

# „ECOMISE it’: New specifications for the energy labelling of washing machines and dishwashers

Transition period lasting until 20 December 2011

Laura Spengler, Ökopol GmbH, April 2011

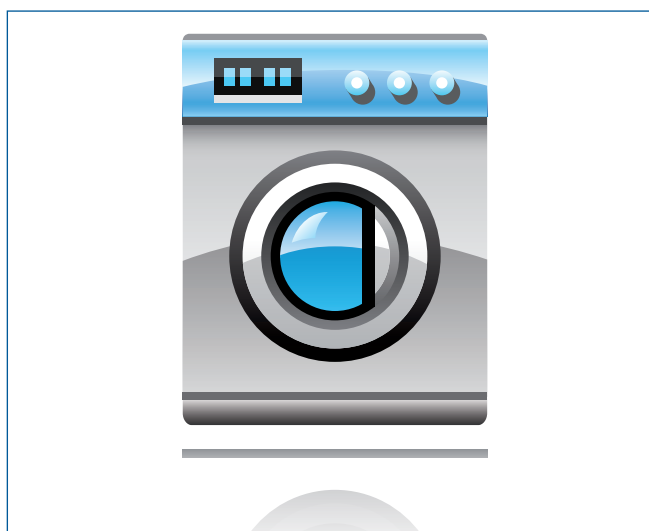
**For around 15 years now, it has been mandatory to display the energy efficiency of new dishwashers and washing machines within the EU. The EU Commission has now passed amended specifications that, among other things, introduce new efficiency classes (up to ‘A+++’).**

The energy labelling system, with its green-to-red scale and the corresponding letters ‘A’ to ‘G’, is an important way of informing consumers of the energy efficiency of products. In June 2010, a new labelling directive was passed that has since been serving as the legal framework for composing product group-specific specifications and has replaced the original directive from 1992. In light of these new framework conditions, at the end of November 2010 the EU Commission published Regulations for the labelling of domestic dishwashers (no. 1059/2010) and washing machines (no. 1061/2010) with regard to energy consumption and other parameters. These will come into effect at the end of 2011, replacing the regulations released in the 1990s based on the old Energy Labelling Directive.

The regulations aim to provide consumers with information on the energy efficiency of the items available when buying a new appliance. One innovation compared to the old energy consumption labelling system is the introduction of classes ‘A+’, ‘A++’ and ‘A+++’ for both types of appliance. This means that the labelling scale ranges from ‘A+++’ to ‘D’, while previous classes ‘E’ to ‘G’ will no longer be used. There is some debate as to how useful this scale actually is: shortly before publishing the energy labelling regulations, the EU Commission concluded two regulations for the minimum energy efficiency standards of domestic dishwashers and washing machines as part of the implementation of the Ecodesign Directive. According to these regulations, washing machines in classes lower than ‘A’ will be prohibited on the EU market as soon as the new labelling specifications take binding effect. Two years later, all machines must have achieved at least class ‘A+’. The same applies to dishwashers, although smaller appliances down to class ‘B’ will still be permitted for some time.

Aside from the energy efficiency of an appliance, the label also provides information about annual water consumption (assuming a specific number of cycles), level of noise, drying performance and capacity. The regulations stipulate defined procedures for calculating each of these parameters. In addition to the energy consumed during washing/rinsing, the method used to calculate the energy efficiency index and allocate appliances to an efficiency class also takes into account how much power the appliance consumes when switched off and on stand-by (at the end of a programme). In the case of washing machines, the energy efficiency index also considers several standard programmes (60°C cotton wash with full and partial loads as well as a 40°C cotton wash with a partial load). The specifications set out in the regulations for labelling dishwashers and washing machines and the specifications of the respective Ecodesign regulations already mentioned are harmonised in terms of scope of validity, definitions applied and testing procedures, and for the most part employ the same calculation methods as well.

Not only does the energy efficiency class of a dishwasher or washing machine now have to be clearly visible while the



item is on sale, but it must also be specified in advertisements and technical advertising material. Following a transition period lasting until 20 December 2011, during which both the old and new labelling systems may be used, the stipulations of the labelling regulations are to be bindingly implemented by suppliers and dealers.

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Laura Spengler works for Ökopol - Institut für Ökologie und Politik GmbH in Hamburg. In addition to basic background texts, Ökopol offers an up-to-date overview of the implementation status of the energy consumption labelling and Ecodesign Directives in the various product groups in a generally

accessible Internet information offering ([www.eup-netzwerk.de](http://www.eup-netzwerk.de)). Ökopol supplies the contents for EBV Elektronik's information campaign about the Ecodesign Directive.

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| Regulation            | (EU) 1059/2010   | (EU) 1061/2010   |
|-----------------------|--|--|
| Date of publication   | 30 November 2010   |  |
| Entry into force      | 20 December 2010   |  |
| Effective             | 20 December 2011 (exceptions: 20 April 2012)   |  |
| Scope                 | Household dishwashers  | Household washing machines<br>(excepted: combined washerdriers)                              |
| Area of applicability | Product information, e.g. energy and water consumption, drying efficiency, sound emissions | Product information, e.g. energy and water consumption, spinning efficiency, sound emissions |

*Schedule, scope and area of applicability of regulation (EU) no. 1059/2010 and 1061/2010*