

**Version Tracking Document for  
ENERGY STAR Certified Homes, Program Requirements for the State of California, Revision 05  
07/01/2015**

In the time since the Version 3 ENERGY STAR Certified Homes program requirements for the state of California were released, EPA has modified, clarified and refined various aspects of the program documents. This document is a summary of these edits. EPA has also posted the revised program documents, labeled (Rev. 05) on its Web site at [www.energystar.gov/newhomesguidelines](http://www.energystar.gov/newhomesguidelines).

All revisions are categorized as a Change, Clarification, or Refinement. These are defined as follows:

**Change** – The addition, deletion, or modification of a program requirement. A change will typically result from a partner question or feedback indicating that EPA’s original intent is not being met or due to changes in relevant standards (e.g., ENERGY STAR labeled product requirements, NAECA standards, ICC codes). A change is the most significant type of edit for partners because it is likely to change the way that partners comply with the program.

**Clarification** – The clarification of a program requirement, typically resulting from a partner question indicating confusion or ambiguity. Clarifications are not intended to significantly change the scope of the program guidelines, but rather to clarify the original intent of the requirement. A clarification is secondary in importance to a change; it should not significantly alter the way that most partners comply with the program.

**Refinement** – A minor revision, such as an improved choice of words, a grammatical correction, or a correction to a typographical error. A refinement is the least important type of edit; it should have no impact on the way that partners comply with the program.

## **California ENERGY STAR Version 3 Guidelines**

### **1. Refinement – All program documents: ‘guidelines’ changed to ‘requirements’**

All references to program ‘guidelines’ have been revised to program ‘requirements’ to align with the current terminology of the ENERGY STAR program.

### **2. Refinement – Certifying Homes Section: Renamed to Eligibility Requirements**

To better fit the content of the section, the Certifying Homes Section has been renamed to Eligibility Requirements Section.

### **3. Refinement – Partnership, Training, and Credentialing Requirements Section relocated**

For improved clarity, the Partnership, Training, and Credentialing Requirements Section has been relocated below the Certifying Homes Section.

### **4. Refinement – Performance Path and Footnote 8: Integration of cover page from Inspection Checklists**

As part of a larger effort to reduce the amount of paperwork required to certify a home, the cover page of the Inspection Checklists has been deleted and much of the content moved to the Program Requirements for the State of California. Because the Inspection Checklists are often printed for each home certified, eliminating the cover page will reduce the paperwork required for each home that is certified.

Specifically, the following paragraphs have been moved from the cover page of the Inspection Checklists to Step 5 of the Performance Path:

“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](mailto: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.”

Additionally, the following language about sampling protocols has been moved from the cover page of the Inspection Checklists to Footnote 8:

“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. 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.”

5. **Refinement** – Exhibit 1: Updated Terminology For Mandatory Requirements

As part of a larger effort to improve the workflow required to certify a home, the inspection checklists required to certify a home have been, in part, rearranged and renamed to improve the workflow of the certification process. Exhibit 1 has been updated to reflect the revised program documents and who is responsible for completing each of them, as follows:

Party Responsible	Mandatory Requirements
<b>Rater</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Completion of Rater Design Review Checklist</li><li>• Completion of Rater Field Checklist</li></ul>
<b>HVAC System Designer</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Completion of HVAC Design Report</li></ul>
<b>HVAC Installing Contractor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Completion of HVAC Commissioning Checklist</li></ul>
<b>Builder</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Completion of Water Management System Builder Requirements</li></ul>