

Frequently Asked Questions

Notice of Proposed Rulemaking pertaining to Test Procedures for Clothes Dryers

1. What is the purpose of this notice?

DOE proposes to amend its test procedures for clothes dryers to continue ensuring that they are reasonably designed to measure the energy consumption during a representative average use cycle or period of use and are not unduly burdensome to conduct.

Specifically, DOE proposes to provide additional direction in response to questions from manufacturers and test laboratories; specify rounding requirements for all reported values; apply consistent use of nomenclature and correct typographical errors; and remove obsolete sections of the test procedures. DOE also seeks feedback from interested parties on issues such as consumer usage patterns and “connected” clothes dryer features.

This notice of proposed rulemaking (NOPR) is part of DOE’s ongoing commitment to consider feedback from all interested stakeholders and promote an open and transparent rulemaking process.

2. What type of information is the Department looking for?

In this NOPR, DOE seeks information related to representative consumer usage of clothes dryers, how frequently consumers select different cycle programs, temperature settings, dryness settings, and other settings that could impact energy use, test-load composition, whether the current residual moisture content (RMC) percentage under DOE test conditions is representative of the energy use during an average use cycle or period of use for clothes dryers with automatic termination controls, or whether a different RMC meets this statutory criterion, or any other aspects of the test procedures. A full list of issues on which DOE seeks comment can be found in section V.C of the NOPR.

3. What is a clothes dryer?

DOE regulations define “electric clothes dryer” and “gas clothes dryer” similarly as a cabinet-like appliance designed to dry fabrics in a tumble-type drum with forced air circulation, with blower(s) driven by an electric motor(s) and either electricity or gas, respectively, as the heat source.

4. How much energy do clothes dryers consume?

The per unit energy consumption for electric clothes dryers is approximately 782 kilowatt hours per year and approximately 2.28 million British thermal units (Btu) per year for gas clothes dryers. Nationally, DOE estimates that clothes dryers used 0.67 quadrillion Btu per year of primary energy in 2016. This represented 3.3 percent of total U.S. residential energy use.

5. How many clothes dryers are shipped annually in the United States?

In 2016, total shipments of clothes dryers in the United States were approximately 7.6 million, of which, electric clothes dryers accounted for 6.2 million and gas clothes dryers accounted for 1.4 million.

6. Who are the parties that may be interested in this notice?

Interested parties include manufacturers of clothes dryers, trade associations, distributors, energy utilities, state agencies, international organizations, and consumer, energy, and environmental advocacy groups.

7. How does an interested party comment on this notice and when are comments due?

The comment period for this rule will be 60 days, beginning on the date in which this NOPR publishes in the Federal Register. Interested parties may submit comments via the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal at <http://www.regulations.gov> or via email to ResClothesDryer2014TP0034@ee.doe.gov, identified with docket number EERE-2014-BT-TP-0034. Comments may also be submitted via postal mail or hand delivery by following the instructions found in the notice.