

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



OFFICE OF
AIR AND RADIATION

December 16, 2009

Dear ENERGY STAR[®] Water Cooler Partner or Other Interested Stakeholder:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) welcomes your input on the attached Draft 1 Version 1.2 ENERGY STAR Water Cooler specification ("Draft 1"). EPA is revisiting the ENERGY STAR specification for water coolers to permit the qualification of Point-of-Use (POU) and other bottle-less water coolers.

Key Draft 1 Modification - Expansion to Bottle-less Coolers

EPA opened the specification for revision on July 1, 2009, primarily to respond to requests from bottled water cooler partners to consider the inclusion of POU and bottle-less coolers. In conversations with these partners and other manufacturers, EPA learned that POU sales currently comprise more than half of the total sales for these manufacturers. EPA also has been informed that some potential customers of POU distributors are requesting or requiring ENERGY STAR qualification before purchasing or leasing the POU's.

Additional Specification Modifications

Other minor updates have been made throughout Draft 1 to make the document consistent with other recently-revised specifications in terms of format and terminology, and to add clarification where needed. Draft 1 is included for your review and comment, and contains explanatory note boxes throughout to highlight and explain any modifications.

2010 Revision Effort

While the ENERGY STAR specification for water coolers is due for a full-scale revision, EPA elected not to change the energy-efficiency criteria or make other substantive alterations at this time for two main reasons. First, a comprehensive revision process would benefit from access to a robust energy consumption data set, comprised of a full suite of product types that were tested at as-shipped conditions. The changes EPA is proposing in Draft 1 will result in such a data set for later evaluation. Second, EPA did not want to delay the qualification of bottle-less coolers until the completion of a larger specification revision effort. For these reasons, EPA will reopen the ENERGY STAR water cooler specification for a full revision beginning in the summer of 2010. At that time, definitions, qualifying products, energy-efficiency criteria, and test methods will be evaluated thoroughly. Stakeholder suggestions received in response to EPA's July 1, 2009 request for feedback that were not accommodated in Draft 1 will be held until this time, and are summarized in the attached comment response document for your reference.

Pending Federal Legislation

Recent developments in federal legislation have also guided EPA's course in revising the ENERGY STAR water cooler specification. The American Clean Energy and Security Act (ACES Act) passed by the U.S. House of Representatives on June 26, 2009, proposes new energy-savings standards for bottle-type water dispensers designed for dispensing both hot and cold water. If passed as currently written, effective January 1, 2012, water coolers as described above will need to meet ENERGY STAR criteria, not exceeding standby energy consumption of 1.2 kilowatt-hours per day. While the modifications to this bill in the Senate have not retained this proposition, continued discussions on energy policy may result the establishment of federal minimum efficiency standards for water coolers. If this occurs, EPA will need to determine options for the ENERGY STAR Water Cooler Program.

Request for Comments

As always, the exchange of ideas and information among EPA, industry, and other interested parties is critical to the success of ENERGY STAR. Stakeholders are strongly encouraged to e-mail feedback on this Draft 1 Version 1.2 specification and EPA's plans for a larger revision effort in the summer to watercoolers@energystar.gov by **January 5, 2010**.

Timeline

EPA will review any comments and issue a final specification by January 22, 2010, which will become effective immediately. Since the Version 1.2 specification is not substantively different from Version 1.1, current partners will be rolled over to the new specification and do not need to take further action with regard to their partnership status. However, because the Version 1.2 specification clarifies that products must be tested for ENERGY STAR qualification as shipped, EPA will work with partners between now and January 22 to learn if any previously-qualified bottled water coolers need to be retested and re-reported. If you believe your product's performance would vary from that which was submitted for qualification if it were tested as shipped, please contact Darcy Martinez, ICF International, at dmartinez@icfi.com, 202-862-1234 to discuss a plan for retesting.

To track EPA's progress in revising the specification for water coolers products, visit the ENERGY STAR Product Development Web site at www.energystar.gov/RevisedSpecs. Please direct any specific questions to Steve Ryan, EPA, at Ryan.Steven@epa.gov, (202) 343-9123 or Darcy Martinez, ICF International, at dmartinez@icfi.com, 202-862-1234.

Thank you for your continued support of ENERGY STAR.

Sincerely,



Steve Ryan, U.S. EPA
ENERGY STAR Product Development