



## ***RETAIL PRODUCTS PORTFOLIO: A TIMELY EXPANSION OF DATA INSIGHT***

Simplicity is the strength of the ENERGY STAR® Retail Products Platform (ESRPP). With an innovative, thoughtful approach that makes it easy for retailers to participate, the alliance designed a flexible program that became stronger in 2020, despite the pandemic's overwhelming impact on the retail world.

In April 2020, ESRPP gained access to online sales data for the first time. Coinciding with a historic spike in online sales at the peak of the country's stay-at-home orders, this expansion gave the region detailed insight into abrupt shifts in consumer behavior. A testament to the strength of these long-standing relationships, participating retailers held firm to program commitments despite the changing circumstances. And others are taking note: the program's proven success and resilience motivated two new utility partners to join the national collaborative in 2020, making the program even more valuable and influential as it transitions to a post-pandemic reality.



### **USING CONSISTENT DATA TO GUIDE PERMANENT CHANGE**

Six years ago, the alliance built ESRPP around the retailer business model. This approach motivated national chains to prioritize the sales of the most efficient appliances using midstream incentives and streamlined participation. And while retailer incentives are an important part of the program, they're just the beginning of ESRPP's ultimate goal of driving permanent change. To get there, ESRPP leverages the retailer-provided data to influence ENERGY STAR specifications and federal standards, thereby motivating manufacturers to make permanent efficiency enhancements to their product lines.

ESRPP's data provides ENERGY STAR with a unique data set that offers insight into market trends and purchasing habits that the national organization wouldn't otherwise see. When combined with the alliance's strong extra-regional relationships, ESRPP's data becomes one of the region's most powerful tools in influencing specification revisions that permanently increase the efficiency of appliances in the Northwest and beyond.

"The premise of the ESRPP program is that program sponsors make decisions at the national level, so there is consistency across the country," said Beth Littlehales, NEEA Sr. Program Manager. "The alliance's involvement gives the Northwest an increased level of scale and influence on the consumer products market. And, the more the alliance can partner with additional ESRPP program sponsors, the more likely we are to have a greater voice and impact for the region."

## THE REGIONAL VALUE OF EXTRA-REGIONAL INFLUENCE

The innovative ESRPP program model has been so effective, it sets a new standard for Market Transformation programs. The alliance built the program with an understanding that influencing product efficiency extends beyond local retail decision-making. Supply-chain partner decisions happen at the corporate level, so ESRPP works with utilities and energy efficiency organizations around the country to offer retailers a consistent and streamlined program that collectively achieves a greater alignment with how products are stocked, sold and developed. In turn, customers across the Northwest and the U.S. are exposed to more efficient products to which they otherwise wouldn't have access. This increased exposure is especially important for customers at smaller local stores and regional chains who aren't typically targeted by efficiency programs.

"Really, ESRPP's secret weapon is the platform. It's inherently collaborative and can serve as a blueprint for other initiatives beyond retail-based programming. With the reach of our partners and with the stewardship of the alliance, it has huge potential to become a powerful tool for delivering efficiency programs that can have a big impact locally and nationally."

—Hewan Tomlinson, Energy Efficiency Program Manager, EPA

**TOGETHER** *We Are Transforming the Northwest*

