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## Highlights from Revision 13 of the Single-Family New Homes (SFNH) Program

Revision 13 of the SFNH program has been posted to the [ENERGY STAR website](#). Partners are permitted to use this Revision immediately, but must apply it to all homes permitted on or after Jan. 01, 2025. The [Current Policy Record](#) contains all specific changes in this Revision. 'Mark-up' documents showing all tracked changes except formatting are also available. EPA strongly encourages partners to review these documents. A summary of the most substantial updates is below:

### Multiple Program Documents

- A requirement to inspect each home has been added to the Certification Process Section of the National Program Requirements and the Footnotes of the National Rater Design Review Checklist and National Rater Field Checklist to reflect the sunset of sampling inspection protocols in the SFNH program for permits on or after 01/01/2025.
- The Certification Process Section of the National Program Requirements has been revised and a footnote has been added to the pre-drywall inspection date field of the National Rater Field Checklist to reinforce that a pre-drywall inspection is always required; that drywall must be entirely removed to fully verify all Items if it is installed prior to the inspection; and that the use of a Sampled Rating on a home that has missed the inspection is not acceptable.
- An allowance has been added to the National Rater Field Checklist, National HVAC Design Report, and National HVAC Design Supplement to Std. 310: inlets providing outdoor air to a dwelling unit are permitted to be  $\geq 5$  ft., rather than 10 ft., from both exhaust dwelling unit mechanical ventilation systems and local mechanical exhaust systems.
- Item 7.1 of the National Rater Field Checklist and Section 2 of the National HVAC Design Report have been clarified: when designers provide multiple ventilation designs with more than one airflow rate, the Rater is required to assess the run-time setting of the installed system and use that to determine the corresponding design ventilation airflow rate. The Rater-measured ventilation rate then must fall within the program-specified tolerance relative to this rate.

### National Program Requirements

- To reinforce the original intent of the program, the Eligibility Requirements Section has been revised to state that only detached dwellings (e.g., single-family homes and duplexes), as well as townhouses, are eligible to participate.
- A new program document has been referenced in the Eligibility Requirements Section that defines the applicable program requirements, including the minimum Version and Revision, to which a home is eligible to be certified. As a result, the Effective Date Section has been deleted.
- The Partnership, Training, and Credentialing Requirements Section has been revised to clarify that Raters, rather than Energy Rating Companies (ERC's), must be credentialed by an HCO prior to completing inspections.
- To ensure more consistent implementation of the program, the allowance to use Provider discretion to define 'permit date' has been removed and a new alternative, based on the date of the Rater's first inspection, has been added.
- The Certification Process section has been revised to better convey that Raters are to verify that checklist items have been met within EPA-defined tolerances. Prior statements regarding verification may have incorrectly implied that Raters have the authority to interpret program intent, potentially leading to inconsistent implementation.

### National Rater Design Review Checklist

- Two new Items have been added to Section 1 to ensure that Raters verify that ERC's have signed a Partnership Agreement and that Raters have met training and credentialing requirements prior to completing inspections.
- Item 3.1.2, which contained an alternative compliance option for meeting the building thermal envelope requirements for all Versions except National Version 3.2, has been removed.

### National Rater Field Checklist

- A qualifier stating "Up to 10%" has been added next to the builder-verified checkboxes for Item 1.2 and 1.3 to clarify that builders are not permitted to verify the entirety of these requirements. In addition, Footnote 1 now states that a maximum of 10% of the total surface area of non-adiabatic insulated assemblies are permitted to be builder-verified.
- An allowance has been added to Item 3.2 to use slab insulation with an equivalent or better F-Factor than that of the required prescriptive insulation. In addition, a new exemption has been added to the [Slab Edge Insulation Exemptions and Alternatives](#), for a monolithic slab that extends from conditioned space to an adjacent garage.

### National HVAC Design Report

- Item 4.5 now clarifies that for AC's or HP's, the AHRI Reference # must represent the rated efficiency of the specific indoor and outdoor components and is recommended, but not required, to also encompass the furnace.

### National Water Management System Builder Requirements

- Item 4.2 has been revised to clarify that moisture-resistant backing materials for tub / shower enclosures are only required where backing is present. For example, backing is not required behind a 3-piece fiberglass tub enclosure.