



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

OFFICE OF
AIR AND RADIATION

DATE: October 25, 2007

Dear ENERGY STAR[®] Programmable Thermostat Partners and Other Interested Parties:

The purpose of this letter is to provide, for your review, a revised proposal for improving the effectiveness of the ENERGY STAR label for programmable thermostats. After careful consideration, EPA is proposing to proceed as follows:

1. Finalize a new ENERGY STAR partner commitment for programmable thermostats regarding a joint industry/government consumer education campaign.
2. Maintain the current ENERGY STAR performance specification for programmable thermostats while pursuing further collaboration with industry and other stakeholders to revise it.
3. Establish a date by which updated ENERGY STAR performance requirements will go into effect for programmable thermostats or by which the performance specification would be suspended if new performance requirements have not been identified.

Under this revised proposal, Programmable Thermostat Partners can continue to use the ENERGY STAR label on products qualifying under the current specification until December 31, 2009 as long as they commit to and participate in a consumer education campaign encouraging proper use. The consumer campaign is proposed to launch in the spring of 2008.

Additional detail on these key provisions is provided below.

Consumer Education

Programmable thermostats offer significant cost-effective energy-saving potential to consumers by reducing their use of energy for heating and cooling when they are not present or do not otherwise need it. However, studies have shown that consumers are not consistently using them in an effective manner, and there is growing interest in the development and implementation of a consumer-oriented education campaign on the value and proper use of programmable thermostats. As previously proposed, EPA plans to develop a new collaborative consumer education campaign on programmable thermostats.

As part of their ENERGY STAR partnership, programmable thermostat manufacturers will be required to participate in the new consumer education campaign that includes, but is not limited to, using ENERGY STAR messaging in your literature, in promotional materials, and on your Internet site where information about ENERGY STAR models are displayed.

As part of the campaign, EPA plans to incorporate the new educational messaging into existing, well-known communication and marketing efforts such as seasonal educational campaigns, retailer sales training and ongoing development of consumer-oriented informational materials. Programmable thermostat partners and other stakeholders will be able to draw upon ENERGY STAR tools such as messaging, factoids, and a new education mark to promote the proper use of these energy efficient products. This education mark is part of a new standardized family of marks EPA has developed offering

consumers energy savings advice on a range of products, including thermostats. EPA plans to engage partners and other stakeholders in developing clear and consistent messaging for this product area beginning this fall via conference calls and/or in-person meetings.



To demonstrate engagement with the new education campaign each partner will need to re-commit as an ENERGY STAR partner for Programmable Thermostats by submitting a new Partner Commitment form. In so doing, the partner acknowledges the revised partner commitments for Programmable Thermostats.

Collaboration on New Program Requirements

EPA undertook the review of the ENERGY STAR specification for programmable thermostats to identify enhancements to the performance requirements that would

- 1) deliver meaningful differentiation between ENERGY STAR qualified and standard programmable thermostats and
- 2) promote more effective use of the energy saving features.

EPA continues to be interested in these objectives and wants to continue to collaborate with industry and other stakeholders to pursue them in a reasonable time frame. Consistent with these objectives, EPA is committed to finalizing a new ENERGY STAR specification for programmable thermostats by March, 2009 which would go into effect on or before January 1, 2010. As we proceed, input from industry will be critical, particularly in terms of **developing a proposal for revising the current specification** to better differentiate ENERGY STAR qualified thermostats consistent with program principles and in such a way that energy savings are not so user dependent. If new program requirements are not identified in this timeframe, a suspension of the ENERGY STAR specification for programmable thermostats will go into effect as of **December 31, 2009**, meaning that the ENERGY STAR label would not be available for this product category at that time.

Please feel free to contact Chris Kent, EPA, at (202) 343- 9046 or via e-mail at kent.christopher@epa.gov or Gwen Dobbs, ICF International, at (202) 862-1230 or via e-mail at gdobbs@icfi.com with any questions or concerns.

Thank you for your continued support of ENERGY STAR.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrew Fanara".

Andrew Fanara
ENERGY STAR Product Manager for Programmable Thermostats