

Air Conditioners, Heat Pumps – New Standards

New Federal NAECA III standards for air conditioners and heat pumps went into effect in early 2015. These standards are at the manufacturer level and not the building code level. First the HVAC standards change from 13 to 14 SEER for heat pumps and air conditioners in the state of GA. The HVAC Distributors surveyed were hopeful that should not be a major increase in cost since the heat pump standard is national and the A/C standard is regional, the manufacturers should be able to shift their inventory around the country to minimize pricing impacts.

NAECA III HVAC Standards:

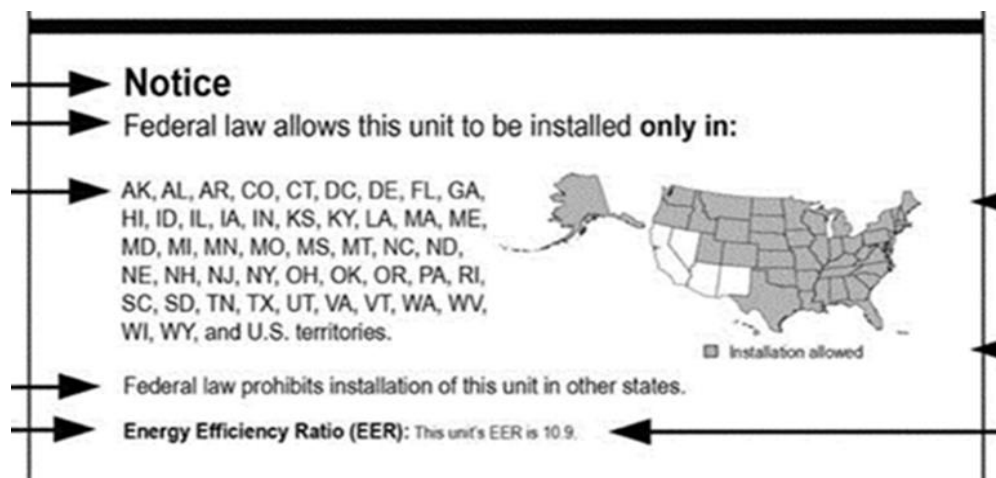
Short version:

- New air conditioner and heat pump efficiency standards went into effect at the start of 2015, for residential type equipment 5.25 tons or less in capacity.
- The minimum SEER changes from SEER 13 to 14, and the minimum heat pump HSPF will change from 7.7 to 8.2.
- However, for a variety of reasons the transition will be more complicated than in past.

Detailed version:

- Currently, the minimum efficiency standards for residential-type air conditioners and heat pumps less than 5.25 tons are:
 - SEER 13 for both air conditioners and heat pumps
 - HSPF 7.7 for heat pumps (heating efficiency)
 - This is a nationwide standard.
- Beginning in January 2015, **regional** standards went into effect:
 - Minimum **heat pump** SEER will be 14, and minimum HSPF will be 8.2, nationwide.
 - For the southeastern and southwestern states the minimum **air conditioner** SEER will be 14. This includes Georgia
 - For states north of Kentucky, minimum **air conditioner** SEER remains 13.
 - For 4 desert southwest states, additional minimum S
 - EER requirements apply, which are not required in the southeast.
- Enforcement:
 - For **heat pumps**, enforcement of efficiency standards will still be manufacturer based. If the **heat pump** it leaves the factory door by the end of 2014, it is legal to install it regardless of how long it stays in dealer inventory. This is because heat pumps are a national standard, not a regional one.
 - For **air conditioners**, it is theoretically illegal to install a SEER 13 unit in the southeast after 12/31/2014. Theoretically because a court settlement between DOE and HARDI (the trade group for HVAC dealers) agreed that DOE would not enforce the regional standard for 18 months, until July 1, 2016. *This is kind of like saying the speed limit is 55, but the police are not permitted to issue speeding tickets.*

- The Energy Guide “yellow label” will be updated for units shipped after the end of 2014. Instead of a single rating point, new labels for split-system air conditioners and heat pumps will now be shown in a range representing the lowest and highest SEER ratings for all the condenser’s certified coil combinations. All of the component parts in the entire system, inside and out, must have an aggregate SEER that meets the new guidelines.
- Shown below is an example Energy Guide label issued by the Federal Trade Commission (FTC.)



		Southern Region States	Southwestern Region States
Alaska	New York	Alabama	Arizona
Colorado	North Dakota	Arkansas	California
Connecticut	Ohio	District of Columbia	Nevada
Idaho	Oregon	Delaware	New Mexico
Illinois	Pennsylvania	Florida	
Indiana	Rhode Island	Georgia	
Iowa	South Dakota	Hawaii	
Kansas	Utah	Kentucky	
Maine	Vermont	Louisiana	
Massachusetts	Washington	Maryland	
Michigan	West	Mississippi	
Minnesota	Virginia	North Carolina	
Missouri	Wisconsin	Oklahoma	
Montana	Wyoming	South Carolina	
Nebraska		Tennessee	
New Hampshire		Texas	
New Jersey		Virginia	

Zones	DOE's New Federal Minimums	
	Air Conditioning	Heat Pump
North	13 SEER	14 SEER 8.2 HSPF
South	14 SEER	14 SEER 8.2 HSPF
Southwest	14 SEER 12.2 / 11.7 EER <45K / >45K	14 SEER 8.2 HSPF