



STATE OF ILLINOIS
OFFICE OF LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR PAT QUINN

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Letter-to-the-Editor
By Lieutenant Governor Pat Quinn
(294 words)

Observe 35th Earth Day (April 22) with a new Energy Star appliance

April 14, 2005

Dear Editor,

Earth Day was first organized 35 years ago to promote stewardship of our natural resources. Today, more than a billion people in 174 countries celebrate it, making it the world's largest secular holiday. And while many observe Earth Day on April 22 by planting a tree or clearing a stream, there's one simple thing consumers can do to honor our planet while cutting their electric bills: buy an Energy Star product.

Energy Star was begun in 1992 by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as a voluntary rating program to identify and promote energy-efficient computers. Now it rates a wide range of household appliances, including refrigerators, washing machines and dryers, dishwashers, water heaters, air conditioners, freezers, ceiling fans, dehumidifiers and light bulbs.

Energy Star is good for the environment, and it's great for your wallet.

The typical household spends \$1,500 annually on energy bills. With Energy Star appliances, however, a household sees a 30 percent decrease (about \$450) in energy bills. In 2004 alone, U.S. consumers with Energy Star products in their homes realized \$10 billion in savings. And by boosting the number of energy-efficient appliances in Illinois homes, we ease pressure on our electric grid, cutting the chances of costly power outages this summer.

The Illinois General Assembly recognizes the value of the Energy Star label. Legislation to create an annual Earth Week "sales tax holiday" on Energy Star products (Senate Bill 513 sponsored by Sen. James Clayborne, D - East St. Louis) passed the Senate and is pending in the House.

Until such legislation is enacted, though, I invite every Illinois consumer to visit www.energystar.gov and celebrate the 35th Earth Day by purchasing that new energy-efficient product you've been thinking about. It will benefit the planet and your household budget.

Sincerely

Pat Quinn
Illinois Lieutenant Governor