

Overview

Appliance and equipment efficiency standards have served as one of the nation's most effective policies for improving energy efficiency and saving consumers energy and money. Today, the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE's) Appliance and Equipment Standards Program (Standards Program) covers more than 65 products, representing about 90% of home energy use, 60% of commercial building energy use, and approximately 30% of industrial energy use.

Standards implemented since 1987 saved American consumers \$63 billion on their utility bills in 2015 alone, and have helped the United States avoid emissions of 2.6 billion tons of carbon dioxide (CO₂), which is equivalent to the annual CO₂ emissions from nearly 543 million automobiles.

Since 2009, the Obama Administration has issued 34 new or updated appliance standards across more than 40 products, which will increase annual savings by more than 75% over the next decade, and are projected to save consumers a total of nearly \$526 billion dollars off their utility bills between 2009 and 2030.¹ The energy savings from these standards—39.3 quads by 2030—is roughly equivalent to the energy used by all U.S. buildings over one year.



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Climate Action Plan

To build upon the energy and environmental savings delivered to American consumers, the Administration set a goal in the President's Climate Action Plan announced in June 2013. Efficiency standards for appliances, commercial equipment, and federal buildings set in the first and second terms combined will reduce carbon pollution by at least 3 billion metric tons cumulatively by 2030—equivalent to nearly one-half of the carbon pollution from the entire U.S. energy sector for one year—while continuing to cut families' energy bills.

Since June 2013, DOE has finalized efficiency standards for 15 products, including commercial refrigeration equipment, electric motors, general service fluorescent lamps (GSFLs), furnace fans, automatic commercial ice makers, and packaged terminal air conditioners and heat pumps. With these standards, DOE is more than two-thirds of the way to achieving the Climate Action Plan's carbon reduction goal of 3 billion metric tons.

Consumer Benefits

The Standards Program has driven remarkable gains in the energy efficiency of household appliances and equipment, resulting in large energy bill savings.² For example, today, the typical new refrigerator uses a quarter of the energy than in 1973—despite offering 20% more storage capacity and being available at half the retail cost. Since 1990, additional efficiency gains in household appliances include the following:

- New clothes washers use 70% less energy
- New dishwashers use more than 40% less energy
- New air conditioners use about 50% less energy
- New furnaces use about 10% less energy

All told, these efficiency gains translate into large dollar savings. While the more efficient products may cost more at the time of sale, consumers save through lower energy bills year after year, and are more than compensated for any higher initial product costs. Today, a typical household saves more than \$300 per year off their energy bills as a result of standards, and as people replace their

appliances with newer models, they can expect to save more than \$425 annually by 2030.

National Benefits

The Program is highly effective — achieving high bang-for-the-buck energy savings. The national energy efficiency standards completed through 2015 are expected to save 70 quadrillion British thermal units (quads) of energy by 2020 and will amount to 127 quads through 2030. The cumulative utility bill savings to consumers of these standards are estimated to be more than \$990 billion by 2020 and grow to \$1.9 trillion through 2030.³

The environmental benefits are substantial, as well. Annual carbon dioxide savings will reach 283 million tons by 2020, and the cumulative savings by 2030 is estimated to be about 7 billion tons.

Manufacturer Benefits

Federal energy efficiency standards benefit manufacturers as well. They reduce the regulatory burden on appliance and equipment manufacturers by pre-empting a potential patchwork of state standards with a single federal standard. This regulatory streamlining enhances industry competitiveness, profitability, and helps to protect and create jobs.



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Further, efficiency standards can help lower the costs of innovative energy efficient technologies by facilitating their entry into the market and providing economies of scale. Plus, the test procedures that underlay standards enhance the ability to test the performance of newer technologies. The result is higher efficiency products that are more widely available and more affordable to own.

The Appliance and Equipment Standards Program

The Appliance and Equipment Standards Program is authorized by Congress through several statutes—with the earliest in 1975— in part due to manufacturer interest in national solutions to a patchwork of state-by-state standards, which increase manufacturer costs and

therefore costs to consumers. These solutions result in energy bill savings for consumers as the least-efficient product models become ineligible for sale in the United States. Consumers can spend these savings on goods and services other than utility bills, spurring the economy and creating jobs. The Standards Program includes a number of interrelated efforts:

- Development of test procedures
- Development of standards
- Enforcement of the standards
- Partner with Federal Trade Commission on the well-known Energy Guide labels on appliances
- Technical support for the ENERGY STAR® program.

DOE works in an open, transparent manner with stakeholders on these efforts.

¹ Represents undiscounted utility bill savings in \$2014. The value accumulates all savings through 2030.

² Data in this section are based on shipment-weighted efficiency data from the Association of Home Appliance Manufacturers for home appliances and the Air-Conditioning, Heating, and Refrigeration Institute.

³ Represents undiscounted utility bill savings in \$2014. The values accumulate all savings through 2020 and 2030, respectively.