

UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460



OFFICE OF
AIR AND RADIATION

March 2, 2016,

Dear ENERGY STAR[®] Computers Partner, Certification Body, Recognized Laboratory, or Other Interested Party,

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has received questions regarding certification of configurations outside the Microsoft Windows[®] Operating System under the Version 6.1 ENERGY STAR Computers specification. In response, EPA and the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) are sharing this clarification regarding the test procedure for workstation computers.

The ENERGY STAR Test Method for workstations does not explicitly allow for certification of configurations outside the Microsoft Windows[®] Operating System. Specifically, workstations must complete the Maximum Power Test to fully stress a configuration, which involves the simultaneous operation of two industry benchmarks, LINPAC and SPECviewperf[®]. As SPEC does not support a version of SPECviewperf[®] capable of running on alternate operating systems such as Linux, EPA is clarifying that workstation manufacturers may qualify such configurations by testing using the Microsoft Windows[®] Operating System, so as to make a wider range of configurations eligible for the ENERGY STAR. EPA understands that the energy performance results of systems using Microsoft Operating Systems are very close to those of systems using Linux or other alternate operating systems.

EPA is making clear with this letter, and in the accompanying updated ENERGY STAR Test Method, that effective immediately manufacturers may certify configurations outside the Microsoft Windows[®] Operating System. The results from benchmarks under Microsoft Windows are considered representative for purposes of certifying computers using alternate operating systems. Regardless of which operating system is shipped on an ENERGY STAR certified work station, power management features compliant with EO 13423 must be enabled.

Any questions about this clarification can be directed to me at Hanson.Steven@epa.gov or 202-343-9836, John Clinger at John.Clinger@icfi.com or 215-967-9407, or Jeremy Dommu at Jeremy.Dommu@ee.doe.gov or 202-586-9870. For any other computer related questions, please contact computers@energystar.gov.

Thank you for your continued support of ENERGY STAR.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Steven Hanson".

Steven Hanson
Manager, ENERGY STAR for Data Center Products