

ENERGY STAR Update

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

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EPA Announces Updated Home Energy Yardstick for Assessing Home Energy Use

American homeowners can see how their home energy use measures up by using EPA's free online energy assessment tool called the Home Energy Yardstick. The Yardstick is a simple performance-based tool that compares a home's annual energy use to other similar homes. Since 2010, nearly a quarter of a million Americans have used the Yardstick to better understand the energy consumption of their homes. By answering a few basic questions, a homeowner can get:

- The home's Yardstick score (on a scale of 1 to 10);
- Insights into how much of the home's energy use is related to heating and cooling versus other everyday uses like appliances, lighting, and hot water;
- Links to guidance from EPA's ENERGY STAR program on how to increase the home's score, improve comfort, and lower utility bills; and
- An estimate of the annual carbon emissions that can be attributed to the home.

The Yardstick looks at the actual energy use of a home based on the last 12 months of utility bills compared to others. To ensure that different homes across the country can be properly compared, the Yardstick uses a statistical algorithm to take into account the effects of local weather, home size, and number of occupants.

A home that scores a "10" on the Yardstick scale used less energy over the last 12 months and performed well compared to its peers, while a home that scores a "1" used more energy and performed poorly compared to its peers.

A homeowner can increase the home's Yardstick score by improving the energy efficiency of the features and/or equipment of the home or by making changes in the way the home is operated to use less energy. Homeowners can revisit the Yardstick each month (when utility bills arrive) to see the impacts of the energy-efficient improvements they have made in the home or changes in the way it is operated.

EPA has now improved the Yardstick with the addition of Green Button. Green Button provides utility customers with easy access to their energy use data. Homeowners with access to Green Button can now easily upload their home utility data into the Yardstick. But even if homeowners don't have access to Green Button, a 12-month utility bill summary can be found on utility web sites and entered into the Yardstick.

The Home Energy Yardstick is not meant to replace a home energy audit conducted by a trained specialist. Often, the best way to determine the root cause of high energy bills or uncomfortable spaces is to have a [professional home energy assessment](#).

The information that homeowners enter into the Yardstick is only used for the purposes of allowing homeowners to assess home energy use. This information is not saved by EPA or shared with others.

Get started now by going to www.energystar.gov/yardstick

For more information on Green Button, visit <http://www.greenbuttondata.org/greenabout.html>

Products, homes and buildings that earn the ENERGY STAR label prevent greenhouse gas emissions by meeting strict energy efficiency requirements set by the U.S. EPA. In 2012 alone, Americans, with the help of ENERGY STAR, saved \$24 billion on their energy bills and prevented greenhouse gas emissions equal to those of 41 million vehicles. To date, more than 1.4 million new homes and 20,000 office buildings, schools and hospitals have earned the ENERGY STAR label.

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