

Partnering to Bring Super-Efficient Dryers to Northwest Consumers

A National Relationship with Regional Benefits

For more than two decades, the alliance has partnered with the Environmental Protection Agency's ENERGY STAR® program to drive market transformation efforts across the region. Recognized and trusted, the ENERGY STAR label provides customers with an easy way to make well-informed buying decisions. To ensure ENERGY STAR specifications meet the needs of Northwest consumers and climates, the alliance provides ENERGY STAR with data and market intelligence.

Driving Demand for Super-Efficient Dryers

When heat pump dryers first came on the market, there was no easy way for consumers to tell the difference between standard ENERGY STAR certified dryers and these new best-of-the-best efficient models. Utilities, who wanted to help their customers make informed decisions, needed a tool consumers would know and trust.

“NEEA is an invaluable ENERGY STAR partner, both for its data-driven technical insights and its market transformation capabilities, most notably demonstrated in its efforts to advance efficient dryers. A proud champion of ENERGY STAR Most Efficient, NEEA has successfully advocated the benefits of these products in its work with manufacturing partners.” - Ann Bailey, Branch Chief, ENERGY STAR Products

To alleviate market confusion, the alliance approached ENERGY STAR to create a new, "Most Efficient" specification for dryers. Even though super-efficient dryers were new to the market, NEEA's data and research showed that Northwest sales were large enough to warrant the higher certification category and that market confusion was likely. Based on these insights, in 2017 ENERGY STAR expanded its Most Efficient certification to dryers.



Whirlpool super-efficient dryer and washer pair

Influencing Certified Product Availability

For the new certification to have its full impact, the region needed the participation of a key ally. The largest manufacturer of dryers in America, Whirlpool, has partnered with the alliance since 2010 to develop super-efficient dryers. However, Whirlpool did not certify dryers to ENERGY STAR Most Efficient, which significantly limited utilities' ability to use the certification as a framework for their programs. To help make the business case for ENERGY STAR Most Efficient certification, NEEA conducted market research that confirmed the influence of the ENERGY STAR label with consumers. The alliance also provided higher incentives for Most Efficient dryers through its Retail Platform, motivating retailers to preferentially stock and sell Most Efficient models. Together, these tactics demonstrated to Whirlpool that there was a solid rationale for certifying Most Efficient dryers, which it did in 2017.

“NEEA has been influential in all of our dryer efficiency efforts. From making the business case to create these new products, to keeping them in the market, to generating internal interest and excitement about them. I firmly believe that without NEEA, and many of the others that were involved in launching those first rebates, we wouldn't have the amount of heat pump dryers in the market that we do today.” – Sean Southard, Manager Regulatory Affairs, Whirlpool

Did you know?

Clothes dryers use more energy than almost any other appliance in the home. But until recently, dryer technology in the U.S. remained fundamentally unchanged from its introduction over 75 years ago. The alliance's emerging technology scanning efforts identified new heat pump technology that was available in Europe and worked with American manufacturers to bring the technology to U.S. markets. With over six million dryers in the Northwest, the opportunity for regional energy efficiency savings is enormous.

TOGETHER *We Are Transforming the Northwest*

