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Dear Partner,

EPA has posted an updated Policy Record on the [Policy Changes and Clarifications](#) page containing three policy resolutions regarding the ENERGY STAR Certified Homes guidelines. As a reminder, the Policy Record is used to communicate notable changes made in between the release of formal Revisions.

These three policy resolutions are expected to help partners more successfully implement the program guidelines. Partners may begin using these changes immediately, but are not required to do so until they are incorporated into Revision 06. For convenience, the changes are summarized below:

- **Raters working under an accredited Sampling Provider are now permitted to apply the applicable sampling protocol to any Checklist Item that has a checkbox option to be “Rater Verified”.** EPA has clarified that only Raters working under an accredited Sampling Provider are permitted to conduct sampling and that the applicable sampling protocol (either RESNET or California Energy Commission) shall be used. These Raters are now permitted to apply the applicable sampling protocol to any Checklist Item that has a checkbox option to be “Rater Verified” (i.e., Rater-verified items on the Thermal Enclosure System Rater Checklist, HVAC System QI Rater Checklist, and Water Management System Builder Checklist).
- **EPA is assessing whether there are alternate options for homes undergoing a gut rehabilitation to comply with the ENERGY STAR Inspection Checklists and earn the label.** Historically, EPA has allowed existing homes to earn the ENERGY STAR when all program requirements are met. However, some of the new program requirements present unique challenges for ‘gut rehab’ homes. EPA is currently assessing whether there are alternate compliance options that would meet the intent of the current requirements and allow these homes to be ENERGY STAR certified.
- **Raters are now permitted, as an alternative to the HVAC contractor, to measure the airflow out of each supply and return register; to document the values on the contractor-prepared balancing report; and to verify that the measured values are within the accepted tolerance relative to the design value.** For instances in which the Rater-verified airflow is not within the greater of  $\pm 20\%$  or 25 CFM of the design airflow, the contractor shall be required to correct the balancing of the system prior to final Rater-verification of the airflow. As partners have noted, RESNET has defined on-site inspection procedures for measuring the airflow out of registers in Section 804.2 of the Mortgage Industry National Home Energy Rating System Standards. In addition to these procedures, RESNET and Rating Providers are responsible for providing oversight of Raters that utilize these procedures.

Please see the Policy Record for the full resolution of these three issues.

In addition to announcing the above policy resolutions, EPA would like to remind partners that a specific type of 4 and 5 story buildings will no longer be eligible to earn the ENERGY STAR under the Certified Homes Program if they are permitted on or after July 1, 2012. This deadline has been included in the program documents since August 29, 2011 and is stated in Footnote 4 of the National Program Requirements:

“Units in multifamily buildings with 4 or 5 stories above-grade, including mixed-use buildings, that have their own heating, cooling, and hot water systems, separate from other units, *but where dwelling units occupy*

less than 80% of the residential (i.e., excluding commercial / retail space for mixed-use buildings) occupiable square footage of the building may qualify for the ENERGY STAR through either the New Homes Program or the Multifamily High Rise 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 Multifamily High Rise (MFHR) Program.”

Please contact us at [energystarhomes@energystar.gov](mailto:energystarhomes@energystar.gov) if you have any questions. Thank you for your work promoting ENERGY STAR.

Best regards,

The ENERGY STAR for New Homes Team

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