

ENERGY STAR[®] Success Story



Save Energy – Save Money
Help protect the environment



Économisez énergie et argent
Contribuez à protéger l'environnement



Keeping Cool and Breathing Easy

For many people, room air conditioners bring cooling comfort in the warm summer months. Yet air conditioners also contribute to the discomfort we feel when the outdoor air quality is poor. There are cleaner, more efficient options for keeping your home cool. The Clean Air Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to developing activities leading to measurable improvements in air quality, managed the delivery of Keep Cool, a product promotion, exchange and recovery program. Keep Cool allowed consumers to bring in older inefficient room air conditioners to specific retail locations for incentives applied to the purchase of newer, more efficient ENERGY STAR qualified models.

The Keep Cool campaign was part of a broader strategy of Natural Resources Canada's Office of Energy Efficiency to influence consumer purchases toward products that use less energy and reduce greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to climate change. In addition, assistance was provided to help remove refrigerants from units exchanged.

Why Room Air Conditioners?

Room air conditioners (RACs), particularly older models, contribute to smog and climate change. Air conditioners are largely responsible for the increased demand for electricity in the summer time. Summer peaks in energy consumption mean increased emissions from power facilities, including natural gas and coal-burning plants. These increased emissions contribute to higher smog levels, which impact human health and the overall health of the planet.

Older window air conditioners use 30 to 70 percent more energy than newer efficient ENERGY STAR labelled models. ENERGY STAR qualified products require less energy for the same cooling output and therefore generate less greenhouse gases and smog-related emissions on a per unit basis.

About ENERGY STAR

The international ENERGY STAR symbol is a simple way for consumers to identify products that are among the most energy-efficient on the market. Only manufacturers and retailers whose products meet the ENERGY STAR criteria can label their products with this symbol. In Canada, Natural Resources Canada's Office of Energy Efficiency administers and promotes the international ENERGY STAR symbol for a wide range of energy-using products sold in Canada.

Look for the ENERGY STAR symbol on product packaging, in product literature and advertising and on products themselves. Ask your local retailer to help you identify products that qualify for the ENERGY STAR symbol so you can begin saving energy and money. For more information, visit the ENERGY STAR Web site at energystar.gc.ca.

Benefits: Cleaner Air

There are over 900 000 Ontario homes and 500 000 Quebec homes that have window or room air conditioners; these represent a significant impact on electricity demand. For instance, the average RAC used in homes today generates 1.3 tonnes of carbon dioxide yearly. In 2003, the Keep Cool campaign permanently removed 354 old, inefficient RACs from use. Of the 354 old units brought in to participating Future Shop stores across Ontario and Quebec, 320 participants used the rebate coupons to purchase new ENERGY STAR labelled models.



In addition to reducing demands on the electricity system, the program also decreased the amount of harmful refrigerants that are often lost to the atmosphere. Volunteers and store staff were trained to ensure that old products received were stored safely. The campaign also employed certified coolant technicians to capture coolants and dispose of them or recycle them.

In 2003 the program reduced 50.11 tonnes of carbon dioxide, 78.82 kilograms of nitrogen oxide, 360.31 kilograms of sulphur dioxide emissions related to energy savings; it has also captured 62 kg of hydro-chlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs) in Ontario and Quebec. HCFC is an ozone-depleting substance and a powerful greenhouse gas estimated to be 1700 times more potent than carbon dioxide.

Partnerships Involved

The success of the 2003 Keep Cool campaign is attributed to the support of its many partners, including Ontario Power Generation, Natural Resources Canada, Panasonic Canada Inc., Future Shop and the Ontario Ministry of the Environment. Through the use of multiple media outlets, over 8.8 million people were reached with messages from the Keep Cool campaign.



The Canadian Energy Efficiency Alliance



Ontario Ministry of Environment



ENERGY STAR



Clean Air Foundation



Natural Resources Canada



Natural Resources Canada

Ressources naturelles Canada

Future Partnership Opportunities for Interested Retailers

Based on the success of the Keep Cool program, the Clean Air Foundation in partnership with Home Depot and a number of product manufacturers is launching a national product promotion focused on ENERGY STAR qualified and other energy-efficient products. The promotion will focus on high-energy-use product lines such as refrigerators, clothes washers, programmable thermostats, compact fluorescent lights and ceiling fans. The promotion will include information on ENERGY STAR, consumer discounts on ENERGY STAR qualified products, as well as other products related to energy efficiency in the home (caulking, insulation, windows, timers, etc.). There will also be an opportunity to enter a promotion to win prizes through in-store contests. The ENERGY STAR product promotion, entitled the “Energy Wise Program,” has the potential to be a major market transformation initiative that influences consumer purchasing practices and increases the availability and visibility of ENERGY STAR qualified products in retail showrooms.

Retailers can become involved in numerous ways:

- Train salespeople on the energy-saving and other features of ENERGY STAR qualified products.
- Advertise ENERGY STAR qualified products in flyers and ads and display the symbol prominently.
- Provide incentives for customers who buy ENERGY STAR qualified products.
- Make reference materials on ENERGY STAR available in their stores.
- Include information on ENERGY STAR in employee newsletters.

Interested in getting your retail store involved?
Get started by contacting Natural Resource’s
Office of Energy Efficiency.

Contact for Information on Keep Cool:



Fiona Oliver
Program Manager
Keep Cool
Tel.: (416) 922-9038, Ext. 46

Web site:
www.cleanairfoundation.org/keep-cool



**For more information on ENERGY STAR[®], contact
Natural Resources Canada’s Office of Energy Efficiency:
Isabelle Guimont, (613) 996-5281**

For tips on energy-efficient products, visit the ENERGY STAR
Web site at energystar.gc.ca or the Web site of Natural Resources
Canada’s Office of Energy Efficiency at oee.nrcan.gc.ca.

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