

Energy efficiency requirements for household electric refrigerators, freezers and combinations

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The objective of the proposal for a European Parliament and Council directive is to establish European standards for the energy efficiency of household refrigerators and freezers, with a view to ensuring the implementation of the internal market and reducing CO₂ emissions and electricity consumption. The proposal for a directive, based on the "new approach" to standardisation, sets energy efficiency standards as a function of the volume, using a different equation for each of the eight categories of appliance defined. In order to give the appliance manufacturing industry time to adapt whilst ensuring progress towards a satisfactory level of efficiency, two levels of minimum efficiency standards are envisaged: - the first will take effect three years after the adoption of the directive and should lead to an average improvement in efficiency of about 10%; - the second level of standards will apply about four years later and will be based on a new Commission proposal laying down a second series of standards. According to Commission figures, implementing the first series of recommended minimum efficiency standards should lead to: . a 13% reduction in the annual electricity consumption of refrigeration appliances in the year 2002, compared to a situation with no standards; . a 10% reduction in related annual emissions of carbon dioxide in the year 2002, compared to a situation with no standards.