



## THIRD PARTY CERTIFICATION IMPLEMENTATION

### ENERGY STAR® PRODUCTS

DIRECTIVE NO. 2011-06

**SUBJECT:** ENERGY STAR Verification Testing Supplement

Revised Date: 11/16/2022

The following guidance is a supplement to the *Conditions and Criteria for Recognition of Certification Bodies for the ENERGY STAR program*, and pertains to selecting and obtaining products for verification testing, as well as reporting results to EPA.

#### **Product Selection**

All unique models on EPA's certified product lists that are currently available for sale in the U.S. are candidates for verification testing. For purposes of determining unique models, certification bodies (CBs) should take into account both privately labeled models and product families. Privately labeled model(s) and the associated OEM model should count as one unique model; however, any one of the models may be selected for verification testing. Likewise, product families only count as one model for purposes of determining unique models, but any member of the product family may be selected for verification testing.<sup>1</sup>

The minimum percentage of products subject to verification testing in each category is indicated in EPA's [ENERGY STAR Verification Testing Requirements by Product Category](#). This percentage is applied to the number of unique models the CB has certified in each category at the start of the calendar year. CBs should round up to the nearest integer to determine the number of models to test. CBs should also select replacement models in the event that one or more of the selected models cannot be tested that year.

EPA will provide nominations for up to half the products the CB will verify in each category. On a rolling basis, EPA will accept nominations for products from energy efficiency program sponsors (EEPS) and others to include in verification testing and provide these to CBs. CBs are responsible for tracking other factors that influence product selection. Each CB may establish its own testing schedule but will be responsible for completing all required testing by the end of each calendar year.

A model may be excused from testing when its manufacturer, ENERGY STAR product brand owner (partner), or private labeler is able to demonstrate that an identical model or model from the same family was procured for verification testing by a CB in the previous year or has already been procured by a CB for verification testing. For off-the-line testing, manufacturers must provide a production schedule. CBs may decide to select alternative models for testing based on the production schedule.

#### **Obtaining Units**

Since verification testing applies only to products sold in the U.S., sample procurement of units should also take place in the U.S. For online ordering, the product must be shipped to a U.S. address. CBs should consult with EPA if they need to obtain a product directly from a warehouse that is located near but outside the U.S.

To ensure that units are available for verification testing, units must be obtained shortly following model selection. Both selection and procurement must occur when the same version

<sup>1</sup> The term, "basic model groups," is used in certain ENERGY STAR specifications and should be treated the same way as product families for purposes of verification testing.

of the specification is in effect so that units are not procured when they are no longer on the list of certified products.

CBs should attempt to procure testing samples from retail locations identified by the partners and online outlets of those retailers. Other locations selling legitimate products are allowed. However, CBs may not procure samples from otherwise unknown internet sources (i.e., grey market sources).

If a selected model is not available in commerce in the U.S., there are two options. If it is part of a product family, the CB should determine if another member of the family is available in the market and select that one for testing. Otherwise, the model should be removed from the QPL and the following actions taken:

1. The partner responsible shall reconfirm availability of ALL its certified models.
2. CB will select another model for testing from that partner.
3. CB will consider flagging the partner for testing in subsequent years if there are ongoing issues with availability of selected models.

### **Testing**

Verification testing is required to take place at an EPA-recognized third-party laboratory in North America unless prior approval is granted by EPA. The selected product should be verified against the same requirements used during initial certification.

CBs should refer to the [Third-Party Certification Directives page](#), product specifications, and other resources for information on product-specific verification testing and certification requirements. CBs should contact EPA with questions on how these policies apply to a particular test.

### **Off-the-Line Considerations**

As stated in the *Conditions and Criteria for Recognition of Certification Bodies for the ENERGY STAR program*, off-the-line procurement is only appropriate when procuring products from the shelf or obtaining them from a warehouse is not feasible. Examples include products that are prohibitively expensive to purchase and/or transport, are made-to-order, or are otherwise unavailable through normal retail channels. Verification testing of such products may take place at EPA recognized first party manufacturing locations under CB-witnessed conditions. Based on these examples, the following list of ENERGY STAR product categories are eligible for off-the-line procurement and/or witnessed testing:

- All Commercial Food Service products
- Imaging Equipment products with speeds greater than 50 ipm (images per minute)
- Laboratory Grade Refrigerators and Freezers
- Light Commercial HVAC
- Computer Servers
- Set-top Boxes with the exception of over-the-top (OTT) internet protocol (IP) products
- Telephony with Voice Over Internet Protocol (VoIP) capabilities
- Uninterruptible Power Supplies with output power >10,000 watts
- Variable-Speed Central Air Conditioners
- Vending Machines

For other product categories, CBs should obtain EPA approval before procuring or testing units off-the-line.

## **Reporting**

All objections to or noncompliance with testing should be referred to EPA within five business days of the CB notification of the objection.

CBs shall report failures within two business days of the CB determination of a testing failure to [Enforcement@energystar.gov](mailto:Enforcement@energystar.gov) using the subject line "FAILURE" followed by the partner's name(s) and model number(s). This report must include a spreadsheet with basic information on the testing failure.

Twice per year (January and July), CBs shall provide a summary of models tested during the previous six months. This summary will include the model's name, number, and top-level test results, as well as information about where the units were obtained and tested. If units were not obtained off-the-shelf and/or tested in a third-party laboratory, the CB shall provide an explanation. The summary shall also include a list of models selected for testing that were not tested, along with the reason.

Forms to report failures or to submit the summary of models tested during the previous six months can be found at [www.energystar.gov/CBresources](http://www.energystar.gov/CBresources).