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Stricter regulations are needed for electric heaters

Converting electricity into heat through resistance is by far the least efficient way of using primary energy to produce comfort heat. It contributes to severe electricity demand peaks in winter, requiring to oversize power grids with polluting flexible powerplants operating on fossil fuels¹.

Regrettably, electric heaters are one of the most popular form of heating in the EU, although widespread alternatives such as heat pumps are far more efficient.

With 18 million units expected to be sold in 2020², electric heaters represent both the largest share of products covered by the local space heaters group and the largest potential for energy savings. Of the 94TWh/year primary energy savings expected for local space heaters in 2030, 63TWh/year (i.e. 67%) are from electric heaters³. The Ecodesign Regulation (EU) 2015/1188 - currently being revised - enables these significant energy savings, but the ambition of the proposed ecodesign requirements could be drastically increased. **More importantly, electric heaters should be included in the scope of the Energy Labelling Regulation (EU) 2015/ 1186, which currently fails to cover 71% of the product group³.**

Consumers are not informed of the poor performance of portable electric heaters in particular, which can still be bought for very low prices (around 20€) and can effectively comply with the existing regulation with a simple mechanic thermostat control⁴. The low purchase price is however offset by the related energy consumption which inflates the electricity bills. Something consumers may not fully realise when making that purchase.

In the context of the climate emergency, we can no longer afford to allow such inefficient technologies being placed on the market at this scale and without a proper information for consumers, and we therefore urge the European Institution to take action, at the very least to:

- **Include electric heaters in the scope of the proposed combined energy label for local space heaters \leq 50Kw and air-to-air heat pumps \leq 12kW** so that consumers can be properly informed and able to compare the energy efficiencies of those products.
- **Adopt stricter ecodesign requirements for electric heaters to make the most advanced controls** (electronic thermostat of high accuracy, automatic night setback, automatic presence detection setback, window opening detection, weekly timer or intelligent auto-programming that detects user need patterns (for fixed models) **a condition for market access.**

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¹ https://negawatt.org/IMG/pdf/190611_mde-levier-pour-fermer-dernieres-centrales-charbon.pdf

² Final report of the review study, p.114; <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1cl4Lo9Z8FbP8q-d5XNdCvT2rXuyDsOdJ/view?usp=sharing>

³ p.23; https://ec.europa.eu/energy/sites/ener/files/documents/eia_overview_report_2017_-_v20171222.pdf

⁴ Final report of the review study, p.171.; <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1cl4Lo9Z8FbP8q-d5XNdCvT2rXuyDsOdJ/view?usp=sharing>