

New standards for Energy Star fridges

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The U.S. Department of Energy is increasing the energy efficiency criteria required for refrigerators carrying the Energy Star label.

Full-size refrigerators must be a minimum of 20 percent more efficient than current federal energy efficiency standards, an increase from the existing 15 percent minimum, the Energy Department said Friday in a release.

The new criteria will go into effect next April.

The Energy Department has projected that that 2.2 million Energy Star-qualified refrigerators will be sold in the first year of the new standards, saving U.S. consumers up to \$23.5 million annually on electric bills and over 230 million kilowatt hours of energy.

Energy Star was created by the Energy Department and Environmental Protection Agency in 1992 to reduce air pollution through increased energy efficiency.

Current ENERGY STAR(r)-qualified refrigerators use 65 percent less energy than refrigerator models in 1980. The criteria for refrigerators was last changed in 2004.

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