

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



OFFICE OF
AIR AND RADIATION

February 23, 2007

Dear ENERGY STAR[®] Solid Door Refrigerator and Freezer Partner or Other Interested Party:

The purpose of this letter is to formally begin the process to examine and revise the ENERGY STAR specification for commercial solid door refrigerators and freezers. The current ENERGY STAR specification for this equipment has been in place since September 2001 and market share of qualified models has been steadily growing. In addition, in 2005 Congress passed new Federal minimum efficiency standards (effective January 1, 2010) for solid door refrigerators and freezers that mirror existing ENERGY STAR levels. To ensure that ENERGY STAR continues to represent the top performers in terms of energy efficiency, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will be revisiting the current ENERGY STAR specifications for solid door refrigerators and freezers to determine new performance levels. In addition to revisiting existing performance levels, EPA is also considering the following items:

Updates to Existing ASHRAE and AHAM Test Procedures

The two test procedures referenced in the current specification and Qualified Product Information (QPI) form have been updated: ASHRAE 117-1992 (new version 2002) and AHAM HRF 1-1998 (new version 2004). It is EPA's general understanding that the updates made to these standards are unrelated to actual measurements of energy use and volume. However, both standards will be reviewed by EPA to determine whether there are any impacts to the existing ENERGY STAR dataset.

New Temperature Requirement for Ice Cream Freezers

DOE's Final Rule, which was released on December 8, 2006 (10 CFR Parts 430 and 431, pp. 71357-71358), calls for ice cream freezer manufacturers to test and certify models at -15° F to meet EPACT requirements. This decision was made based on industry stakeholder feedback and data provided by the Air Conditioning and Refrigeration Institute (ARI). Currently, the testing requirement for ENERGY STAR qualification is -5° F. EPA will be reviewing available ARI data over the next month and is seeking stakeholder input as to whether the ENERGY STAR temperature parameter should also be revised to -15° F. Please note that a change to the temperature parameter will require retesting of equipment using this new temperature to determine whether the current ENERGY STAR performance level is appropriate.

Laboratory Grade Refrigerators and Freezers

EPA is also interested in developing separate testing and energy performance requirements for laboratory grade models. This is in response to the increased interest in these product types and realization that existing ENERGY STAR test conditions may not be representative of the temperatures under which this equipment typically operates. Toward this goal, we are currently reviewing ASHRAE 117-2002 to determine if it may be used for evaluating the daily energy consumption of laboratory grade refrigeration equipment. EPA anticipates that some minor alterations may need to be made to the testing parameters to address the unique characteristics of this equipment. Once the test procedure evaluation is complete, we will send a communication to stakeholders asking for review of any proposed changes to the test procedure and where possible that this review include the testing of equipment and submission of results to EPA. EPA also anticipates that the effort to develop an ENERGY STAR specification for laboratory grade equipment will be separated from work to revise the existing specification for solid door refrigerators and freezers so that the latter may proceed in a timely manner.

Once EPA has completed its preliminary research, a Draft 1 Version 2.0 specification will be released to all stakeholders for review and comment. All EPA correspondence and specification documents will be posted throughout the revision process to the ENERGY STAR Product Development Web site at www.energystar.gov/productdevelopment (click on "Revisions to Existing Product Specifications"). In addition, all written comments received by EPA will be posted, with permission from the commenter, to the same site.

The exchange of ideas and information between EPA, industry, and other interested parties is critical to the success of ENERGY STAR. As an existing partner, your input is very valuable during this specification review process. Companies that are not already familiar with ENERGY STAR are encouraged to contact EPA to learn more about the program and answer any questions regarding manufacturer participation. If you have any questions or concerns during this process please feel free to contact me at (202) 343-9124 or schmeltz.rachel@epa.gov.

Thank you for your continued support of ENERGY STAR. I look forward to working with you to revise the specification so that it continues to reward superior energy efficiency and high quality in the marketplace.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rachel Schmeltz". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Rachel Schmeltz
ENERGY STAR Program Manager