

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



OFFICE OF
AIR AND RADIATION

November 17, 2010

Dear Climate Control Manufacturer or Other Interested Stakeholder:

The purpose of this letter is to invite you to participate in review and discussion of the US Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) proposed performance based Climate Control usability test method drafted for inclusion in the Version 1.0 Residential Climate Controls specification. EPA plans to release the draft usability requirements and test method in late November 2010 and will host an in-person meeting on December 14 in Washington, DC to facilitate discussion of this draft.

EPA's goal is to develop a specification that will: (1) identify products with superior usability and (2) improve adoption rates for HVAC program schedule usage and other energy saving approaches. As proposed in Draft 2, the Version 1.0 Residential Climate Controls specification includes two distinct paths to evaluate usability for ENERGY STAR[®] qualification. Both require compliance to core requirements. The "prescriptive" path requires compliance with secondary prescriptive usability requirements as well. The "performance-based" path allows usability testing to performance-based usability requirements in lieu of secondary prescriptive requirements. The performance-based path is designed to allow manufacturers additional flexibility in order to comply with usability requirements using innovative and creative features. Performance-based testing will involve product usability testing, administered by an accredited lab, under which the Device Under Test will be evaluated by a panel, selected in accordance with specific criteria.

For the "performance-based" path, EPA is developing usability test requirements and a Residential Climate Controls Usability test method, which will include panel selection criteria and test procedures for performance of usability testing.

In person meeting to discuss draft: EPA will host an ENERGY STAR Residential Climate Controls Stakeholder meeting in Washington, DC to discuss the Draft 1 Usability Test Method on Tuesday, December 14, 2010. If you would like to participate in this meeting, please RSVP by Wednesday December 1, 2010 to ClimateControls@energystar.gov with your name and contact information (specifying "in-person attendee" or "conference call attendee" in the subject line). Conference call information will be provided to attendees prior to the meeting.

The meeting will include presentation and extensive discussion of the following topics:

1. Introduction of the Draft 1 Residential Climate Controls usability test requirements and test procedure, including justification and associated research.
2. Structured discussion of key areas including reference device options.
3. A brief update on other aspects of the Residential Climate Controls specification development process and schedule.

4. Identification of areas where additional discussion and stakeholder feedback is needed.

A detailed agenda will be shared with attendees prior to the meeting. A full-day meeting is planned, which EPA intends to allow for up to four stakeholder presentations of data and supporting information in response to the Draft 1.0 Residential Climate Controls Usability Test Method. If your company/organization is interested in presenting, please indicate this request, along with the intended topic, in your meeting RSVP. EPA will review all requests received by December 7 and select four presenters based on the intention of covering a diverse mix of topics and viewpoints.

The meeting will be held from 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. at the ICF International office located at 1725 Eye St. NW, Washington, DC 20006 (Concourse Conference Room).

If you have any questions, please contact Abigail Daken, EPA, at Daken.Abigail@epa.gov or Doug Frazee, ICF International, at dfrazee@icfi.com. All specification development documents can be viewed on the Climate Controls webpage located at www.energystar.gov/newspeccs.

Thank you for your continued support of ENERGY STAR.