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“Appliance standards remove many barriers to efficiency, allowing consumers and businesses to save energy and money with more efficient appliances and equipment.”

Q & A APPLIANCE STANDARDS
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Why Appliance Standards?

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Take this Quiz and See for Yourself.

True or False

- 1. T or F?** Left to their own devices, landlords tend to purchase the most efficient appliances and heating/cooling products for their apartments and buildings.
- 2. T or F?** The profusion of information about products makes it easy to understand the efficiency options.
- 3. T or F?** When a consumer’s basement is full of water from a broken water heater, they take the time to find the most efficient product.
- 4. T or F?** Local stores can easily change stocking practices to carry and give prominent display to the most efficient options.
- 5. T or F?** Developers tend to install the most efficient lighting and heating/cooling systems in their commercial properties even though it costs them more.
- 6. T or F?** For most consumers efficiency is more important than price, brand, features, and availability.
- 7. T or F?** The most efficient products are usually the least expensive option.
- 8. T or F?** Standards make it easy to purchase efficient products, save energy, and save money.

Finished the quiz? You likely noticed that all the answers except for the last one are FALSE. You also probably noticed that purchasing efficient products may not be as easy as it seems. Let’s look at the barriers that make it difficult for consumers to purchase efficient appliances and the reasons standards help to overcome those barriers.

Questions 1 and 5 – False

Landlords and builders have little incentive to purchase even slightly more expensive efficient products since they do not pay the utility

bills – tenants do. *With standards*, appliances purchased by landlords and developers will be more efficient, lowering monthly bills for tenants.

Question 2 – False

Many consumers either have too much information or lack the key information needed to make economically rational choices about energy efficiency. Additionally, many do not trust the information provided. *With standards*, efficiency levels have been set after careful analysis by the Department of Energy and input from stakeholders. Standards can save consumers excessive research by assuring a minimum efficiency level. Of course, some consumers will choose to go beyond minimum standards by buying Energy Star qualified products.



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Efficiency is rarely the top priority when consumers make “panic purchases” (e.g. when a refrigerator, furnace or water heater fails, consumers typically try to replace these within 24 hours). *With standards*, efficient products are ‘on the truck’ or in stock at stores, allowing consumers with limited time to make wise choices.

Question 4 – False

Sometimes efficient products are not in stock, making efficient products a special order item. Sometimes, efficient products are stocked, but not featured prominently. *With standards*, efficient products are on the shelves or available when ordering online.

Question 6 – False

For most consumers, price, brand, availability and other features will trump efficiency in purchase decisions. *With standards*, efficiency becomes as common as automatic locks on cars – most cars have them and you expect it as part of the package. Because of standards, all price points, brands, and models will have a minimum level of efficiency as part of the package.

Question 7 – False

Efficiency is often bundled with other features in the top-of-the-line products only, denying consumers the option of a value-priced efficient product. *With standards*, efficiency is available on all models, not just on the most expensive models. In addition, with economies of scale, the price of the efficient product often comes down as the products are mass produced.

Question 8 – True

Appliance standards remove many barriers to efficiency, allowing consumers and businesses the opportunity to save energy and money with more efficient appliances and equipment.