

EU decides in favour of "green" fans High energy efficiency standards defined

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The European Parliament has already adopted power consumption reduction measures affecting light bulbs, pumps and the "standby" function. One example of the upshot of these measures is the classical 100 watt light bulb being banned.

Last week, the EU defined new high efficiency standards for fans. Within the framework of the Eco-Design Directive, which has been in force since 2005, and in which the savings potential of energy-relevant products is examined and minimum standards are defined as appropriate, CO₂ emissions in Europe are to be reduced by some 16 million tonnes and electrical power consumption is to be reduced by 34 TWh. According to the EU Commission, the energy consumption of fans is currently around 410 TWh per annum in Europe alone, and this is expected to rise to about 660 TWh by the year 2020.

The global fan industry is now required to make its contribution to saving energy by designing its products for the European market according to energy efficiency criteria. This is to be done in two stages. The first stage will become effective on 1 January 2013. Some 30% of all current fans will then no longer satisfy European regulations. A further 20% will disappear from the market from 2015, as these will no longer fulfil the defined efficiency standards.

"We support the decision of the EU in favour of energy-efficient fans," declared Hans-Jochen Beilke, Chairman of the Managing Directors of the ebm-papst Group. "This will make a significant contribution to the achievement of global climatic targets." Since 2000, the market leader has been developing its fans and motors using energy-efficient EC technology. "These achieve the greatest efficiency, exceeding by far the newly defined minimum standards of the ERP [Energy Related Product] Directive," explains Uwe Sigloch, Market Manager at ebm-papst in Mulfingen.

Compared to conventional products (that use AC technology), EC fans save about 90% of the energy transmitted onto the shaft. There is practically no waste heat. An integrated electronic circuit allows the speed of these electronically commutated solutions to be regulated, which has the double benefit of lower operating costs and reduced noise emissions for the user. Fans with EC technology also achieve a very long service life and convince with maintenance-free operations.

Sigloch also notes that the willingness of customers to pay more for energy-efficient products has increased significantly. "There are various reasons for this,"

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explains the market manager, "for example the fact that energy costs are continually increasing and that our customers now also take total energy consumption throughout the service life into account when deciding which product to buy."

Beilke is well aware that the Eco-Design Directive will make great efforts necessary on the part of global fan manufacturers, but ebm-papst and other market players are most definitely in a position to master this challenge.

"The ERP Directive means that energy-consuming fans, for example those imported from other countries, will no longer be able to be put onto the market," the company chairman explains. "The resulting concentration on energy-efficient products will secure highly qualified jobs in Europe - pressure to move production abroad will then reduce," explains Beilke.

Captions:

Image 1: The efficiency plume of ebm-papst centrifugal fans shows that ebm-papst will also have to make great efforts as a result of the defined minimum standards. However, the company is confident that it will master this challenge.

Image 2: Assembly of the energy-efficient global innovation "RadiCal". ebm-papst's aerodynamically optimised energy-saving fan, which was nominated for the Hannover Messe Hermes Award in 2010, already satisfies the newly defined minimum EU standards.

Image 3: The energy-saving fan "RadiCal" is the new benchmark for ventilation and air-conditioning applications. It already satisfies the newly defined minimum EU standards.

About ebm-papst

The ebm-papst Group is the world's leading manufacturer of fans and motors, and is a pacemaker for ultra-efficient EC technology. In the last fiscal year 09/10, the company generated a turnover of 986 million €. ebm-papst employs a workforce of more than 10,000 at 17 production sites (e.g. in Germany, China, USA) and 57 sales offices worldwide. Products of the global market leader are represented in many industries, including ventilation, air-conditioning and refrigeration technology, household appliances, heating engineering, in IT/telecommunications applications as well as those in automotive and commercial vehicle engineering.

About the Eco-Design Directive

By adopting the Kyoto Protocol, the European Union has undertaken to reduced CO2 emissions by at least 20% by 2020. A measure towards achieving this is the Eco-Design Directive, which was adopted in 2005 and extended in 2009. Within the framework of this directive, the savings potential of energy-relevant products is examined and minimum standards are defined as necessary. The European Commission compiles a working program defining which product groups are to be scrutinised in the future.

Product groups for which the Eco-Design Directive has already been implemented: Standby function, simple set-top boxes (TV receivers), domestic lighting (bulbs, energy-saving bulbs), gas discharge lamps (street light and office lighting), external power supplies, electric motors, heating pumps, TV sets, refrigerators and freezers.