



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

OFFICE OF
AIR AND RADIATION

November 16, 2005

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

The purpose of this letter is to invite you to participate in an industry meeting hosted by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). This meeting will address EPA's latest efforts to revise the ENERGY STAR specification for programmable thermostats.

As you may know, the current programmable thermostat specification has not been revised since 1995 and EPA believes it has become inadequate to differentiate energy-efficient products in the marketplace. In order to ensure that the specification met the ENERGY STAR guiding principles and thus remained of value to partners, EPA began to re-evaluate the current specification in 2002. To date, this revision process has included: conducting market industry research; meeting one-on-one with stakeholders; holding an industry meeting with ENERGY STAR manufacturer and utility partners in conjunction with the 2003 HVAC Partner meeting; attending trade shows for input; and working with a third-party to determine consumer barriers, concerns and usage patterns with programmable thermostats.

As a result of this process, EPA has determined that programmable thermostats have several unique features, which have posed challenges in moving forward with revising the specification. These unique features include the following:

1. sales of ENERGY STAR qualified programmable thermostats do not guarantee EPA energy savings nor carbon emission reduction;
2. savings are determined by consumer behavior; and, research gathered by EPA indicates installation of programmable thermostats has little to no impact on consumer set back behavior;
3. each programmable thermostat manufacturer uses different design elements to address consumer ease-of-use issues. Determining success of these elements is subjective and standardizing them may lead to competitive disadvantages;
4. consumers may often use programmable thermostats to enhance comfort, rather than for energy and dollar savings; and,
5. programmable thermostats use insignificant energy themselves, making setting specifications unique and difficult.

Given these challenges, EPA is proposing a change in direction for the specification and a new set of goals for the revision process. EPA would like to request the attendance of ENERGY STAR programmable thermostat stakeholders for an industry meeting to discuss these issues and to provide details on the new direction we would like to pursue with regards to programmable thermostats. The meeting will take place **Wednesday, January 11, 2005, from 10 a.m. to noon, in Washington, D.C.** Please respond to Gwen Duff, ICF Consulting, via e-mail at gduff@icfconsulting.com if you are able to attend the meeting. A Draft agenda and detailed logistical information for the meeting will be forthcoming shortly. Thank you for your attention and ongoing support of ENERGY STAR.

Regards,

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

Andrew Fanara, Team Leader
ENERGY STAR Product Development