ENERGY STAR®
Residential New Construction Programs

Historical Document

This document is provided for reference because it has been superseded by a more recent Version or Revision. Please find current program documents on the Program Requirements webpage.

Use of older Versions and Revisions, such as this document, are typically limited to homes and buildings with a permit date (or, for manufactured homes, a production date) prior to a specified date. Consult the Implementation Timeline table to assess whether a home or apartment is still eligible to be certified using this document.

For questions or more information, contact us at energystarhome@energystar.gov.

California Program Requirements
ENERGY STAR Certified Homes, Version 3.1 (Rev. 08)

Eligibility Requirements

The following homes are eligible to earn the ENERGY STAR:

- Detached dwelling units [1] (e.g. single family homes); OR
- Dwelling units [1] in any multifamily building with 4 units or fewer; OR
- Dwelling units [1] in multifamily buildings with 3 stories or fewer above-grade [2,3]; OR
- Dwelling units [1] in multifamily buildings with 4 or 5 stories above-grade [2,3] that have their own heating, cooling, and hot water systems [4], separate from other units, and where dwelling units occupy 80% or more of the occupiable [3] square footage of the building [5]. When evaluating mixed–use buildings for eligibility, exclude commercial / retail space when assessing whether the 80% threshold has been met.

Dwelling units [1] in multifamily buildings that are not eligible to earn the ENERGY STAR through the Certified Homes Program may be eligible through the Multifamily High Rise Program. For more information, visit: www.energystar.gov/mfhr/eligibility

Note that compliance with these requirements is not intended to imply compliance with all local code requirements that may be applicable to the home to be built. [6]

Partnership, Training, and Credentialing Requirements

Builders, Raters, and HVAC contractors must meet the following requirements prior to certifying homes:

- Builders are required to sign an ENERGY STAR Partnership Agreement and complete the online Version 3 Builder Orientation, which can be found at www.energystar.gov/homesPA.
- HVAC installing contractors are required to be credentialed by an EPA-recognized HVAC Quality Installation Training and Oversight Organization (H-QUITO). An explanation of this process can be found at www.energystar.gov/newhomesHVAC.
- Raters and Field Inspectors are required to complete training, which can be found at www.energystar.gov/newhomestraining.

ENERGY STAR Certification Process

1. The certification process provides flexibility to select a custom combination of measures for each home that meets one of two performance targets, as assessed through energy modeling. Select one of the two following performance targets:
   a. A California Advanced Home Program (CAHP) score of ≤ 84, as determined by a CEC-approved software program. [7]
   b. Savings ≥10% above the 2013 Building Energy Efficiency Standards, as determined by a CEC-approved software program. [7]
2. Configure the preferred set of efficiency measures for the home to be certified and verify that the resulting performance meets or exceeds the applicable performance target using the applicable software program, as determined in Step 1.

   Note that, regardless of the measures selected, the Mandatory Requirements for All Certified Homes in Exhibit 1 are also required and impose certain constraints on the efficiency measures selected (e.g., insulation levels, insulation installation quality, window performance, duct leakage). Furthermore, on-site power generation may not be used to meet the performance target.
3. Construct the home using the measures selected in Step 2 and the Mandatory Requirements for All Certified Homes, Exhibit 1.
4. Using a Rater, verify that all requirements have been met in accordance with the Mandatory Requirements for All Certified Homes and with Data Input requirements and On-Site Inspection Procedures for California HERS Ratings. [8] The Rater is required to keep electronic or hard copies of the completed and signed Rater checklists and the HVAC Design Report.

   The Rater must review all items on the Rater checklists. Raters are expected to use their experience and discretion to verify that the overall intent of each inspection checklist item has been met (i.e., identifying major defects that undermine the intent of the checklist item versus identifying minor defects that the Rater may deem acceptable).

   In the event that a Rater finds an item that is inconsistent with the intent of the checklists, the home cannot earn the ENERGY STAR until the item is corrected. If correction of the item is not possible, the home cannot earn the ENERGY STAR. In the event that an item on a Rater checklist cannot be inspected by the Rater, the home also cannot earn the ENERGY STAR. The only exceptions to this rule are in the Thermal Enclosure System Section of the Rater Field Checklist, where the builder may assume responsibility for verifying a maximum of eight items. This option shall only be used at the discretion of the Rater. When exercised, the builder's responsibility will be formally acknowledged by the builder signing the checklist for the item(s) that they verified.

