

DOCKETED

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*Comment Received From: Claire Ann Warshaw
Submitted On: 5/13/2020
Docket Number: 20-BUSMTG-02*

2020_05_13 20-BUSMTG-02 Thanks for residential heat pump research agenda items

Wednesday, May 13, 2020

Dear California Energy Commission Commissioners and Staff:

Thanks for today's business meeting agenda items which involved improving residential heat pumps for affordability, higher efficiency, and lower global warming refrigerants. Making residential heat pumps affordable cannot seem to come soon enough, due to R-22 refrigerant now considered outdated (from what I have understood reading the internet and listening to contractors), due to more low income residents due to COVID-19, and the need for higher efficiency situations.

I still encourage heat pump gurus (and other machine makers) to work on reducing machine decibels. Most current residential heat pumps, (not including some mini-splits and some higher expensive machines) seem to be manufactured new, with decibels above the Sacramento County noise ordinance, which I believe is 65 decibels, one foot on the other side of the fence. Reducing decibels is extremely difficult. (I tried.) My heat pump, bought in 2005, a Trane TR11, would not have passed the Sacramento noise ordinance when it was new. Sacramento County does not enforce its heat pump noise ordinance upon installation, so I was told by their building office (at Goethe and Bradshaw Roads). Yet, noise can be a public nuisance. Constant and strange "white noise" sources, in my experience, can be exhausting. Because of this, I believe could make sense for the CEC staff, to record decibels along with SEER, HPSF, and EER values in their databases.

I have good news to share on this issue. Unfortunately, I do not think this news is what heat pump gurus want.

In my densely populated, townhouse community, our bedrooms are close to our heat pumps. I had written about my neighbor who had an HVAC machine, installed by the previous owner, which seemed to be variable speed, going on/off in the early am and often, strangely, during temperate weather conditions. The noise, especially in the early am, was difficult and could wake one easily. About a month and a half ago, she replaced her heat pump with what seems to be a one or two stage machine. So far, her new machine and thermostat control situation (?) makes far less unpredictable noise. It seems more peaceful at night. Replacing that machine, however, would not have been my recommendation for her since I have understood (per listening to others speak) that variable speed heat pumps are more efficient. However, her current heat pump replacement is working in terms of significantly reducing noise so far, and in that regard, I am extremely thankful. I am not sure what it will be like during a heat wave, but I am

guessing the noise will be more tolerable. I hope she too is thankful, and happy with the new machine (and thermostat?) as well. I hope she was not ripped off in any way. These replacements and improvements can be costly and difficult.

That is why I was thankful to read and listen to the various heat pump research and implementation agenda items today. In short: THANKS!

Sincerely,

Claire Warshaw

Additional submitted attachment is included below.

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