

Trump Administration Levels Another Assault on Consumers' Energy Bills

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Contacts: Mel Hall-Crawford, CFA, 805-245-0523; Jan Kruse, National Consumer Law Center, 617 542-8010

New Rule Hinders Improvements for Energy Efficiency Standards for Major Residential Gas Appliances

Washington, D.C. — Consumer Federation of America and the National Consumer Law Center expressed great disappointment at the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) last-minute approval of an anti-consumer rule that effectively keeps inefficient gas furnaces, water heaters and boilers on the market.

DOE has continually disregarded the legal deadlines that were set for consideration of standards for these heating products which by far represent the largest utility expenditure (often 50%, or more) of consumers' home energy bills. Instead, the Department has made it impossible to remove inefficient gas (non-condensing) appliances from the market and instead will require that they be regulated separately from other more efficient (condensing) gas products performing the same functions of providing heat and hot water.

According to a report released by American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy and Appliance Standard Awareness Project, potential annual savings from long overdue improved efficiency standards for furnaces, boilers and water heaters will save residential consumers approximately \$3 billion by 2035 and \$7 billion by 2050.

"This is yet another harmful rule costing consumers billions of dollars that the Trump Administration is forcing down our throats at the eleventh hour," **said Mel Hall-Crawford, CFA Energy Programs Director.** "The life span for residential furnaces and boilers, in a household, is approximately 15-20 years, and for gas water heaters, it's typically about 10 years—that is a very long period of time for consumers to pay a higher, unnecessary premium on their energy bills for a major appliance that is inefficient. We look to the incoming Biden Administration to take prompt action to negate this rule and update the efficiency standards for these products so that consumers can save on their energy bills."

"Strong standards for furnaces, boilers, and water heaters are important for low-income tenants, who don't choose which appliance the landlord installs but who then are saddled with needlessly high energy bills if the equipment is inefficient. DOE's ruling may be good for industry, but is very harmful for consumers," **said Charlie Harak, attorney at the National Consumer Law Center.**