

EPEE WELCOMES THE ADOPTION OF THE EUROPEAN ECO-LABELLING SCHEME FOR HEAT PUMPS

Brussels, 20 November 2007: EPEE welcomes the start of the EU eco-labelling scheme which kicks off today. Representing the European air-conditioning, heat pump, and refrigeration industry, EPEE is highly committed to contributing to the success and recognition of the European Eco-label.

EPEE Chairman Frans Hoorelbeke commented that “EPEE strongly supports the EU eco-label, as an important scheme to change consumers’ behaviour and encourage the industry to develop heat pumps with high energy efficiency and low global warming impact across Europe.”

EPEE welcomes the balanced and holistic approach which has been taken to develop the criteria, especially taking into account the overall global warming impact, and allowing the freedom of choice in refrigerants.

In the past years, many Member States have recognised the potential of heat pumps to lower the use of primary energy sources and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The EU eco-label builds on existing schemes used in several Member States which have their own heat pump certification programmes or tax incentive programmes.

Mr. Hoorelbeke: “EPEE is a strong supporter of the European approach taken by the EU eco-labelling scheme, as one single European scheme makes the eco-label more transparent since you are dealing with only one system as opposed to several different ones.”

Heat pumps offer a very energy efficient way to provide space heating, because they are able to remove heat from ground, air or water sources and transfer it into buildings at elevated temperatures. Even when outdoor conditions are far below 0°C, there is still heat energy that can be moved.

The key for this technology is the use of a “refrigerant” which can absorb and release heat, by evaporating and condensing in a closed piping circuit. By moving energy instead of producing it, heat pumps enable the development of heating (with optional cooling or sanitary hot water) based on renewable energy sources and can make a significant contribution to protect the environment.

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Notes to the Editor:

****The European Partnership for Energy and the Environment (EPEE)** is a group of businesses involved in the development and manufacture of cooling, heating and air conditioning applications, where energy efficiency and safety are important. It represents a broad-based group of responsible companies, national associations and European associations active in the European air-conditioning, heat-pump and refrigeration industry. It was formed in September 2000 to contribute to the development of effective European policies to reduce greenhouse gases from the use of refrigerants. Further information can be found on-line at www.epeeglobal.org.

The central mission of EPEE is to contribute to the development of effective European policies to limit greenhouse gas emissions from the use of refrigerants. We believe that hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), hydrocarbons, ammonia water and CO₂ are all viable refrigerants depending on application and operational requirements. In all cases emission of greenhouse gases from refrigerant use must be minimised and full Life Cycle Climate Performance (LCCP) must be wisely considered when selection is made of what refrigerant best meets the unique application needs. In addition, each refrigerant property must be taken into account in the selection process.

In our view, any policy aimed at the reduction of the emission of greenhouse gases from the use of refrigerants should be based on the desire to minimise their Global Warming Impact. This approach takes into account the direct emissions of the refrigerant as well as the indirect emissions of CO₂ from the electricity used. Energy related emissions from the use of refrigerants in refrigeration systems represent on average 85 % of the total. Measures to promote energy efficiency should therefore be a prime focus of climate change policies.

Background to Heat Pumps

A heat pump is a device which transfers heat energy from one place to another. In heating applications, the heat is removed from ambient air, water, brine or ground sources and delivered to where it is needed. In cooling applications, the reverse happens and the heat is removed, to be discharged to the ambient air, water or ground.

Background to the European Eco-label

The European Eco-label, or the Flower, is a voluntary scheme designed to encourage businesses to increase the environmental friendliness of their products or services and to help consumers to make the best environmental choice.

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The European Eco-label programme comprises the following product groups: Cleaning Products, Appliances, Paper Products, Home and garden, Clothing, Tourism and Lubricants. An individual product within one of the product groups must comply with all criteria set for that particular product in order to be awarded the European Eco-label.

Besides the EU, the European Eco-label is also used in Norway, Liechtenstein, Switzerland and Iceland.

For more information, see http://ec.europa.eu/environment/ecolabel/index_en.htm

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