



## Earning Money, Saving Money with Energy Star Appliances

By Tom Lienhard, PE, CEM

We have something to be proud of here in the Pacific Northwest – we lead the nation in ENERGY STAR frontload washer use. Now, that may not seem like a lot to get excited about, but a front-load washer uses up to 50 percent less energy than a top load model. Plus, a front-load washer uses much less water. And now is a perfect time to buy one.

Washington and Idaho have recently launched new statewide home appliance rebate programs that will provide cash for purchasing qualifying ENERGY STAR appliances. These rebates can be partnered with those offered by some local utilities for even more savings.

Most of the energy-using products in your home can now be found with the ENERGY STAR logo. While it may initially seem that an ENERGY STAR product costs more, you have to look beyond the price sticker to the lifelong operating cost of the device. So selecting an ENERGY STAR product may save you money in the long term.

To see about how much you'll save, check the EnergyGuide™ label which manufacturers are required to display on many units. The label shows the estimated operating costs and annual savings of the appliance and compares the energy use of similar products. The average kilowatt hour cost in Washington and Idaho is 7 cents, but check with your electric or natural gas utility to find your rates to more accurately calculate your savings.

Thinking about relocating that old refrigerator or freezer to the basement or garage after buying a new ENERGY STAR model? In a word – don't. Models made before 1993 use up to three times the energy of newer ones, plus you'll be increasing the electrical load of your home rather than decreasing it.

Your utility may have a refrigerator and freezer recycling program which will pick up your older unit from your home and give you a cash rebate. In most cases, nearly 96 percent of your older refrigerator or freezer will be recycled with its toxins and the ozone-destroying gases safely disposed. That's good because the Washington appliance rebate program requires that your old unit be recycled in order to receive their rebate.

Although the ENERGY STAR program has been in the news recently, you can still buy products with the designation with confidence. ENERGY STAR appliances and electronics continue to be the most energy efficient products on the market, saving you money and reducing carbon pollution.

For information on the ENERGY STAR program and products, visit [www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov) Visit [www.cashforapplianceswa.com](http://www.cashforapplianceswa.com) for information on Washington's appliance rebate program, or [www.energy.idaho.gov/stimulus/appliance\\_rebate.htm](http://www.energy.idaho.gov/stimulus/appliance_rebate.htm) for information on Idaho's program.



### **Equipment Rebates and Incentives**

Some electric and natural gas utilities offer rebates and incentives for customers making energy efficiency upgrades to their home or business. It could pay to find out what your energy provider offers.

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