ASAP | APPLIANCE STANDARDS AWARENESS PROJECT

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ASAP FACT SHEET: Dishwashers

> According to Consumer Reports, "when it comes to clean dishes, sparkling performance starts at $500 or less".

Consensus standards

The Department of Energy (DOE) recently published updated national efficiency standards for dishwashers. DOE based the new standards on a consensus recommendation negotiated between manufacturers and consumer, environmental and energy efficiency groups in August 2010. The standards will reduce energy use by 14% and water use by 23 % compared to a dishwasher meeting the current standards. For standard-sized units, the maximum energy and water use will be 307 kWh/year and 5 gallons or less per cycle respectively. For compact units, the maximum energy use will be 222 kWh per year and water use will not exceed 3.5 gallons per cycle. The standards, which apply to newly manufactured dishwashers manufactured or imported for domestic sale, will take effect in May 2013. This fact sheet addresses some of the key questions about the standards.

New dishwasher standards will save consumers money

The new standards will reduce consumer energy and water bills by about $8 per year or about $100 over the typical life of a dishwasher. We estimate that the average additional upfront cost to purchase the product will be about $20, which will be paid back in lower bills within 2.5 years.

Efficient dishwashers widely available and affordable today

Many affordable dishwashers on the market today already meet and go beyond the negotiated standards. The January 2012 ENERGY STAR criteria are slightly more stringent than the proposed standards with a maximum of 295 kWh/year and 4.25 gallons or less per cycle. A review of ENERGY STAR-qualified products on manufacturer sites reveals a high percentage already meeting this efficiency level.

For example, about three-quarters of the dishwashers listed on Whirlpool's website and about half of those listed on Kenmore's website meet ENERGY STAR criteria. These products cover the range of price points, with budget style units available for around $300-$500.

Top performance in high efficiency models

Pick up the January 2012 *Consumer Reports* (CR) magazine and you'll see 20 recommended dishwashers rated very good or excellent in performance. The majority of these high performing models meet the new efficiency standards, well in advance of the effective date of the standards. Though you will find some high priced models among them, several sell for $650 or less.

Beyond the top twenty, there are many affordable high-performing products. In *Consumer Reports* online, more than half of the dishwashers rated 'very good' or 'excellent' in washing performance and efficiency cost less than $500 and about half of those sell for $400 or less.

More features migrating to lower-priced models

Consumers have a range of choices with dishwashers - both in price and in features. According to Consumer Reports, "You can pay $1,500 or more for a dishwasher with hidden controls, interactive digital displays, and special grime-fighting cycles. But when it comes to clean dishes, sparkling performance starts at about $500 or less. What's more, you needn't settle for a bare-bones dishwasher at that price. Esthetics such as stainless-steel exteriors--and practical perks that include flexible loading features--are migrating to more low-priced models." (CR Jan 2012)

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DOE estimates net dollar savings for consumers will be about $500 million.

With standards, we expect that more features will migrate to the lower-priced models. Manufacturers often use the opportunity presented by standards to upgrade production lines, add features, and introduce innovations.

National savings

By 2025, we estimate the dishwasher standards will save about 2.6 billion kilowatt hours of electricity annually (an amount equal to the annual consumption of more than 200,000 U.S. households), reduce natural gas consumption by about 3.2 trillion Btu (enough to heat about 65,000 U.S. households), and save about 16 billion gallons of water (enough to meet the daily needs of about 300,000 Americans). Annual carbon dioxide emissions will be reduced by about 1.7 million metric tons in 2025 or more than the annual emissions of 300,000 passenger vehicles. Taking into account increased upfront costs, DOE estimates net dollar savings for consumers will be about $500 million.