



Housing Fact Sheets

Energy Efficiency & Appliances

Appliances account for about 20% of your household's energy consumption, with refrigerators and clothes washers at the top of the consumption list.

When you're shopping for appliances, think of two price tags. The first one covers the purchase price - think of it as an investment. The second price tag is the cost of operating the appliance during its lifetime. You'll be paying on that second price tag every month with your utility bill for the next 10 to 20 years, depending on the life of the appliance. For example, during the typical 20 year lifespan of a refrigerator, you will pay two to three times as much for the electricity to operate the refrigerator than you paid to purchase it at the store. By paying a little more to invest in an energy efficient model, you will be paid a dividend in savings on your monthly electric bill over the life of the appliance. So when shopping for new household appliances keep in mind that purchasing cheaper, but inefficient, appliances is not saving you money, it's costing you money.

ENERGY STAR Label

When shopping for a new appliance look for the ENERGY STAR label. The ENERGY STAR helps you to quickly identify the most energy efficient products. Only products that substantially exceed minimum federal energy efficiency standards can be labeled with the ENERGY STAR.

To learn more about ENERGY STAR appliances and to locate stores in our area that carry them, go to www.getenergysmart.org. Once at this web page click on the ENERGY STAR products button.



If looking for new household products, look for ones that have earned the ENERGY STAR. They meet strict energy efficiency guidelines set by the EPA and U.S. D.O.E



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Energy Guide Label:

Don't confuse the blue ENERGY STAR label with the yellow and black Energy Guide label. The federal government requires most appliances to display the bright yellow and black Energy Guide label to help consumers determine how energy efficient an appliance is. Although these labels will not tell you which appliance is the most efficient, they will tell you the annual energy consumption and operating cost for each appliance so you can compare them yourself.

Since 1980 the Federal Trade Commission has required Energy Guide labels on refrigerators, freezers, dishwashers, clothes washers, room air conditioners, water heaters, furnaces, boilers, central air conditioners, heat pumps and pool heaters. The Energy Guide label allows consumers to compare the efficiency of various brands and models when shopping for a new appliance. See box below for more information about how to read the EnergyGuide label.

How to Read The Energy Guide Label

Manufacturer, model number and appliance type

- Information about features, capacity, and size so you can compare brands
- Estimate of appliance's annual energy use. The lower the number, the more energy efficient the appliance, and the less it costs to run it.
- If the appliance is an ENERGY STAR appliance the ENERGY STAR symbol will appear on the ENERGYGUIDE label
- The range of energy use for similar models. Use this scale to see how a particular model measures up to the competition.
- Estimate of how much it can cost to run this model for a year. Note that the estimated yearly operating cost is based on the national average cost of electricity (8.24 cents per kWh). The average cost of electricity for residential consumers in New York State is much higher (15.64 cents per kWh in 2005)¹

¹This price was obtained from the Public Policy Institute of New York and was the average for the period of January 2005 to November, 2005.