

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



OFFICE OF
AIR AND RADIATION

August 28, 2012

Dear ENERGY STAR[®] Clothes Washer Manufacturer or Other Interested Party:

With this letter, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is announcing the launch of a process to revise the ENERGY STAR clothes washer specification. EPA welcomes stakeholder input on the attached Draft 1 Version 7.0, ENERGY STAR Product Specification for Clothes Washers.

The ENERGY STAR criteria for residential clothes washers last changed on January 1, 2011. Based on unit shipment data (USD) collected by the Agency, EPA is aware that the market responded to the change more quickly than expected. EPA estimates an ENERGY STAR clothes washer market share in 2011 of over 60%. Considering this, as well the availability of products in the marketplace that significantly exceed the minimum ENERGY STAR criteria, EPA believes stronger requirements are necessary to effectively differentiate highly energy efficient residential clothes washers for consumers.

The Draft 1 Version 7.0 incorporates the following key elements:

- **Revised Energy & Water Criteria:** Revised Modified Energy Factor (MEF) and Water Factor (WF) criteria levels for residential clothes washers. EPA is proposing to increase MEF from 2.0 to 2.6 and strengthen WF from 6.0 to 3.7; approximately 23 percent of all residential clothes washers on the market currently meet these criteria.
 - Note: EPA is not proposing to revise the criteria for commercial clothes washers through this specification revision; the requirements for ENERGY STAR commercial washers were recently updated through a Version 6.0 development process and become effective February 1, 2013.
- **Connected:** Consistent with efforts for other home appliances, EPA is planning to propose a set of optional connected criteria for residential clothes washers and has proposed a supporting 5 percent connected allowance intended to serve as a temporary incentive that helps “jump start” the market for appliances with connected features. EPA is in the process of vetting optional connected product criteria for Refrigerators/Freezers (R/F) with stakeholders. Similar to what has been discussed for that product category, EPA intends to propose connected clothes washer criteria that enable both near-term consumer benefits associated with energy management and added convenience features as well as longer-term, societal benefits associated with smart grid interconnection. The criteria will leverage the latest connected language developed for R/F and recommendations related to clothes dryer demand response (DR) functionality provided to EPA and DOE in the 2010 *Joint Petition to ENERGY STAR to Adopt Joint Stakeholder Agreement as It Relates to Smart Appliances*.

As with R/F, EPA plans to highlight products meeting the connected functionality criteria as listed in the final specification on the ENERGY STAR Qualified Product List as soon as they are available in the market. However, in order to receive the 5% allowance, products will need to be tested to the ENERGY STAR demand response test method. The U.S. Department of Energy

(DOE) will be developing this test method and will engage stakeholders in the development process.

- **Feedback Sought on Inclusion of Cleaning and Rinse Performance:** Some stakeholders have expressed concerns to EPA that as energy and water efficiency levels become more stringent, clothes washer cleaning and/or rinse performance may suffer. They have encouraged the Agency to consider adding new performance requirements to the program. An ENERGY STAR test method to evaluate these aspects of clothes washer performance is not currently available. Therefore, EPA is not planning to incorporate cleaning and/or rinse performance requirements into the Version 7.0 specification. EPA did consider cleaning performance when developing the proposed MEF and WF criteria and found that many highly efficient clothes washers meeting the proposed criteria have received excellent scores in Consumers Union's ratings that factor in washing performance. For example, more than 15 models meeting EPA's 2012 Most Efficient clothes washer eligibility requirements – which exceed the proposed Draft 1 levels – received top scores and are recommended by Consumers Union.

EPA and DOE are seeking stakeholder feedback on whether the program should incorporate cleaning and/or rinse performance into the ENERGY STAR program for clothes washers and the timing for doing so.

As an initial step in considering cleaning and/or rinse performance requirements for clothes washers, DOE has begun reviewing available industry test procedures for characterizing clothes washer cleaning and rinse performance. DOE is prepared to discuss these options as well as other ideas with stakeholders should the comments on this draft point to support for inclusion of cleaning and rinse performance.

- **New DOE Residential Clothes Washer Standards in 2015:** EPA is aware that manufacturers will be required to test using a new U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) test procedure for clothes washers and comply with new DOE standards, beginning in March 2015. EPA is planning to transition the ENERGY STAR clothes washer specification to this new test procedure at that time, harmonizing with DOE's schedule. With assistance from DOE, EPA also plans to crosswalk the final Version 7.0 levels for residential clothes washers to equivalent levels expressed using the new energy and water performance metrics: Integrated Modified Energy Factor (IMEF) and Integrated Water Factor (IWF), respectively.

Comment Submittal

Stakeholders are encouraged to provide written comments via email to appliances@energystar.gov no later than September 28, 2012. All comments will be posted to the ENERGY STAR Product Development website unless the submitter requests otherwise.

Stakeholder Webinar to Discuss Draft 1

EPA and DOE intend to host a webinar on September 12, 2012, from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. (EST) to discuss the Draft 1 specification and address stakeholder questions. To RSVP, please email appliances@energystar.gov. Further details will be distributed to confirmed attendees in advance of the webinar.

Revision Schedule

The anticipated schedule for the ENERGY STAR Clothes Washer specification revision is as follows:

August 28, 2012	EPA releases Draft 1, Version 7.0 specification
September 12, 2012	Stakeholder webinar on Draft 1 specification
September 28, 2012	Comment period closes on Draft 1 specification
November/December 2012	EPA releases Draft 2, Version 7.0 specification; stakeholder webinar and comment period
January 2013	Final Draft Version 7.0 specification and comment

	period
February 2013	Final Version 7.0 specification released

To follow EPA's progress in revising the ENERGY STAR Clothes Washer specification, visit the ENERGY STAR Product Development website at www.energystar.gov/revisedspecs and click on "Residential Clothes Washers".

Please direct any specific questions to Amanda Stevens at EPA, stevens.amanda@epa.gov or (202) 343-9106 or Ryan Fogle, D&R International, at rfogle@drintl.com or (301) 588-9387. Please direct questions on the Clothes Washer test method to Ashley Armstrong, DOE, at Ashley.Armstrong@ee.doe.gov or (202) 586-6590. Thank you for taking the time to review this draft specification. I look forward to working with you over the next few months.

Sincerely,



Amanda Stevens, Product Manager
ENERGY STAR for Appliances