



Changes to Household Refrigerator and Freezer Energy Efficiency Regulation

What the changes mean for retailers and consumers

On 15 August 2019, the Australian Government introduced new requirements for the energy efficiency of household refrigerators and freezers in the [Greenhouse and Energy Minimum Standards \(Household Refrigerating Appliances\) Determination 2019](#). Over time, all household refrigerator and freezers will meet the new requirements.

What are the main changes?

The principal changes introduced by the 2019 Determination are:

- Strengthened minimum energy performance standards (MEPS) that mean that less efficient refrigerators and freezers will be removed from the market, reducing household energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.
- Appliances will be tested according to an international test standard and energy efficiency performance will be measured over a wider range of operating conditions.
- This new test data is configured to better reflect how appliances are actually used in homes, so the information on the energy rating label will show more accurately the characteristics of an appliance and its energy efficiency performance during normal use.

What differences will consumers see?

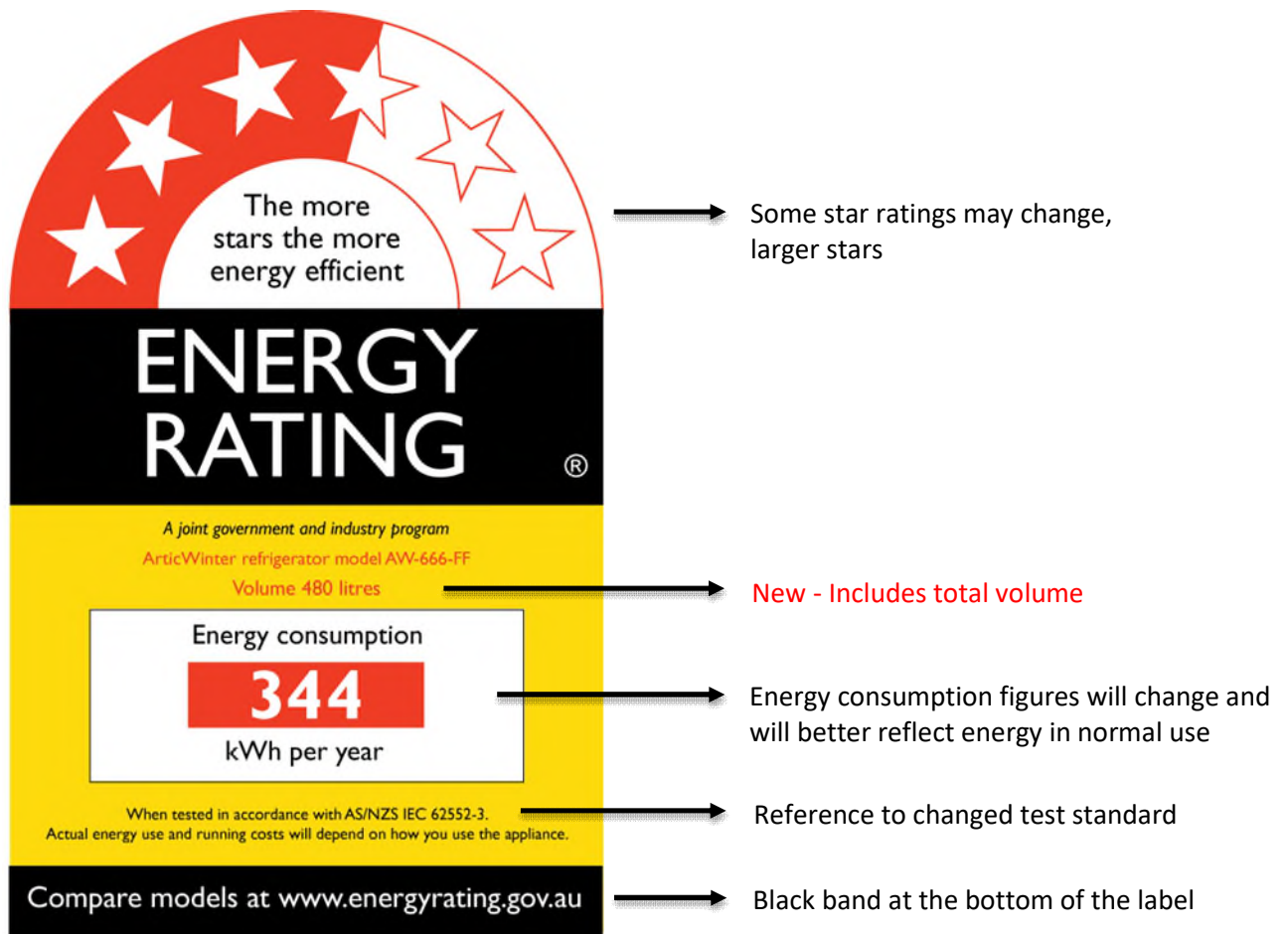
- The least efficient appliances will be removed from the market leaving the more efficient refrigerators and freezers that use less energy and are cheaper to run.
- Because the energy performance of appliances in homes will be measured in a more representative way, the energy consumption numbers on energy rating labels will change and, in some cases, an appliance's star rating may also change. Less efficient appliances may receive less stars and better performers may be awarded more stars on the updated energy rating label.
- The international test standard measures the cooled volume of the appliance and the total volume of all compartments is now shown on the energy rating label.
- The new energy rating label looks similar to the old label (see the figure overleaf).

A significant change is how volumes are measured. Under the new testing requirements, the measured volume is the usable and accessible space of the appliance's compartments and excludes hidden inaccessible spaces, such as volumes inside air duct work. The newly defined volume in most cases will be smaller than previous gross volumes measured using the previous Australian/New Zealand methodology, which included some space that consumers could not see

or access. Inclusion of the new total volume on the energy rating label will allow consumers to more easily compare the size of appliances.

For example, a manufacturer that could previously claim that a refrigerator-freezer had a total volume of 600 litres, may find that under the new measurement method the same appliance may appear to be 5% to 15% smaller (i.e. in the range 510 litres to 570 litres). However, any difference in claimed volume will be dependent on the specific design characteristics of each model. For example, the volume of a chest freezer that is not frost free will not change, because all of the space inside the freezer compartment is measured in the same way under the old and new measurement procedures. However, the volume of an upright frost-free freezer that has cold air ducts that cannot be accessed will appear to be smaller under the new measurement system.

An example of the updated energy rating label



Existing models that have been shown to comply with the new minimum energy performance requirements are permitted to remain on sale and display the old energy rating label for the remainder of their registration periods.

What about appliances that do not meet MEPS?

On 15 August 2021, when the 2019 Determination comes into effect, any models that fail to meet the new minimum energy performance requirements can no longer be imported into Australia. Existing stock of previously approved models already in Australia can be sold until this stock is exhausted.