   In the event that a Rater is not able to determine whether an item is consistent with the intent (e.g., an alternative method of meeting a checklist requirement has been proposed), then the Rater shall consult their Provider. If the Provider also cannot make this determination, then the Rater or Provider shall report the issue to EPA prior to project completion at: energystarhomes@energystar.gov and will typically receive an initial response within 5 business days. If EPA believes the current program requirements are sufficiently clear to determine whether the intent has been met, then this guidance will be provided to the partner and enforced beginning with the house in question. In contrast, if EPA believes the program requirements require revisions to make the intent clear, then this guidance will be provided to the partner but only enforced for homes permitted after a specified transition period after the release of the revised program requirements, typically 60 days in length.

   This process will allow EPA to make formal policy decisions as partner questions arise and to disseminate these policy decisions through the periodic release of revised program documents to ensure consistent application of the program requirements.

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Exhibit 1: Mandatory Requirements for All Certified Homes

Party Responsible	Mandatory Requirements
Rater	• Completion of Rater Design Review Checklist • Completion of Rater Field Checklist
HVAC System Designer	• Completion of HVAC Design Report
HVAC Installing Contractor	• Completion of HVAC Commissioning Checklist
Builder	• Completion of Water Management System Builder Requirements

Effective Date

Exhibit 2 defines the implementation timeline for Version 3.1 of the California Program Requirements.

Exhibit 2: California ENERGY STAR Certified Homes Version 3.1 Implementation Timeline

Version #	Applicable to Homes with the Following Permit Date
CA v3.1	On or after 04/01/2016

Notes:

1. A dwelling unit, as defined by the 2012 IECC, is a single unit that provides complete independent living facilities for one or more persons, including permanent provisions for living, sleeping, eating, cooking, and sanitation.
2. Any above-grade story with 20% or more occupiable space, including commercial space, shall be counted towards the total number of stories for the purpose of determining eligibility to participate in the program. The definition of an 'above-grade story' is one for which more than half of the gross surface area of the exterior walls is above-grade. All below-grade stories, regardless of type, shall not be included when evaluating eligibility.
3. Per ASHRAE 62.2-2010, occupiable space is any enclosed space inside the pressure boundary and intended for human activities or continual human occupancy, including, but not limited to, areas used for living, sleeping, dining, and cooking, toilets, closets, halls, storage and utility areas, and laundry areas.
4. Central domestic hot water systems are allowed if solar energy provides ≥ 50% of the domestic hot water for the residential units.
5. Units in multifamily buildings with 4 or 5 stories above-grade, including mixed–use buildings, that have their own heating, cooling, & hot water systems, separate from other units, *but where dwelling units occupy < 80%* of the residential (i.e., excluding commercial / retail space for mixed-use buildings) occupiable square footage of the building may earn the ENERGY STAR through either the Certified Homes Program or the Multifamily High Rise (MFHR) Program if permitted prior to July 1, 2012. Units in buildings of this type that are permitted after this date shall only be eligible to earn the ENERGY STAR through the MFHR Program.
6. Where requirements of the local codes, manufacturers' installation instructions, engineering documents, or regional ENERGY STAR programs overlap with the requirements of these guidelines, EPA offers the following guidance:
   a. Where the overlapping requirements exceed the ENERGY STAR guidelines, these overlapping requirements shall be met;
   b. Where overlapping requirements conflict with a requirement of the ENERGY STAR program (e.g., slab insulation is prohibited to allow visual access for termite inspections), then the conflicting requirement within these program requirements shall not be met. Certification shall only be allowed if the Rater has determined that no equivalent option is available that could meet the intent of the conflicting requirement (e.g., switching from exterior to interior slab edge insulation). Note that a home must still meet its performance target. Therefore, other efficiency measures may be needed to compensate for the omission of the conflicting requirement.
7. Information on the CAHP score and available rating software can be found at http://www.cahp-pge.com. CEC-approved computer programs can be found at: http://www.energy.ca.gov/title24/2013standards/2013_computer_prog_list.html.
8. The term 'Rater' refers to the person completing the third-party inspections required for certification. This person shall: a) be a certified Home Energy Rater, Rating Field Inspector, or an equivalent designation as determined by a Verification Oversight Organization such as RESNET; and, b) have attended and successfully completed an EPA-recognized training class. See www.energystar.gov/newhomestraining.

   Raters who operate under a Sampling Provider are permitted to verify the Minimum Rated Features of the home and to verify any Checklist Item designated "Rater Verified" using the CEC-approved sampling protocol for homes in CA. No parties other than Raters are permitted to use sampling. All other items shall be verified for each certified home. For example, no items on the HVAC Commissioning Checklist are permitted to be verified using a sampling protocol.
9. This Revision of the California Program Requirements is required to certify all homes permitted after 04/01/2016, but is allowed to be used for any home permitted or completed prior to this date. The Rater may define the 'permit date' as either the date that the permit was issued or the date of the contract on the home. In cases where permit or contract dates are not available, Providers have discretion to estimate permit dates based on other construction schedule factors. These assumptions should be both defensible and documented.