

DISHWASHER EFFICIENCY STANDARDS

QUICK STATS

- ✘ **CONFERENCE:** Regulation
- ✘ **TEAM:** Department of Energy
- **FUMBLE:** Allow only 3.1 gallons of water to wash a load of dishes
- **HOW TO RECOVER THE BALL:** Work with industry and the public *before* drawing up final regulations

According to the *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, *efficient* means “capable of producing desired results without wasting materials, time, or energy.”³¹ Unfortunately, when DOE issued its “higher efficiency standards” for household dishwashers in 2015, they failed to meet the full definition of the word. The new standards, which only allowed 3.1 gallons of water to wash each load of dishes, were issued after already lowering the limit from 6.5 gallons to 5 gallons in 2012.^{32,33}

The Association of Home Appliance Manufacturers decided to test the new standards. Accordingly they calibrated their appliances to meet the new standard and ran some tests. The dishwashers that used 3.1 gallons of water ended up with so much residual food on the dishes that they needed to be rewashed to be usable, which completely negates any efficiency achieved. In other words the new standards would save 240 billion gallons of water over a 30-year period and reduce energy consumption by 12 percent, but

it would also leave families with dirty dishes that require an additional cycle.³⁴

Families already have enough to worry about without adding extra loads of dishes to the mix, simply due to poorly conceived federal regulations. This is another example of a regulation, drawn up in an office building in Washington, DC, that is unworkable for families.

RECOVERY

When the Constitution was written, did the Framers really dream the federal government would one day control how Americans wash their dishes? The constant push for more regulation and efficiency does have a limit. When someone in Washington decides industry must change, the loser is often the consumer who pays higher prices for a less desirable product. The federal government must evaluate products for safety but allow the market and local codes to drive design.

[For more information, please visit:](#)

[The Hill: Industry rails against Obama’s dishwasher rules](#)

[Federal Register: Proposed Rules](#)

[Fox News: Appliance industry warns federal dishwasher regs would lead to dirty dishes](#)