

SUSHILKUMAR SHINDE LAUNCHES NATIONAL ENERGY LABELING PROGRAMME

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Union Minister of Power Shri Sushilkumar Shinde launched the National Energy Labeling Program on Thursday, the 18th of May, 2006 at India Habitat Centre, New Delhi in a function organized by the Bureau of Energy Efficiency. The Minister, while launching the program, said "This is the beginning of a new era for energy efficiency. We have introduced energy labels and history has been created. Energy Efficiency movement is now at the doorstep of every consumer."

Shri R.V. Shahi, Secretary (Power) speaking on the occasion said that energy-labels will provide a common energy-efficiency benchmark making it easier for utility companies and government agencies to offer consumers incentives to buy energy-efficient products. Shri L. Mansingh, Secretary (Consumer Affairs) endorsed the initiative and assured his Ministry's support to the program.

Shri V.S. Verma, Director General, Bureau of Energy Efficiency introduced the labeling scheme, and asserted that the Scheme would help in attaining higher efficiency levels in consumer products and reduce electricity demand.

The industry representatives from CII and Electric Lamps Component Manufacturers Association (ELCOMA) also lauded the effort and assured industry participation in the Energy Labeling program. Shri Gireesh B. Pradhan, Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Power thanked all the stakeholders for their active participation and support to the program.

This function was attended by over 400 delegates representing various Ministries, Manufacturers and their Associations, International Agencies, Consumer Associations, and Government Institutions.

The Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE), is a statutory body under the Ministry of Power, created under the Energy Conservation Act 2001. The role of BEE is to promote efficient use of energy and to implement the provisions of the Act. BEE's objective is to reduce energy intensity in the Indian Economy and introduce energy conservation and efficiency in all sectors in a sustainable manner.

Energy efficiency labels are informative labels affixed to products, describing the product's energy performance, usually in the form of energy use or efficiency on a comparative scale across brands. Energy Labels provide consumers with information to make informed purchases.

Energy Efficiency Standards and Labeling is a key thrust Area of BEE. Energy Labeling is the one of the most cost effective policy tools for improving energy efficiency and lowering energy cost for the consumers. Under the BEE's Labeling Program, appliances are rated on a scale of 1 to 5 stars, with the most efficient carrying a 5 star label and the least efficient carrying a 1 star label. The program has been developed in a collaborative and consensus driven approach with active participation from all the stakeholders. A self-regulatory mechanism has been adopted for implementing the program. BEE will conduct rigorous testing in accredited independent laboratories to maintain the credibility of the program and ensure consumer confidence.

Energy labeling program is being introduced for the first time in the Indian market. The program is being initially launched on voluntary basis for two appliances, namely, Frost Free Refrigerators and Tubular Fluorescent lamps. Subsequently, more appliances would be included in a phased manner and the scheme will be made mandatory within six months time.

With the BEE labeled products coming in the market, consumers will have the choice of making informed purchases based on energy efficiency or energy consumption of the products. They will benefit through lower operating cost of the higher efficiency products. The star rating and labeling scheme will substantially expand the market for energy efficient appliances. Retailers will benefit from increased sales of energy efficient appliances. Energy Labeled products are expected to be available in market (starting with Frost Free Refrigerators and Fluorescent Tube Lamps) starting July 2006.

Consumer participation is the key to the success of the BEE labeling program. A nationwide multimedia consumer awareness and education campaign will be launched as the labeled products become available in the market.

BEE's Labeling program marks a significant step towards ensuring efficient use of scarce energy resources. It would result in substantial energy savings for the consumers and the nation. As more and more products come under the scope of the labeling program, the impact will be even greater. Direct cool refrigerators, General purpose Electric Motors, Air-conditioners and Ceiling fans will be included in the program by 2007.

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