cost-effective option and increasing unit cost will only add to the problem.

You need to look at the "hold" options. Hold should only be good for one cycle of the setback routine. If you want a long term hold feature, it should be called Vacation or Away. The user should be able to set what temperature (heating/cooling) they desire in the mode, but only to a certain extent. They should not be able to set this close to the normal comfort temperature setting. So in the heating mode as an example, it can't be set higher than 60 F. This allows a long term setback, but won't all for a permanent over ride that is all to common now with the hold feature.

There should be a line-voltage model. If electric strip heat is the less efficient, better control has the potential of generating the highest savings. Controlling very efficient systems that already has results in low usage, won't save much. If you want to save energy in homes, you go after the least efficient because that is where the biggest potential is for savings exists.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed new thermostat requirements.

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