



Should I be concerned about the new energy-efficiency standards?

We're Glad You Asked!

On January 23, 2006, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) is implementing new federal regulations on energy efficiency for residential central air conditioning and heat pump units. If you're buying a new unit for your home, there are some things you should consider before you make your decision.

THE NEW STANDARDS

Under the terms of the National Appliance Energy Conservation Act (NAECA), energy efficiency standards for air conditioners, heat pumps and residential packaged units have been raised. A minimum of 13 SEER (seasonal energy efficiency rating) is required for air conditioners and 13 SEER/7.7 HSPF (heating seasonal performance factor) for heat pumps.

Compared to the previous 10 SEER standard, 13 SEER represents a significant increase in energy efficiency. Increased energy efficiency creates significant environmental benefits as well as important economic benefits. For example, when compared with older, less efficient equipment, air conditioners and heat pumps with higher SEER ratings can save you hundreds of dollars each year on your utility bills.

WHAT'S IN STORE FOR YOUR FUTURE

If your current air conditioner or heat pump is rated at less than 13 SEER, the new regulations don't require you to purchase new equipment. Replacement parts for 10 and 12 SEER systems will be available for years to come, so routine maintenance and repairs of your current equipment can continue. It may even be possible to purchase a new air conditioner or heat pump rated below 13 SEER. However, after January 23, 2006, manufacturers can no longer produce equipment that does not meet the NAECA minimum standard of 13 SEER/7.7 HSPF. That means equipment rated 10 or 12 SEER will only be available as long as manufacturers, distributors and dealers have them in inventory.

IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS

Your decision to purchase a new air conditioner or heat pump might also involve questions about cost. Initially, equipment rated 13 SEER or higher is more expensive. However, it's important that you consider overall value. The improved energy efficiency of higher-SEER equipment will lower your utility bills, saving you money in the long run.

When replacing your existing system be sure you receive full value for your purchase. To achieve true NAECA efficiency standards, the outdoor unit must be installed with the properly matched indoor coil. The appropriately matched indoor coil can be identified through a rating registered with the Air Conditioning and Refrigeration Institute. Ask your Lennox dealer for this rating.

To achieve the benefits of increased energy efficiency, equipment rated 13 SEER or higher requires greater heat-transfer surface area. As a result, system components will be larger than before. Lennox has minimized increases in the size of units where possible, while maintaining unit performance goals.

COVERING THE BASICS

Homeowner Concern	Lennox Answer
New regulations mean I will be forced to replace my air conditioner or heat pump.	The purchase of new equipment is not mandated. You can keep using your current air conditioner or heat pump as long as you like. Replacement parts for 10 and 12 SEER systems will remain available for some time allowing routine maintenance and repairs to continue.
I do need a new air conditioner, but I am concerned about the added cost of higher SEER equipment.	Because the NAECA mandate applies only to manufacturers of HVAC equipment, you can still buy units rated below 13 SEER if your dealer has them available in inventory. However, higher SEER equipment will save you money in the long-term through lower energy bills.
I'm worried that higher SEER equipment won't fit in the space I have available.	Some components of HVAC equipment rated 13 SEER or higher are larger than before. While this may be an issue for some homeowners, your Lennox dealer is equipped to handle any such considerations and will be glad to tell you about the comprehensive line of high-efficiency cooling systems now available to meet your needs.

Lennox is fully prepared for implementation of the new energy efficiency standards. Your Lennox dealer is knowledgeable about the issues involved, and will gladly answer any questions or concerns you may have. In addition, Lennox is proud to offer a full line of products designed to meet and exceed the new government regulations and, more importantly, to meet your needs as a homeowner.



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