

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



OFFICE OF
AIR AND RADIATION

June 9, 2010

Dear ENERGY STAR[®] Furnace Stakeholders and Other Interested Parties:

With this letter, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is launching a revision of the ENERGY STAR[®] Version 2.0 Furnace specification. The current ENERGY STAR specification has been in place since October 2006. Furnaces were among the first products to qualify for the ENERGY STAR label, and over the years we have worked together to prevent over 330 trillion btu of primary energy use. Initial market research indicates that the opportunity exists for additional, cost-effective energy savings and greenhouse gas reductions from this product category.

EPA's consideration of a specification revision for furnaces at this time is prompted by a number of factors:

- As of 2008, EPA estimates that 43% of gas furnaces sold in the U.S. were ENERGY STAR qualified. This progress represents a positive indication of the impact the program has had in transforming the market and paves the way for potentially more stringent requirements.
- The Department of Energy (DOE) has proposed a minimum efficiency standard for gas furnaces in northern regions that is equal to the current ENERGY STAR specification, in accord with a Consensus Agreement between industry and environmental NGOs.
- The minimum efficiency standard for gas furnaces in Canada is equal to the current ENERGY STAR specification, as of the beginning of this year.

EPA sees a number of new opportunities to recognize the most energy efficient furnaces. EPA intends to propose modest AFUE increases over the current specification where relatively high winter heating bills make it cost effective. This will involve separating the country into climate regions. We intend to use those recently proposed by DOE, which mirror those in the Consensus Agreement. We also propose a third region for Canada. Furthermore, EPA plans to include furnace fan efficiency requirements for the first time, based on the upcoming Canadian CSA C823 Test Method due to be released well before any specification revision will go into effect. (We note that this test method may need to be modified slightly for the United States climate.) This measure has the potential to save significant energy and provide excellent value for customers. In addition, we intend to propose requirements specific to air leakage through the furnace cabinet.

EPA is also very interested in the potential for energy savings represented by the emergence of digital communication within HVAC systems, particularly in combination with diagnostic information (e.g. clogged filter). EPA will request additional information about such technologies during the stakeholder process for this revision and determine what is possible in the near term.

Our anticipated schedule for the revision is as follows:

June 2010	Launch revision.
July 2010	Draft 1 ENERGY STAR Version 3.0 Furnace specification released for comment.
August 2010	Stakeholder webinar; comment period ends mid-month.

September 2010	Draft 2 ENERGY STAR Version 3.0 Furnace specification released for comment early in month; stakeholder webinar; comment period ends by end of month.
October 2010	Final Draft ENERGY STAR Version 3.0 Furnace specification released.
November 2010	Final ENERGY STAR Version 3.0 Furnace specification released.
August 2011	Specification takes effect.

Specifications and meeting materials will be distributed via email and posted on the ENERGY STAR Web site. To track EPA's progress with the revision of this specification, please visit the Furnace web site for partners, http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?fuseaction=products_for_partners.showFurnaces. The exchange of ideas and information between EPA and stakeholders is critical to the success of ENERGY STAR. We hope you will actively participate in the ENERGY STAR specification revision process for furnaces. If you know of others who may be interested in participating, please forward this announcement and encourage them to send their contact information to furnaces@energystar.gov and ask to be added to the list of interested parties.

Please direct any specific questions to Abigail Daken at EPA, daken.abigail@epa.gov or 202-343-9375; or Sarah Medepalli, ICF International, at smedepalli@icfi.com or 202-862-1268.

We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Abigail Daken', written in dark ink.

Abigail Daken