

New US federal minimum energy conservation standards for air-cooled unitary (single package and split system) air conditioning (AC) and heat pump (HP) equipment greater than or equal to 65,000 Btu/h and less than 760,000 Btu/h in cooling capacity, are scheduled to take effect on January 1, 2023. As of January 1, 2023, manufacturers will no longer be permitted to produce equipment that does not meet these new federal minimum standards. They may sell their existing stock of equipment manufactured and distributed in commerce prior to January 1, 2023.

The new federal minimum standards align with the current CEE Tier 2 integrated energy efficiency ratio (IEER) levels for Commercial Unitary AC. The CEE Advanced Tier for Commercial Unitary AC identifies levels of performance above the 2023 standard. For Commercial Unitary HP, the current CEE Tier 1 IEER levels are below the new federal minimum standards; the CEE Tier 1 heating coefficient of performance (COP) rated at 47°F dry bulb (db)/43°F wet bulb (wb) outdoor air criteria align; the CEE Tier 1 cooling energy efficiency ratio (EER) criteria and heating COP at 17°F db/15°F wb are more efficient than that of standard models and the minimum performance allowed by model energy codes, e.g. ASHRAE 90.1 (the federal minimum does not use EER and COP at 17°F db/15°F wb).

The CEE Commercial Air Conditioning and Heat Pumps Committee is working to revise the Commercial Unitary AC and HP Initiative and associated specifications to support program administrator needs and continued investment in efficiency improvements by manufacturers and anticipates bringing a proposal to the CEE Board of Directors for considered adoption in the first half of 2023.