



Department of Energy
Washington, DC 20585

May 25, 2006

Dear ENERGY STAR Partners and Stakeholders:

On January 1, 2007, the ENERGY STAR criteria will change for dishwashers and residential/commercial clothes washers. The dishwasher efficiency criteria will change from a minimum Energy Factor (EF) of 0.58 to a minimum EF of 0.65. The clothes washer efficiency criteria will change from a minimum Modified Energy Factor (MEF) of 1.42 to a minimum MEF of 1.72. The ENERGY STAR criteria for clothes washers will also include for the first time a maximum water consumption factor of 8.0.

In preparation for this criteria change, the Department of Energy (the Department) would like to review the product qualification process. Any product *manufactured* after January 1, 2007 must meet the new criteria efficiency levels to be designated as ENERGY STAR. Any product *manufactured* prior to January 1, 2007 may be labeled as ENERGY STAR at the factory and on the EnergyGuide label if the products meets the current or the January 1, 2007 ENERGY STAR criteria.

When an ENERGY STAR criterion is revised, it can cause confusion in the marketplace due to the carryover of ENERGY STAR qualified inventory that does not meet the new criteria. Much of this confusion can be avoided through advance notification and preparation. All ENERGY STAR partners and stakeholders are aware of these criteria changes and have been provided significant lead time to prepare before the effective date of the revised criteria.

In 2004, ENERGY STAR allowed retailers to continue to promote products meeting the old criteria for six months after the updated criteria effective date, provided the products were labeled by the manufacturer. This approach was instituted to try and ease consumer confusion since the products were already labeled as ENERGY STAR. However, the main problem with this approach occurred when consumers purchased these older products and then tried to receive an ENERGY STAR rebate for them. Since these products were not technically "ENERGY STAR qualified", they were not eligible for most product rebates and generated numerous problems for those organizations that offered the rebates.

As a result, starting in 2007, retailers will only be permitted to promote old products as ENERGY STAR qualified for three months if they do not meet the new criteria. After March 31, 2007, these older products may still be sold, but retailer point-of-purchase and promotional materials cannot be affixed to them to designate them as ENERGY STAR qualified. It is the Department's hope that this process will ease the consumer confusion and issues with ENERGY STAR qualified clothes washers and dishwasher rebate redemptions in 2007.

On January 1, 2007, the ENERGY STAR qualified clothes washer and dishwasher product lists will be changed to only show available products that meet the new criteria. Explanatory text will be placed above the product lists to provide details on the new criteria requirements and to state that some previously qualified products may be still available for sale at retail. Additionally, an Excel spreadsheet and a PDF file will be posted to identify all products that met the old criteria and no longer qualify as ENERGY STAR.

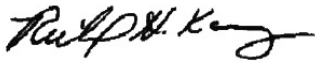
It is still the decision of the individual utility or state to determine if they wish to fulfill rebates or incentives on products that are labeled as ENERGY STAR, but do not meet the new criteria.

Manufacturers are now allowed to place the ENERGY STAR label on the EnergyGuide label and it is illegal to remove that label from any product at the retail level.

As part of our increased efforts to create a smooth transition, DOE will continue to work with ENERGY STAR manufacturing and retail partners to educate them on the new ENERGY STAR criteria introduction process. DOE will encourage manufacturers to try and minimize the number of non-qualified products to market in the first months of 2007. DOE will also encourage retail sales force training to communicate the new ENERGY STAR criteria to their customers.

If you have any questions about this ENERGY STAR criteria process, please contact either Bill McNary, D&R International, at bmcnary@drintl.com or me at Richard.Karney@ee.doe.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard H. Karney". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping tail on the final letter.

Richard H. Karney, P.E.
ENERGY STAR Products Manager