

## Case Study: European Union Energy Label

### What is the EU Energy Label?

The European Union (EU) Energy Label rates electric household appliances from A (the most energy efficient) to G (the least energy efficient) within a class of products and provides additional information such as the volumetric capacity of the refrigerator or freezer and the washing and spinning performance of washing machines. The label must be shown on all refrigerators, freezers, refrigerator-freezers, washing machines, tumble dryers, washer dryers, dishwashers and light bulb packaging by law. The EU Energy Label is a mandatory label for selected household appliances with application to products also sold for non-household uses.

The objective of the EU Energy Label is to inform consumers about the energy performance of products. The publication of information on the consumption of energy and of other essential resources by household appliances allows consumers to choose appliances on the basis of their energy efficiency.

### How does the EU Energy Label work?

Household appliances offered for sale, hire or hire-purchase must be accompanied by a fiche and a label providing information relating to their consumption of energy (electrical or other) or of other essential resources. The following picture (Fi. EU.I) provides an example of such a product fiche for a washing machine:

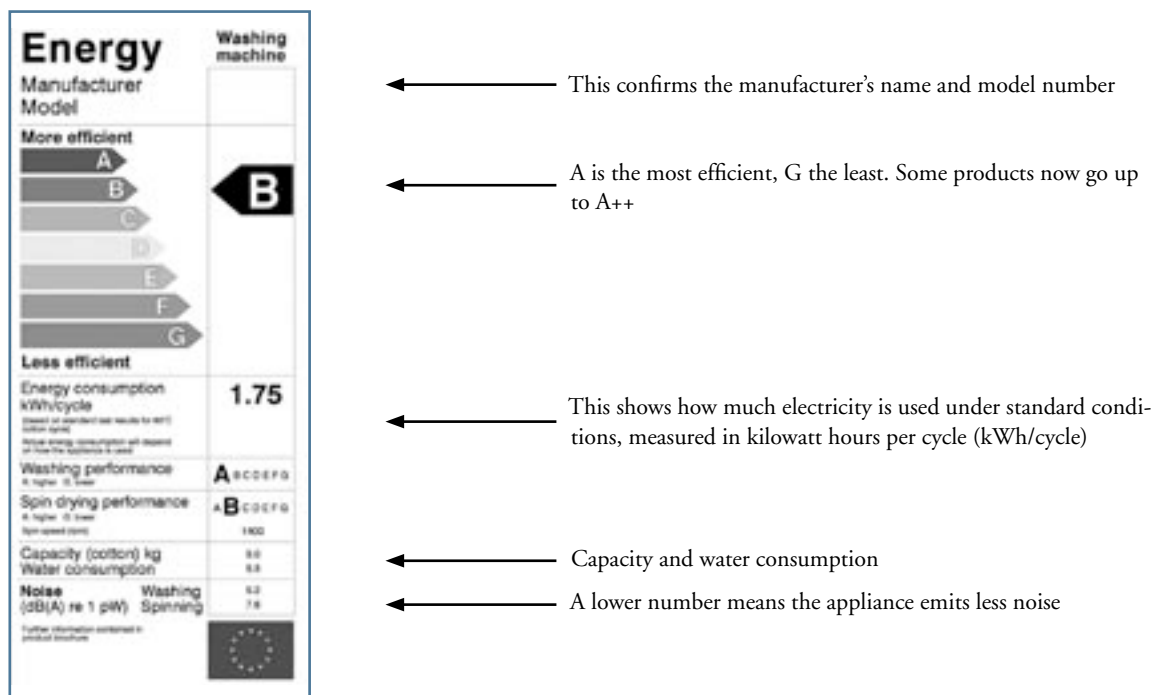


Fig. EU.I: Example of an EU Energy Label for a washing machine

The supplier has to ensure that the eco-label is used correctly. He must provide technical documentation sufficient to assure the accuracy of the information contained in the label and the fiche. This documentation must include: 1) a general description of the product; 2) the results of design calculations, where necessary; 3) test reports and 4) where values are derived from those obtained for similar models, the same information for these models. Further, suppliers must provide:

- a free label, to be attached to the appliance by the dealer in the appropriate position and in the relevant language;
- a product fiche, included in all brochures relating to the product or, where these are not provided, in all other literature provided with the appliance.

Suppliers are responsible for the accuracy of the information contained in the labels and fiches that they supply and are deemed to have given their consent to the publication of the information. Where appliances are offered for sale, hire or hire-purchase by catalogue or by other means whereby the potential customer is unable to see the appliance displayed, the essential information contained in the label or fiche must be provided to the potential customer before purchase.

### **Evaluating the EU Energy Label**

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The application and implementation of the EU Energy Label is widespread in European Countries, largely due to the mandatory character of the label. The easy to understand and eye-catching character of the EU Energy Label has significantly contributed to increased European consumer awareness on energy efficiency. The market share of energy efficient household appliances has increased together with increased energy prices and consumers are paying more and more attention to buying energy efficient products because of cost saving potentials during the use phase of the products.

### **Further information on the EU Energy Label**

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European Commission: Household appliances and energy consumption labelling

<http://europa.eu/scadplus/leg/en/lvb/l32004.htm>

International Energy Agency (IEA), 2000: Energy Labels and Standards.

<http://www.iea.org/textbase/nppdf/free/2000/label2000.pdf>