

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



OFFICE OF
AIR AND RADIATION

July 6, 2004

Dear HVAC Manufacturers and Other Interested Parties:

In the coming months, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency will be revisiting the current ENERGY STAR[®] specification for central air conditioners (CAC) and air source heat pumps (ASHP). This is in light of the recent announcement by the U.S. Department of Energy to go forward with a new national standard for these products at 13 SEER.

As you may know, the current ENERGY STAR specification of 13 SEER/11 EER for split system CAC/ASHP has been in place since October 2002. With the new standard of 13 SEER taking effect in January of 2006, the ENERGY STAR specification must be updated to capture energy savings beyond the standard in a way that is cost effective for consumers and maintains product performance. EPA has initiated a broad review of the specification to determine whether and to what extent this can be accomplished.

EPA will strive to finalize a new specification by April of 2005 in order to be effective at the same time as the new standard – January 2006. This will allow manufacturers nine months to prepare for the ENERGY STAR specification.

On a related note, in October 2003, EPA temporarily suspended the 11 EER requirement for the ENERGY STAR specification. This was due to a lack of information as to which products met this requirement. We are happy to announce that the Air-Conditioning and Refrigeration Institute (ARI), with funding from the Consortium for Energy Efficiency (CEE) and its members, is hosting a national database that will allow consumers to identify products that meet the current ENERGY STAR specification as well as other levels of energy efficiency. **This letter provides you with 30-days notice of the reinstatement of the EER requirement effective August 5, 2004.** At that time, the database may be accessed via a link from the ENERGY STAR Web site, www.energystar.gov.

Lastly, EPA will be initiating a review of the HVAC market to assess the potential for an ENERGY STAR specification for ductless mini-split systems. Information on EPA's progress will accompany future HVAC updates and once available, may be viewed on our Web site at www.energystar.gov/productdevelopment.

As always, the revision of this and all ENERGY STAR specifications is an open process and we welcome, encourage, and appreciate your input. We will contact you again in the near future regarding EPA's ideas for the specification and solicit more detailed feedback. In the meantime, please feel free to contact me at schmeltz.rachel@epa.gov or 202-343-9124 if you have questions or concerns about the revision process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rachel Schmeltz". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending from the start of the name.

Rachel Schmeltz
ENERGY STAR Product Development