



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

OFFICE OF
AIR AND RADIATION

March 15, 2007

Dear ENERGY STAR[®] Stakeholder:

The purpose of this letter is to formally begin the process to examine and revise the ENERGY STAR specification for Set-top Boxes (STBs) e.g., digital viewing and recording devices and cable and satellite boxes. The most recent ENERGY STAR specification for this equipment originally became effective on January 1, 2001, and was suspended on December 16, 2004. At that time, EPA acknowledged that moving this market to a place of greater efficiency would require a holistic approach that looked beyond potential technology advances and included the vital contributions that a wider universe of stakeholders could make.

In the two years since EPA suspended the specification, STBs have evolved in complexity, feature-richness, and energy use. Consumers are increasingly interested in reducing their utility bills and lessening their impact on the environment. Additionally, the ENERGY STAR Product Development team has learned more about advancements in power management techniques in consumer electronics and other products. EPA has further enhanced its experience developing creative approaches to achieve energy savings in products such as computers, imaging equipment, and DTAs. EPA is eager to bring this knowledge together with the expertise of manufacturers, service providers, and other interested parties to consider potential opportunities to reduce the energy consumption of STBs.

As a key step to beginning the process, EPA invites stakeholders to participate in an initial meeting to discuss this specification on May 15, 2007, in Washington, DC (detailed logistics to follow). We sincerely hope you will participate and will extend the invitation to others with an interest in increasing the efficiency of STBs. In addition, if you would like to meet individually with EPA, please contact me at kaplan.katharine@epa.gov.

In keeping with the intent of the ENERGY STAR program, EPA hopes the result of our collaboration will allow us to:

- Develop a STB program that delivers the greatest practical energy savings;
- Identify appropriate roles and responsibilities for all relevant stakeholders;
- Develop energy efficiency specifications for STBs that are performance-based and technology neutral – recognizing leaders in the market in terms of energy efficiency;
- Make use of existing test procedures and/or specifications and harmonize, where technically appropriate, with domestic and international partners; and
- Develop Program Requirements that offer longevity, as well as simplicity, fair comparison of products, and consideration of feature richness.

As with all ENERGY STAR specification development and revision processes, EPA intends to run a transparent, open, and inclusive process that results in a high quality end product in a reasonable amount of time. As EPA moves forward with revising the ENERGY STAR STB specification, we will solicit input from stakeholders on an ongoing basis. The exchange of ideas and information between EPA, industry, and other interested parties is critical to developing a meaningful specification and contributing to the overall success of ENERGY STAR. As such, we welcome and look forward to your input and participation in all aspects of the specification development process. Additionally, EPA encourages all stakeholders to visit the ENERGY STAR Web site periodically at: www.energystar.gov/productdevelopment for important updates and resources. (Click on Revisions to Existing Specifications.) In addition to official documents, presentations and draft revisions of the specification, this Web page will also include written comments EPA receives from stakeholders, unless marked as confidential.

Thank you for your support of ENERGY STAR. I look forward to working with you to revise the STB specification so that it advances superior energy efficiency in the marketplace. Please contact me at (202) 343-9120 or kaplan.katharine@epa.gov with any questions or comments, or if you wish to be included in future distributions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Katharine Kaplan".

Katharine Kaplan, EPA Product Manager
ENERGY STAR for Consumer Electronics