

Frequently Asked Questions

Request for Information Pertaining to Energy Conservation Standards for Residential Clothes Washers

1. What is the purpose of this notice?

This Request for Information (RFI) initiates the review process outlined by the Energy Policy and Conservation Act, as amended, and seeks input from the public to assist DOE with its determination about whether amended energy conservation standards are warranted for residential clothes washers.

Information received in response to this request will help DOE determine whether amending the energy efficiency requirements for residential clothes washers would result in significant energy savings and whether such standards would be technologically feasible and economically justified.

This RFI 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?

DOE seeks information related to the U.S. residential clothes washer industry, technology, and market. In particular, DOE seeks information regarding the appropriateness of the current product classes and the current energy and water efficiency metrics; the consumer utility associated with clothes washer cycle time; the installation and consumer use of smaller residential clothes washers; and on the availability of new configurations and features that may be affected by amended energy conservation standards. DOE also seeks information on consumer purchasing trends for top-loading units. To the extent that designs, configurations, and features of residential clothes washers affect performance, DOE seeks information on the market, availability, prevalence, and consumer preferences for them as part of its technical and economic evaluation of potential standards.

3. What is a residential clothes washer?

Residential clothes washers are consumer products that clean clothes using a soap or detergent solution along with mechanical agitation or other movement. The user preselects a combination of settings for the cycle, which may include water temperature, water fill level, and wash, rinse, drain, and spin operations.

4. How much energy do residential clothes washers consume?

Nationally, residential clothes washers use approximately 1.0 quads/year of primary energy (including the energy to heat water used in residential clothes washers), which represents roughly 5% of total residential energy use, and 1% of total U.S. energy use.

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

Nearly 10 million residential clothes washers are shipped annually in the United States.

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

Interested parties include manufacturers of residential clothes washers, 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 45 days, beginning on the date in which this notice 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 ConsumerClothesWasher2017STD0014@ee.doe.gov, identified with docket number EERE-2017-BT-STD-0014. Comments may also be submitted via postal mail or hand delivery by following the instructions found in the notice.