The Federal Trade Commission (FTC)’s Energy Labeling Rule has a new look. Following a public comment period, the FTC issued amendments to the Energy Labeling Rule that reorganize the Rule’s product descriptions and categories to make them clearer and simpler for stakeholders to understand and apply. But the FTC’s changes are cosmetic – the agency made no substantive changes to the Rule.

The Rule requires manufacturers to attach yellow EnergyGuide labels to many home appliances and electrical products and prohibits retailers from removing these labels or rendering them illegible. It also directs sellers to post label information on websites and in paper catalogs.

The amendments divide the covered products list into four different groups organized by general product category to make it easier for stakeholders to identify relevant covered products, particularly for categories that contain different product types and exemptions, such as lighting. They also separate labeling requirements into seven sections: one for general layout and formatting requirements and six additional sections containing stand-alone label content requirements for refrigerator products, clothes washers, dishwashers, water heaters, room air conditioners, and pool heaters. Finally, the amendments remove obsolete references and correct minor errors.
The Commission approved publication of the final amendments by a vote of 4-1. Commissioner Christine S. Wilson issued a dissent in which she argued that some of the requirements in the amended Rule were unnecessarily exacting, and that the Commission should consider conducting “a comprehensive review of this Rule with a deregulatory mindset.”

The changes become effective on November 29, 2019.

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