

AHAM Announces Development of a Test Procedure to Determine Clothes Washer Capacity (August 2, 2010)

AHAM is developing a voluntary test procedure to support appliance manufacturers in determining clothes washer capacity. With new clothes washer designs and technologies, an enhanced washer capacity measure would provide more information to consumers regarding the quantity of clothes that can be effectively washed and rinsed in a single load. The test procedure would be voluntary; however, AHAM will present the test procedure to the Department of Energy (DOE) for proposed incorporation into the DOE's test procedure for clothes washers.

While this new test procedure is under development, appliance manufacturers will voluntarily communicate capacity using the same values reported to DOE for drum volume under the current DOE clothes washer test procedure. That procedure provides an accurate, uniform and repeatable measurement of drum volume for the purpose of calculating energy and water consumption for all clothes washer types. Because of advances in clothes washer design, technology and efficiency, AHAM is developing a method that may enhance the communication of useable washer capacity information to the consumer when making a purchase decision among a wide variety of product choices.

Historically, manufacturers have employed rating systems to provide the consumer with meaningful purchase evaluation information. AHAM members desire an enhanced, uniform test method to determine washer capacity.

This AHAM effort of developing a uniform washer capacity test procedure will harmonize with international washer capacity procedures where appropriate. This is a complex area and will require significant investigation into consumer-relevant washing and rinsing performance characteristics.