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Dear ENERGY STAR® CAC/ASHP and Connected Thermostats Stakeholders,

**Update:** EPA has made the difficult decision to postpone the workshop described below regarding inclusion of communicating controllers for variable capacity HVAC in the ENERGY STAR Connected Thermostat specification.

For the average American household, almost half the annual energy bill goes to heating and cooling – more than \$900 a year. Based on a recent canvas of existing programs, smart thermostat energy efficiency programs are numerous, growing, and diverse in design. Since 2017, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has recognized smart thermostats that deliver energy savings with the ENERGY STAR, but the controllers for the most efficient, variable speed heating and cooling equipment have not been able to participate. EPA is updating the criteria for ENERGY STAR connected thermostats to allow these controllers to be recognized and is looking for stakeholder input.

**New Time/Date/Format:**

Webinar, Part 1: Friday, April 3, 12 pm to 2 pm Eastern

- Controls verification procedure for Residential variable speed HVAC controllers: The specifics and usefulness of the test.
- Savings mechanisms for variable capacity HVAC, and the field data that may give insight into controller performance (EPA and industry presentations, discussion)
- Please use the following link to register for the webinar:  
<https://attendeegotowebinar.com/register/6674375735381376268>

Webinar, Part 2: Monday, April 6, 1 pm to 3 pm Eastern

- Specific metric proposals to reward energy saving control strategies; discussion
- Updates to the specification criteria and associated software as needed for these controllers.
- Please use the following link to register for the webinar: <https://attendeegotowebinar.com/register/3169861642199274763>

EPA has reached out to several organizations to ask them to speak, and any attendee is welcome to ask for time on the agenda to present their views on this matter. Call-in attendees are welcome to present remotely.

Expected attendees include Mitsubishi Electric, Trane Technologies, Honeywell, Carrier, AHRI, Intertek, SkyCentrics, NEEP, Lennox, Daikin, and Energy Solutions.

**Pre-work:** In a February technical meeting with stakeholders, EPA introduced one possible metric to demonstrate that controls were successfully keeping variable speed HVAC in lower capacity states when possible. Provisionally called “Average Capacity Fraction” or ACF, the metric is explained in the publicly available slides from that meeting, found [here](#). Please review ACF ahead of time and be ready to discuss with other stakeholders on the 6<sup>th</sup>. This metric presumes that the primary opportunity controls have to ensure energy savings with variable capacity HVAC as to avoid using higher capacity states; however, EPA is interested if there are other mechanisms we should consider instead or in addition to this. For instance, are there savings available from knowing when no one is home and awake? Would it be meaningful to try to avoid large capacity swings in a short period of time? EPA hopes to spend time at the workshop brainstorming about savings mechanisms and whether they can be recognized through analysis of field data. Field data analysis can be applied to any information the controller would typically have access to, and the analysis may be able to focus on particular times, such as core heating and cooling season, shoulder seasons, recovery from setback, times of moderate or extreme outdoor temperature, etc.

Please send any questions to [connectedthermostats@energystar.gov](mailto:connectedthermostats@energystar.gov).

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