



## Highlights from Revision 14 of the Single-Family New Homes (SFNH) Program

Revision 14 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 01/01/2026. The [Current Policy Record](#) contains all changes in this Revision. ‘Mark-up’ documents showing all tracked changes except formatting will also be posted at this location. The EPA strongly encourages partners to review these documents. Following are the most substantial updates:

### Applicable Program Requirements, Versions, and Revisions by Location Document

- Footnote 1 has been clarified to state that, in cases where multiple permits are issued for a project (e.g., footing permits, building permits), the ‘permit date’ is the date on which the permit authorizing construction of the building, including the building features affecting energy use (e.g., insulation levels, window U/SHGC specifications, mechanical equipment efficiency), was issued.

### National and Regional Program Requirements

- Footnote language allowing townhouses to be certified using the Multifamily New Construction program has been removed to reinforce that townhouses are now only eligible to be certified using the SFNH program.
- Exhibit 1, which summarizes the key efficiency features in the ENERGY STAR Reference Design Home, has been redesigned to improve its utility and clarity. In addition, the language preceding the table has been updated to emphasize that it is not mandatory to include the features contained within the table.

### National Rater Design Review Checklist

- Item 2.1, which defined fenestration requirements, has been simplified to only address SHGC. In addition, the SHGC requirement in Climate Zones 4C & 5 has been removed. Fenestration U-factor will continue to be assessed as part of the overall thermal enclosure in Item 3.1. Lastly, Items 2.1 and 3.1 have been reformatted, edited for clarity, and combined into a single section titled “High-Performance Insulation & Fenestration”.

### National Rater Field Checklist

- In Section 3, the reduced thermal bridging details have been converted from mandatory features to a list of details that must be assessed so they can be accurately reflected in the final energy model. Homes will no longer be mandated to include slab edge insulation, advanced framing, nor meet minimum insulation levels at attic edges, access points, and under platforms. However, homes without such features will have to include offsetting measures to achieve the ERI target and thermal enclosure backstop. For quality assurance purposes, partners wishing to use the revised Section 3 must certify the home using Rev. 14 of the National Rater Field Checklist in its entirety.
- In Section 4, the program’s mandatory air sealing details have been streamlined and a new maximum infiltration (or “blower door”) limit has been added, which a home must achieve to be certified. In addition, two exemptions related to stucco cladding systems have been removed. For quality assurance purposes, partners wishing to use the revised Section 4 must certify the home using Rev. 14 of the National Rater Field Checklist in its entirety.
- Each item in Sections 1-4 has been classified as one that may not be builder verified, may be partially builder verified, or may be fully builder verified. In addition, the allotment of builder-verified items has been reduced from eight to five.
- Raters will be required to capture photos covering key requirements, in addition to those they are already required to photograph per ANSI / RESNET / ICC 301. A camera icon (📷) has been added next to the “Rater Verified” checkbox to indicate which photos are required. In addition, a checkbox with the caption “Photo of Rater” has been added next to each inspection date / signature row to indicate the requirement for a “selfie” photo at each inspection.
- Footnote 48 has been revised to encourage and facilitate the measurement of microwave-integrated exhaust fan airflow. Raters will be permitted to tape off all air inlets except at the bottom during measurements. No correction factors shall be applied to the measured airflow to account for the increased airflow restriction caused by the tape.
- Footnote 4 has been revised to add a time-limited allowance for CMU block wall assemblies with Grade III insulation filling the cores to be used in homes permitted prior to 01/01/2026. This will provide an opportunity for standards bodies to consider a protocol that may allow such assemblies to achieve Grade I.
- A new Policy Record Entry #01390 emphasizes the intent that local mechanical exhaust fan inlets be located within the space that they serve (i.e., within the kitchen or bathroom) and not be separated from this space by a doorway.
- A new Policy Record Entry #01375 clarifies that a Rater must verify that the HVAC manufacturer and model number match the HVAC design even under Track A because it is a prerequisite in Standard 310 for achieving Grade I or II.

### National Water Management System Builder Requirements

- These requirements have been sunset and are no longer required. While their value is recognized, the program’s quality control will benefit by limiting requirements to those that are third-party verified, with limited exceptions.