

# Consumer Checklist for ENERGY STAR Storm Windows

Note: EPA plans to make this Consumer Checklist available on the ENERGY STAR website to help consumers make an informed decision about purchasing low-e storm windows. The Checklist will help address feedback and concerns raised by commenters in response to the storm window Framework Document. Stakeholders may submit comments on this document.

## Are ENERGY STAR Certified Storm Windows right for you?

ENERGY STAR certified low-e storm windows can be an affordable way to help reduce energy costs.

**What is a “low-e” storm window?** The glass on a low-e (low emissivity) storm window has a microscopically thin, almost invisible, very durable coating to reduce heat loss through the window glass when it is cold outside, saving on heating bills. Some low-e glass also has a low solar transmittance (Tsol) rating that blocks heat coming in from the outside and can help to keep your house cooler in the summer, saving on air conditioning bills. Some types of durable plastic storm windows may also have low-e characteristics.

**Why are ENERGY STAR certified storm windows better?** The ENERGY STAR label makes it easy to select storm windows are designed to deliver cost-effective energy savings in your area. ENERGY STAR certified storm windows are tested and certified to meet the program requirements and are subject to additional routine performance verification testing.

**Which ENERGY STAR certified storm windows are best for my location?** Every ENERGY STAR certified storm window has a label with a map to indicate which part of the country that product is designed for. Look for the label to determine if the storm window you are considering is ENERGY STAR certified in your location.

### What else should I consider in my purchase decision?

Before purchasing storm windows, consider these questions:

- ✓ **Are your current windows still in good condition?** If your windows are rotted, damaged, or broken, adding low-e storm windows may not be appropriate. Instead, consider replacing them with new windows, if possible.
- ✓ **Are your current windows single-pane or double-pane with clear (not low-e) glass?** Low-e storm windows offer the most savings potential when installed over single-pane windows and double-pane windows that have only clear glass.
- ✓ **Is your home historic?** Low-e storm windows can be a good option if you live in a neighborhood with historic preservation requirements or you like the historic look of your original windows.
- ✓ **Are your current windows tinted?** If your current windows already have tinted glass, adding a low-e storm window may reduce the visible light transmitted through the window, making them even

darker. Some people prefer tinted glass to reduce glare, while others prefers more daylighting.

- ✓ **Do your current windows open and close?** Interior and exterior storm windows are available in both operable and fixed models. Choose a storm window that matches the operability of your current windows. This is especially important when installing storm windows in bedrooms and other places where an emergency exit (or egress) should be considered.
- ✓ **Do local building codes require safety glass?** Safety glass is much stronger than regular glass and is designed to shatter into little pieces (instead of larger, more dangerous shards) when broken. There may be state or local residential building codes that require safety glass in storm-prone regions or more accident prone locations in the home (near stairs, for example) to reduce the likelihood of injury. Check your local building code requirements for more information.
- ✓ **Do you live in a place where the temperature gets extremely hot (above 115 °F)?** In very hot climates and under certain conditions, low-e storm windows can trap heat between the original window and the storm window. If you already have double pane or low-e coated windows **and** you live in a hot, sunny climate where the temperature frequently goes above 115 °F, you should consider awnings, solar screens, or full replacement with ENERGY STAR certified low-SHGC windows as an alternative to storm windows.