



ENERGY RATING LABEL CHANGES FOR AIR CONDITIONERS, REFRIGERATORS AND FREEZERS

Notice to Suppliers and Retailers

All Australian jurisdictions and the New Zealand Government have agreed to revise and improve the appliance label, one of the longest running programs under the Australian National Framework for Energy Efficiency and the New Zealand National Energy Efficiency and Conservation Strategy. These programs have enabled the achievement of some substantial energy usage and carbon emission reductions.

The Equipment Energy Efficiency (E3) program, which includes Minimum Energy Performance Standards (MEPS) and the Energy Rating Label for equipment and appliances, has contributed to improvements in energy efficiency over the past 20 years.

The purpose of this letter is to notify you of some upgrades to the Standards and Energy Rating label calculations to assist you with:

- a smooth transition through the provision of key dates and fact sheets;
- pro-active stock holding management where possible to reduce consumer confusion by minimising the display and delivery of product with inconsistent labelling (both old and new labelling);
- the opportunity to use the transition to increase environmentally focussed perceptions of your brands; and
- the ability to pro-actively convey the changes and transitional arrangements, including positive selling points.

The aim of the Energy Rating label is to assist consumer decision making by providing an easy to read comparative data at the point of sale. It also assists suppliers to differentiate products in a market where consumers are becoming increasingly environmentally savvy. Research has shown that consumers value energy ratings as a key contributor in their decision making process with 90% using information on the energy label when buying an appliance¹.

New Standards

A new refrigerator and freezer standard (AS/NZS4474.2:2009) was published in April 2009 and a new air-conditioning standard (AS/NZS3823.2:2009) was published in October 2009.

¹ Appliance Performance Labelling in Australia and New Zealand, Artcraft Research, Canberra 2005

As a result:

- New registrations to the old standard for fridges and freezers will not be accepted from 1 October 2009; and
- New registrations to the old standard for air conditioners will not be accepted from 6 December 2009; and
- All relevant, fridges, freezers and air conditioners manufactured or imported on or after 1 April 2010 will need to be registered to the new standards (see key dates table posted on website) even if they were registered to the previous version of the standard.

New Labels

Industry adoption of current technology, to increase the energy efficiency of individual products, has resulted in the clustering of products at the higher end of the scale. Therefore refrigerators, freezers and air-conditioning units have been re-graded to a new 10-star system to enable clearer differentiation.

While the appearance and dimensions of the label will be similar, the revised algorithms will initially reduce the number of stars on the label for products which have the *same energy consumption*. This re-grading will allow consumers to make better informed cost and energy-saving decisions, as well as provide an incentive for manufacturers to continually improve the energy efficiency of their products. Please view fact sheets online for more information.

While the 6-star label will continue to appear on all products, the new 10-star label can be awarded to manufacturers of super-efficient appliances.

Additional information and communication materials will be forwarded to you before 1 April 2010 to assist you in explaining the transition to your staff and customers.

In the meantime if you have any enquiries please send your questions to energyrating@environment.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

Mel Slade



Mel Slade
Equipment Energy Efficiency Program Chair
14 October 2009