

ENERGY STAR IN LOUISIANA

By
James Davidson

The ENERGY STAR (<http://www.energystar.gov/>) designation means saving you money by reducing the amount of electricity consumed and thus reducing the pollution produced. What should ENERGY STAR mean to you? It depends on who you are.

If you are a home owner, investing in ENERGY STAR labeled products means that you get the same performance (or better performance) while using less energy. You will save money over the life of the products. ENERGY STAR appliances are at least 10%, and often over 50%, more efficient than the same sized non ENERGY STAR model. One of the best investments being made in multi-family housing facilities around the country is replacing old refrigerators with ENERGY STAR labeled models. Utility costs are significantly reduced by doing so, particularly if the existing refrigerator is over ten years old.

If you are a home buyer, investing in the ENERGY STAR label means buying a home that is energy efficient. These homes use less energy and generate less pollution, so you save on your utility bill and help the environment. You may decide to have an ENERGY STAR Partner Builder build an ENERGY STAR-labeled home for you, or you might buy an ENERGY STAR modular home to place on your lot. ENERGY STAR homes meet the International Residential Code (IRC) with its energy conservation feature requirements and then exceed the code by improving on the tightness of the building envelope, the air conditioning duct work, the efficiency of the heating ventilating and air conditioning system, the internal air quality and the lighting fixture efficiency. An ENERGY STAR qualified home is 15% more efficient than a similar home built to only meet the 2004 IRC. To find an [ENERGY STAR Partner Builder in Louisiana](#), visit the ENERGY STAR website.

Typical features to look for in ENERGY STAR qualified homes include:

- **An Efficient Home Envelope**, with effective levels of wall, floor, and attic insulation properly installed, comprehensive air barrier details, and high-performance windows;
- **Efficient Air Distribution**, where ducts are installed with minimum air leakage and effectively insulated;
- **Efficient Equipment** for heating, cooling, and water heating;
- **Efficient Lighting**, including fixtures that earn the ENERGY STAR; and
- **Efficient Appliances**, including ENERGY STAR qualified dishwashers, refrigerators, and clothes washers.

SOURCE: WWW.ENERGYSTAR.GOV

Commercial buildings and industrial plants can be awarded the ENERGY STAR designation. ENERGY STAR buildings have been found to be excellent energy performers. Currently there are 3 hospitals, 2 hotels, 13 private offices, and 10 government offices in Louisiana. The ExxonMobil refinery in Baton

Rouge was declared an ENERGY STAR industrial facility in 2007. ConocoPhillips's refinery in Westlake won an award in 2006 and Marathon's refinery in Garyville has been designated in each of the last three years. These plants were awarded an ENERGY STAR for pursuing energy efficiency in the operations. Formosa Plastics Corporation–Louisiana in Baton Rouge and SUCRON, Inc. in Clinton are ENERGY STAR Partners which means they are implementing ENERGY STAR guidelines in their plants.

ENERGY STAR for congregations (found on www.energystar.gov) is targeted to help faith based organizations improve the energy efficiency of houses of worship. The aim is to educate and assist congregations identify building equipment and systems that can be upgraded to save them money.

ENERGY STAR is the national mark that means you are saving energy, saving money and helping the environment. Assuming that energy costs will continue to rise, every dollar spent on ENERGY STAR improvements will return a dividend from the first day that the improvements are made through a reduced utility bill.¹

October is Energy Awareness Month 2008: Working to Secure A Clean Energy Future Where Energy is Abundant, Reliable, and Affordable

Taking concerted action to achieve a *clean energy future* is not only a long-term goal, it results in a number of immediate benefits: it enhances economic vitality, increases energy security, and improves environmental quality. Federal agencies are taking concerted action by implementing bold, innovative energy initiatives that will make our buildings more efficient, our fleets less dependent on foreign sources of fuel, and our energy managers better stewards of our nation's resources. The Federal government is demonstrating that the United States is a global leader in deploying cleaner, more efficient technologies to save money and resources. Improving operations and maintenance practices, reducing energy intensity, and installing renewable energy technologies takes a unified long-term commitment. The Federal government is ready to *lead by example*.

SOURCE: U.S. DOE http://www1.eere.energy.gov/femp/pdfs/eam_theme2008.pdf accessed October 7, 2008

Nearly Two Million Americans Have Pledged To Change A Light (October 2008)

EPA celebrates the 4th annual ENERGY STAR Change a Light Day on October 1, by recognizing the more than 1.8 million Americans who have already pledged to change at least one light at home to an ENERGY STAR qualified light. Together these actions will save \$220 million dollars in energy bills and prevent the release of 3 billion pounds of greenhouse gases. EPA is now challenging Americans to take the newly expanded ENERGY STAR Pledge to do more in the fight against climate change by taking additional actions that will save them energy at home and at work.

SOURCE: WWW.ENERGYSTAR.GOV

¹ Note that this assumes that you do not have a net increase in power usage. In other words, adding square footage would result in a net increase in power demand. The same would apply to the refrigerator; your electric bill will not decrease if you buy a bigger refrigerator or if you keep the old one in the garage to use for drinks.