



Consumer Federation of America

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CFA Applauds Department of Energy's New Regional Efficiency Standards For Residential Air Conditioners and Furnaces & Upgrade of Heat Pump Standards

With Heating and Cooling Costs Comprising Almost 50% of Home Energy Bills, Standards Will Provide Meaningful Savings to Consumers

Washington, DC—The Consumer Federation of America (CFA) praised the Department of Energy's new efficiency standards establishing regional standards for central air conditioners and furnaces and strengthened national standards for heat pumps. The new rules are based on a joint recommendation filed with DOE made by CFA, other consumer organizations, and manufacturing and efficiency groups in 2009.

“CFA has long supported regional efficiency standards for residential products whose energy consumption is largely dictated by the climate. A more efficient air conditioner in hot weather climates and a more efficient furnace in colder climates mean a greater reduction in energy consumption resulting in lower energy bills for consumers. These are important pocketbook savings especially when you consider that residential heating and cooling costs comprise almost 50% of home energy consumption,” according to Mel Hall-Crawford, CFA Energy Projects Manager.

Although the average installed cost of a new furnace, AC or heat pump is estimated to increase some as a result of the standard, the cost is more than outweighed by savings on the energy bill over the life of the product. A typical northern region furnace buyer will save about \$54 per year on heating bills, a typical southern region air conditioner owner will save about \$22 per year and an average heat pump buyer will save \$29. New standards for non-weatherized furnaces will take effect on May 1, 2013, and standards for air conditioners, heat pumps, and weatherized furnaces will take effect on January 1, 2015.

“Our survey results from earlier this year found that the public supports the government setting minimum appliance efficiency standards and improved appliance efficiency. These

standards are an example of good government—you have industry and proponents of energy efficiency, including consumer groups, hammering out an agreement on standards for heating and cooling equipment, and the Department of Energy, after fulfilling its responsibilities under the law, implementing those recommendations,” noted CFA’s Director of Research, Mark Cooper.

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The Consumer Federation of America is an association of nearly 300 nonprofit consumer organizations that was established in 1968 to advance the consumer interest through research, advocacy, and education.