

Efficiency Standards for Walk-In Coolers Will Lower Business Costs

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Updated standards finalized by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) in December 2024 will ensure that new walk-in coolers and freezers use proven energy-saving technologies, reducing businesses' electricity bills. A congressional resolution to cancel these standards, if adopted, would cost businesses and increase strain on the electric grid.

Keeping food and other perishable items cold in walk-in refrigerators and freezers is a big electricity expense for businesses like restaurants, convenience stores, and grocery stores. Last year DOE finalized efficiency standards ensuring that new units will soon use up-to-date energy-saving improvements, making them less costly to run.

The new standards will save businesses up to \$6.5 billion on utility bills (from products sold over 30 years), DOE estimates. The standards will take effect in late 2027 for non-display doors and late 2028 for refrigeration systems.

Walk-in refrigeration systems can be improved to meet the amended standards by using technologies including more efficient compressors, variable-speed fan motors, improved heat exchangers, and crankcase heater controls. Manufacturers of non-display doors can meet the new standards by adding anti-sweat heater controls. These improvements can deliver significant cost savings.

DOE was required by law to update the standards for these products (if cost-effective) by 2022.

Repealing the standards would raise costs for businesses and constrain future electric grid capacity needed to power local manufacturing, AI data centers, and new residential or commercial developments.



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