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ENERGY STAR[®] LAUNCHES NEW ENERGY-EFFICIENT DEHUMIDIFIERS

While states grapple with deregulation and an impending energy crisis this winter, one government program is offering a solution. ENERGY STAR, a program created by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the US Department of Energy (DOE), will launch new energy-efficient dehumidifiers during the 2001 International Housewares Show, Jan. 14-17 in Chicago. Whirlpool Corporation, a charter dehumidifier partner, will take the lead by featuring this latest addition to the ENERGY STAR family of products at its booth.

While the ENERGY STAR label is already displayed on more than 30 product categories, the event will mark ENERGY STAR's first step into the small household appliance market, which accounts for 30 percent of total residential energy usage. The ENERGY STAR label helps consumers identify products that save them money and protect the environment by saving energy. Manufacturers and retailers sign voluntary agreements allowing them to place the ENERGY STAR label on products that meet or exceed energy-efficiency guidelines set by the EPA and DOE.

Dehumidifiers, which reduce the amount of moisture in the air, have become a popular appliance in homes across the US, particularly those with basements. Reduced moisture helps prevent mold, mildew and odor, contributing to a healthy home environment. To qualify for the ENERGY STAR label, an average dehumidifier with the capacity to remove 10-24 liters of water from the air per day must have an Energy Factor of 1.30 or greater (or remove at least 1.30 liters per kilowatt hour). Whirlpool Corporation and Therma-Stor Products are the first manufacturers to qualify for the ENERGY STAR label for dehumidifiers. Whirlpool's ENERGY STAR labeled model – the Whirlpool Basement Dehumidifier(TM) – also is the only dehumidifier on the market designed to operate at temperatures as low as 50F.

“Whirlpool Corporation is committed to supporting the ENERGY STAR program in all categories,” said Michael D. Ambos, Brand Manager of Whirlpool. “The new ENERGY STAR labeled dehumidifiers in the Basement Dehumidifier platform provide consumers with significant energy savings.”

With energy use and rising utility bills increasingly making headlines, demand for energy-efficient products may see a significant increase. Already, California has witnessed unprecedented power emergencies, leading to business shut downs and soaring utility bills. With ENERGY STAR, consumers have an easy way to make a difference.

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Dehumidifiers consume as much electricity as the average refrigerator and cost US consumers approximately one billion dollars a year in utility bills. If everyone purchasing a dehumidifier chose an ENERGY STAR labeled dehumidifier in the year 2001 alone, consumers would save approximately seven million dollars, or 86 million kWh (kilowatt hours) – a pollution reduction equal to removing 14,000 autos from US highways.

ENERGY STAR is a dynamic government/industry partnership that makes it easy for businesses and consumers to save money and protect the environment. ENERGY STAR covers a wide range of product categories, including new homes, commercial and industrial buildings, residential heating and cooling equipment, major appliances, office equipment, lighting, and consumer electronics among others. Introduced by the EPA in 1992 as a voluntary labeling program designed to identify and promote energy-efficient products, ENERGY STAR continues to grow. Recent additions to the ENERGY STAR family include set-top boxes, traffic signals, and water coolers.

For more information about ENERGY STAR, visit our Web site at www.energystar.gov.

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