



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

OFFICE OF
AIR AND RADIATION

July 23, 2024

Dear ENERGY STAR® Audio/Video Manufacturer and Other Interested Parties:

The purpose of this letter is to present a proposal from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to sunset the ENERGY STAR specification for Audio/Video (AV) systems. The EPA recognizes the significant and long contribution of ENERGY STAR AV stakeholders and is committed to carefully considering all input. The EPA invites the public to submit comments on this proposal no later than August 20, 2024.

Under certain circumstances, the EPA makes the determination that an ENERGY STAR specification for a product category should be sunset rather than revised. The following factors are most relevant to this sunset proposal:

- Additional cost-effective efficiency gains are not available or anticipated.
- The market has evolved such that the product type is being discontinued.

Rationale for Proposed Sunset

Across the various types of product categories eligible for the label under the AV specification, there are numerous indications the ENERGY STAR label is no longer serving its intended purpose.

- With the advent of digital platforms, consumers are increasingly accessing video content online, rendering physical media less relevant.
- In the case of DVD/Blu-ray players, the market has declined significantly due to a significant shift in how consumers access content and partners have stopped investing in certification for ENERGY STAR, with the most recent certifications in 2022.
- Soundbars have evolved over the years to consume very low power. This evolution has diminished the value in differentiating efficiency for consumers. Furthermore, the advent of enhanced Audio Return Channel (eARC) HDMI connections in TVs and soundbars has revolutionized user experience by allowing seamless control of the soundbar through the TV remote. This technological development also ensures that soundbars are turned off when TVs are turned off, further enhancing their energy efficiency, and making automatic power down requirements redundant.
- In the realm of AV equipment, smart speakers have emerged as the main innovation. These devices are included in the scope of the ENERGY STAR Smart Home Energy Management Systems (SHEMS) specification ensuring that they continue to meet stringent energy efficiency standards. Note that EPA shared the intention to exclude these products from the AV specification in 2022.
- Lastly, while commercial amplifiers are currently covered within the scope of AV specification, the lack of performance information hampers our ability to effectively differentiate top performing efficient ENERGY STAR models. The available data does not indicate that additional cost-effective efficiency gains are anticipated.

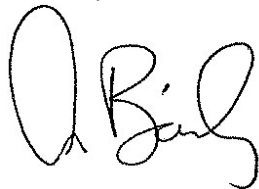
Considering these developments, EPA is proposing to sunset the current specification and focus program resources on areas that provide more value and relevance to consumers in today's digital age.

Proposed Timing

The EPA recognizes the investment ENERGY STAR brand owner, retailer and utility partners have made in certifying and promoting products in these categories and is sensitive to providing a reasonable transition period. The Agency proposes to sunset the ENERGY STAR Version 3.0 Audio Video specification effective August 1, 2025. To facilitate a smooth transition under this proposal, partners would no longer be able to certify new products as of February 1, 2025.

Stakeholders are encouraged to provide written comments on this proposal to sunset the AV program via email to audiovideo@energystar.gov no later than August 20, 2024. In closing, the EPA appreciates the efforts of all AV stakeholders to advance a cleaner environment through the ENERGY STAR Program and applauds your success in moving the market towards greater energy efficiency.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ann Bailey". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ann" and the last name "Bailey" clearly distinguishable.

Ann Bailey, Director
ENERGY STAR Product Labeling Branch
US Environmental Protection Agency