

## Standards Shape the Future for RTUs

Standards will take effect in two phases



**INNOVATOR:** HIGHMARK co-founders Anthony Sannazzaro and Richard Gerbe, along with Aermec's Jim Chaters (left to right), introduce the Aermec WWM modular chiller at the 2017 AHR Expo



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LAS VEGAS — On Dec. 17, 2015, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) finalized new negotiated energy conservation standards for commercial air conditioners, heat pumps, and warm-air furnaces. According to the DOE, these new efficiency standards will save businesses \$167 billion in energy costs over the lifetime of the equipment — more than any other efficiency standard issued to date.

The new rooftop unit (RTU) standards will take effect in two phases, increasing minimum efficiency by about 10 percent as of Jan. 1, 2018, and by 25-30 percent as of Jan. 1, 2023. Standards for new warm-air furnaces, which are typically installed in conjunction with commercial air conditioners, will also become effective in 2023.

Furthermore, the ANSI/AHRI 920 standard, “Rating Standard for DX Dedicated Outdoor-Air Units,” has added efficiency minimums to the ASHRAE 90.1 standard, so manufacturers are adjusting and preparing. Therefore, it’s not too surprising that the biggest trend with rooftop units and chillers at the 2017 AHR Expo was energy efficiency.

## CHILLER TRENDS

Chiller manufacturers are also striving to make the installation process as easy as possible. Whether it’s making it easier to break down, adjust, or fit into tight or small places, manufacturers are simplifying the installation process for chillers.

Due to its modular design, installation of Aermec’s new water-to-water chiller, the WWM, can be adapted to suit specific development needs while guaranteeing improved safety and reliability. As a result, the cooling capacity can be easily increased over time and at a limited cost.

“We’ve designed the product to have access only through the front, which allows the modules to be configured back to back in a single line against the wall or stacked. This allows us to put as much cooling tonnage in a square foot as you would see in a large centrifugal chiller,” said Richard Gerbe, cofounder, Highmark NY LLC. “Contractors love that this chiller can go through a standard door when you remove a piece. Additionally, the redundancy you get with all of the standard compressors is great. You could work on one of these modules while not impacting any of the other cooling in the plant.”