



NEWS:

- Latest news
- Product News
- Company News
- Policy News
- Conference News
- General News
- Eco Cute Flash News
- Subscription

[Home](#) [News](#) [Latest News](#)

[High-efficient EcoCute models launched](#)

Leading Japanese brands showcased their latest CO₂-based Heat Pump Water Heaters (EcoCute) at an industry show in Tokyo this week. Sanyo and Daikin received special awards for their new high-efficient and performing units.

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After hitting the first 1 million sales in 2007, momentum is growing for EcoCute Water Heaters in Japan, with constant innovations entering the market every year. Leading manufacturers chose the ENEX (Energy and Environment Exhibition) in Tokyo this week to showcase their latest models featuring increased efficiency in different conditions, therefore contributing to reduce overall greenhouse gases emissions.

Awards to Sanyo & Daikin

Sanyo presented its innovative new Heat Pump able to operate efficiently under extremely low ambient temperature conditions (-20 degrees Celsius), being thus suitable for cold areas such as the Hokkaido region in north Japan. The unit, developed in co-operation with the Hokkaido Electric Power company, won the Chairman Prize of the Energy Conservation Centre of Japan (ECCJ), under the category of Low Ambient Multifunction EcoCute.

Sanyo's new CO₂ Heat Pump uses a 'split cycle system' allowing to increase by 50% the heating capacity and by 20% the Coefficient of Performance (COP) at -20° C ambient temperature, when compared to a 'conventional cycle' of a Sanyo model.

Daikin, on the other hand, also won the Chairman Prize of ECCJ for its CO₂ Heat Pump. With a COP of 5.1, its latest EcoCute unit uses a special 'water/CO₂ Heat Exchanger'.

Trend towards increasing efficiency

The exhibition showed a trend towards high efficient Heat Pumps, with the majority of new models presenting a COP of over 5.0. This means a significant increase since the launch of EcoCute in 2001, where best models offered a maximum COP of 3.5. Sizes of EcoCute units have also decreased to fit smaller spaces, and new models have been developed to suit various needs (i.e. large integrated systems, industrial installations, extreme weather conditions, etc.).

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Companies showcasing new models included:

- Chofu: its new Ecocute Heat Pump reaches a COP of 5.1, combined with a silent operation, with maximum operating noise of only 38dB.
- Corona: with similar efficiency, it offers an attractive slim design to fit in residential dwellings.
- Panasonic (National): last year's winner of the ECCJ award showcased a new model using a 'vacuum insulation panel', with overall improved efficiency.
- Hitachi (see picture in image gallery)

Other exhibitors included TEPCO (Tokyo Electric Power Company), offering information about its 'switch' campaign to promote the transition to all electric houses, or Yodobashi, the Japanese consumer electronics store. Its booth integrated an interactive game to raise awareness about CO₂ emissions to the atmosphere related to the use of electronic equipment.

Background

The ENergy & ENvironment Exhibition (ENEX) displayed from 30 January to 1 February in Tokyo technical innovations contributing to efficient and environmental solutions for the automotive and stationary sectors. The event is organized every year by The Energy Conservation Center of Japan (ECCJ), with the support of the Japanese Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI). After the showcase in Tokyo, ENEX will also take place in Osaka from 21 to 23 February.

"Eco Cute" is the commercial name of heat pump water heaters in Japan, using the natural refrigerant CO₂ (R744). Since its entry into the market in 2001, over 1 million EcoCute units have been sold in the country.

More information:

[ENEX 2008](#)

[Energy Conservation Centre of Japan \(ECCJ\)](#)

[EcoCute Flash News \(R744.com\)](#)