

New efficiency standards for clothes washers, dishwashers

June 25 2012, By Mary Beth Breckenridge, Akron Beacon Journal

New energy-efficiency standards for residential clothes washers and dishwashers were announced by the U.S. Energy Department.

Under the new rules, announced in May, front-loading clothes washers will use 15 percent less energy and 35 percent less water. Top-loading clothes washers will use 33 percent less energy and 19 percent less water. For dishwashers, the savings will be about 15 percent on energy and more than 20 percent on water.

An analysis by the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy and the Appliance Standards Awareness Project determined consumers would save \$400 to \$600 in energy and water bills with a new clothes washer. Buyers of new dishwashers would save about \$100 in those utility costs.

The appliances are expected to cost more upfront, but utility savings are expected to offset the additional cost within about two years, the two organizations said.

Some [appliances](#) already meet the higher standards. All of Consumer Reports' highest-rated clothes washers do, and so do most of its top-rated dishwashers, ACEEE noted. That indicates the changes will not harm cleaning performance, the organization said.

The changes take effect in 2013 for dishwashers and 2015 for clothes washers.

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Citation: New efficiency standards for clothes washers, dishwashers (2012, June 25) retrieved 25 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2012-06-efficiency-standards-washers-dishwashers.html>

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