

California Bill Addressing Implementation of Battery Charger Standard Makes Progress in Senate

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In California, legislation is moving forward to prohibit implementation of the state's new energy efficiency labeling standards for battery chargers, unless the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) fails to adopt charger labeling requirements by January 31, 2013 (which would take effect no later than July 1, 2013). Should the DOE fail to meet those deadlines, the bill further provides that any state labeling requirements that do go into effect would ultimately be preempted by any DOE standard once it takes effect. Assembly Bill 1850 was approved unanimously August 16 by the Senate Appropriations Committee.

Absent passage of AB 1850, the California Energy Commission labeling standard will go into effect for most consumer product chargers by February 2013. (The implementation date for forklift trucks is January 2014.) The expected publication date for the federal standard is uncertain, but one DOE report lists an adoption target date of December 2012.

The January 12, 2012 California Energy Commission's energy efficiency standards (estimated to reduce charger energy consumption by 40%) for battery chargers cover a wide range of products, including cell phones, laptop computers, power tools, cameras, electronic toothbrushes, golf carts, and forklift trucks.

The DOE issued its proposed rule on March 27, 2012 to implement energy conservation standards for both product battery chargers and external power supplies (EPS). 77 Fed. Reg. 1847 (Mar. 27, 2012) (to be codified at 10 CFR 430).