



.....**for immediate release**.....

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***Q: How can Wisconsin residents protect the environment for future generations and save money on utility bills?***

***A: Focus on Energy recommends using ENERGY STAR® qualified appliances in homes and offices.***

**MADISON, Wis. (April 30, 2007)** – As talk of global warming, carbon footprint and energy conservation dominate headlines and political agendas, many consumers are left to wonder how they can make a difference or if they can be part of the solution. Focus on Energy, Wisconsin’s energy efficiency and renewable energy initiative, wants Wisconsin residents to know reducing energy consumption and saving money on utility bills is as easy as looking for the ENERGY STAR.

ENERGY STAR qualified appliances use advanced technologies to operate more efficiently than standard models, which reduce energy consumption and operating costs. These reductions translate into a cleaner environment with fewer fossil fuels being used and financial savings in the way of lower utility bills.

Most consumers are unaware the appliances they purchase actually have two price tags. The obvious cost is the purchase price; the expense most people don’t consider is what it will take to operate in terms of utility charges. Appliances that have earned the ENERGY STAR use 10 percent to 50 percent less energy than standard model counterparts, which can add up to big savings.

“Simple actions can make a big difference,” said Bobbi Fey, appliance program manager for Focus on Energy. “Saving energy and money comes down to making smart choices, and looking for the ENERGY STAR when shopping for appliances is a way everyone can win. ENERGY STAR qualified appliances protect the environment for future generations and save money on utility bills. In addition, adopting practices to optimize the efficiency of purchased equipment can result in even more savings.”

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To make becoming energy efficient easier for consumers, Focus on Energy is offering a \$50 mail-in Cash-Back Reward on ENERGY STAR qualified clothes washers purchased at participating retail locations beginning May 1 and lasting until June 30. To receive the Cash-Back Reward, simply fill out the Cash-Back Reward form provided by the retailer at the point of purchase, or print the form from the Focus on Energy Web site, [focusonenergy.com](http://focusonenergy.com), where there is also a list of participating retailers.

**Following are facts about the financial and environmental benefits of ENERGY STAR qualified appliances.**



**Clothes Washers**

- Through superior design and system features, ENERGY STAR qualified clothes washers clean clothes using 50 percent less combined energy and water than standard washers.
- Most full-sized ENERGY STAR qualified clothes washers use 18 gallons to 25 gallons of water per load, compared to the 40 gallons used by a standard machine. These savings equal enough water to fill a 10,000-gallon swimming pool each year.
- Compared to a model manufactured before 1994, an ENERGY STAR qualified clothes washer can save up to \$110 per year on utility bills.
- Most ENERGY STAR qualified clothes washers extract more water from clothes during the spin cycle. This reduces the drying time, saving energy, as well as wear and tear on clothes.
- ENERGY STAR qualified clothes washers are available in both top-loading and front-loading designs.

**Tips for Optimizing Efficiency**

- Wash full loads. Clothes washers are most efficient when operated with full loads.
- Wash clothes in cold water to eliminate the energy needed to heat water.

### **Refrigerators**



- In most households, the refrigerator is the single biggest energy consuming kitchen appliance.
- ENERGY STAR qualified refrigerator models use 40 percent less energy than the conventional models sold in 2001, which can result in a savings of more than \$250 over the refrigerator's lifetime.
- Replacing a refrigerator bought in 1990 with a new ENERGY STAR qualified model would save enough energy to light the average household for nearly four months.
- ENERGY STAR qualified refrigerator models use high efficiency compressors, improved insulation and more precise temperature and defrost mechanisms to improve energy efficiency.
- Many ENERGY STAR qualified refrigerator models include automatic ice-maker and through-the-door ice dispensers. Qualified models are also available with top, bottom and side-by-side freezers.

#### **Tips for Optimizing Efficiency**

- Position your refrigerator away from a heat source such as an oven, a dishwasher or direct sunlight from a window.
- To allow air to circulate around the condenser coils, leave a space between the wall or cabinets and the refrigerator or freezer, and keep the coils clean.
- Make sure the door seals are airtight.
- Keep your refrigerator between 35 degrees and 38 degrees Fahrenheit and your freezer at zero degrees Fahrenheit.
- Minimize the amount of time the refrigerator door is open.
- Recycle older or second refrigerators.

### **Dishwashers**



- ENERGY STAR qualified dishwashers use more than 40 percent less energy than the federal minimum standard for energy consumption.
- Because they use less hot water compared to new conventional models, an ENERGY STAR qualified dishwasher saves about \$100 over its lifetime.
- Because of their internal water heaters, ENERGY STAR qualified dishwashers reduce water heating costs by 20 percent.

#### **Tips for Optimizing Efficiency**

- Dishwashers should be run with full loads. Most of the energy used by a dishwasher goes to heat water. Since the amount of water used per cycle cannot be decreased, dishwashers should be full to optimize efficiency.
- Avoid using the heat-dry, rinse-hold and pre-rinse features. Instead use your dishwasher's air-dry option.

For more information about ENERGY STAR qualified appliances, including the economic and environmental benefits of using them, call Focus on Energy at (800) 762-7077 or visit [focusonenergy.com](http://focusonenergy.com).

**About Focus on Energy**

Focus on Energy works with eligible Wisconsin residents and businesses to install cost effective energy efficiency and renewable energy projects. Focus information, resources and financial incentives help to implement projects that otherwise would not get completed, or to complete projects sooner than scheduled. Its efforts help Wisconsin residents and businesses manage rising energy costs, promote in-state economic development, protect our environment and control the state's growing demand for electricity and natural gas. For more information call (800) 762-7077 or visit [focusonenergy.com](http://focusonenergy.com).

**About ENERGY STAR**

ENERGY STAR was introduced by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in 1992 as a voluntary market-based partnership to reduce air pollution through increased energy efficiency. Today, with assistance from the U.S. Department of Energy, the ENERGY STAR program offers businesses and consumers energy efficient solutions to save energy and money, and help protect the environment for future generations. More than 8,000 organizations have become ENERGY STAR partners and are committed to improving the energy efficiency of products, homes and businesses. For more information, visit [energystar.gov](http://energystar.gov).

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