

Buy Energy-Efficient Products

A Guide for Federal Purchasers and Specifiers

Efficient product purchases can really add up. In a single year, they could save the federal government almost a half billion dollars worth of energy. Every day, federal employees and contractors make choices about which products to buy. With each choice comes an opportunity to capture ongoing savings through the purchase of energy-efficient products. By purchasing products that exceed the minimum required efficiency levels, buyers can save the government even more energy and money.

Federal employees and contractors must take an active role in ensuring that the government receives products that meet efficiency requirements. This document provides an overview of product purchasing requirements and shows you how to write compliant contracts, find funding, and confirm product compliance.

Overview of Product Purchasing Requirements

Over the past 20 years, Congress and multiple presidents have established energy-efficient product procurement requirements. These laws and executive orders (E.O.s) are codified in 42 U.S.C. 8259 and the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Part 23.2 and 52.223-15. Many agencies have also incorporated energy-efficient product procurement requirements into their internal policies and rules.

Federal agencies must purchase energy-consuming products that meet or exceed the efficiency levels designated by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Federal Energy Management Program (FEMP) and ENERGY STAR®. ENERGY STAR certifies products that meet efficiency requirements for a variety of products, including appliances and commercial kitchen equipment.



FEMP estimates that federal purchases of energy-efficient products could save the government a half billion dollars in a single year. *Photo from iStock 28660088.*

For products not covered by ENERGY STAR, FEMP conducts rigorous market analysis to set minimum efficiency requirements and ensure that compliant products are cost-effective. If the product category is covered by ENERGY STAR, there is no separate FEMP designation. FEMP-designated products represent the upper 25% of their class in energy efficiency.

When requesting products, ask for ENERGY STAR-certified models or products that meet FEMP-designated efficiency requirements. When receiving products, verify that they are energy efficient.

Write Compliant Contracts

Whenever FAR requirements apply, the solicitation or contract must include language from FAR Section 52.223-15. In addition, incorporate specific efficiency requirements into the contract's technical specifications, and develop appropriate evaluation criteria to ensure delivery of compliant products. Doing so will comply with FAR Part 23.206 and extend efficiency requirements to contractors. When receiving bids or quotes, request product technical specifications sheets to make sure the products meet or exceed minimum energy efficiency requirements.

Find Funding

In many parts of the United States, utilities, states, and other organizations offer rebate and incentive programs to

Do Federal Acquisition Regulation Requirements Apply?

Federal agencies must add specific contract language to solicitations and contracts when purchasing energy-consuming products covered by ENERGY STAR or FEMP. This includes products that are:

- Delivered to a federal facility
- Acquired by a contractor for use in a federal facility
- Furnished by a contractor for use by the federal government
- Specified in the design of a building or incorporated into its construction, renovation, or maintenance.

Check FEMP's [list of covered product categories](#) to find out if an energy-consuming product is covered by FEMP and ENERGY STAR. If the product is on the list, insert [language from FAR Section 52.223-15](#) into the solicitation or contract.

encourage the use of energy-efficient products. FEMP researches these programs on a state-by-state basis to help federal agencies meet their energy management goals, and maintains a list of *energy incentive programs*.

Federal agencies can also use a variety of financing options to pay for energy efficiency projects. These funding tools include energy savings performance contracts (ESPCs), utility energy services contracts (UESCs), and power purchase agreements (PPAs). FEMP can help federal agencies identify, obtain, and implement project financing for energy efficiency projects.

Determine Whether a Product Is Compliant

Before you buy an energy-consuming product, determine whether that product category is covered by FEMP-designated or ENERGY STAR requirements. If a product category is covered by ENERGY STAR, the product purchased must carry the ENERGY STAR label to be eligible for federal purchase. Products that meet ENERGY STAR specifications but have not earned the label do not qualify. In addition, FEMP sets minimum energy efficiency requirements for many commercial products procured by the federal government that are not covered by ENERGY STAR. Products in the categories covered by FEMP must meet or exceed the relevant energy efficiency requirements.

Follow these steps to determine whether a product you've selected meets efficiency requirements:

Step 1: Review FEMP's list of covered product categories and find the relevant category.

Step 2: Read FEMP's acquisition guidance for that product category, including efficiency requirements, to find the relevant parameters for that type of product, such as capacity, fuel type, or other product characteristics. Compare these requirements with your product's technical specifications, keeping in mind that

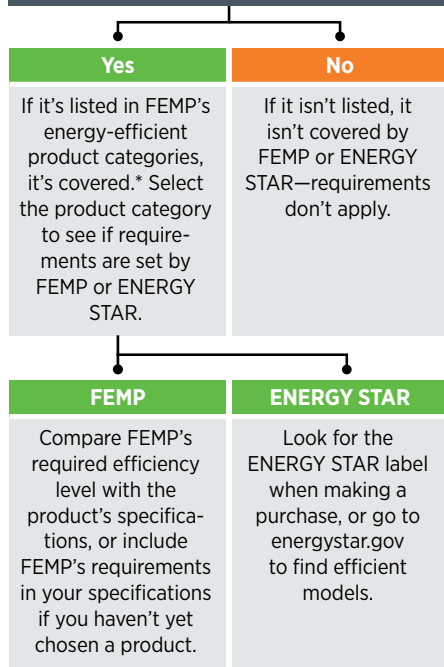
compliance must be determined based on the industry-recognized testing standards identified by FEMP. Any product that meets or exceeds the listed level meets federal energy efficiency requirements.

When making a purchase, look for the performance of the product you've selected and compare it to the efficiency requirement. When specifying a product for purchase, make sure to specify the FEMP-designated efficiency requirement.

To find ENERGY STAR makes and models, visit the *ENERGY STAR Certified Products* website, select the product category in which you are interested, and look for the Product Finder tool. When making a purchase, look for the ENERGY STAR logo.



Before you buy an energy-consuming product, confirm that the product category is covered by FEMP or ENERGY STAR. To check, visit energy.gov/eere/femp/find-product-categories-covered-efficiency-programs.



*Within a covered product category, products with certain characteristics (size, capacity, or fuel type) may not be covered. Refer to the relevant efficiency requirement to confirm coverage.

Resources

FEMP has a variety of resources available to promote the purchase of energy-efficient products:

- FEMP's *list of covered product categories* summarizes the product categories covered by federal efficiency requirements. In addition, FEMP provides product overview guidance that includes efficiency requirements, cost-effectiveness examples, and tips to help buyers select the right product, size it properly, install it correctly, and use it effectively.
- Energy- and cost-savings calculators* help demonstrate the impact of a purchase with estimates on life-cycle cost and energy savings.
- The *FEMP Contracting for Efficiency Best Practices Guide* is an in-depth, step-by-step guide to incorporating efficiency requirements into solicitations.
- Minimum efficiency requirements tables for heating and cooling products* can help buyers incorporate the proper purchasing requirements set by FEMP and ENERGY STAR into federal acquisition documents.
- FEMP's *promising technologies* list includes new or underutilized technologies with demonstrated energy savings.
- FEMP can help federal agencies identify, obtain, and implement *project financing* for energy efficiency projects.
- Energy-efficient product procurement training* is available, including live and on-demand sessions.
- FEMP's *Low Standby Power Product List* includes manufacturer-supplied standby power consumption data for select computer products.

FEMP is here to help. Website resources are regularly updated, so visit FEMP Energy- and Water-Efficient Products at energy.gov/eere/femp/energy-and-water-efficient-products for more information, or contact Saralyn Bunch at saralyn.bunch@ee.doe.gov.