



How to Wisely Use Builder-Verified Items

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Pros and Cons of Builder-Verified Items

Due to construction staging, it is not always possible for a Rater to see all items during their normally-scheduled inspections. To reduce the need for extra trips, ENERGY STAR allows a builder to verify up to eight items in Sections 1-4 of the Rater Field Checklist (located on the [Program Requirements page](#) within the National Rater Design Review & Rater Field Checklist).

However, builder verification is not a free pass! Like any other program requirement, builder-verified items are expected to be installed correctly in every ENERGY STAR certified home.

In cases where the builder verifies Items, the builder is acting at the Rater's discretion, essentially as a field agent of the Rater. Therefore, the Rater is ultimately responsible for ensuring that such Items have been successfully verified. In other words, if a quality assurance review indicates that Items have not been successfully completed, the Rater will be responsible for facilitating corrective action.

Leveraging builder-verified Items may reduce the number of trips the Rater must make to the home. However, a Rater should only exercise this option at their discretion and must be confident that the builder can accurately verify such Items.

Best Practices

Raters should follow these best practices to ensure success:

- Provide on-site trades training on program requirements.
- Spot-check examples together before allowing the builder to verify for the rest of the project.
- During site visits, look for in-process details on upcoming houses to independently assess quality.

- Direct the builder to take photos of verified items and send them to you for documentation.

Paying close attention to the quality of builder-verified items reflects on a Rating company's reputation for quality assurance. Rating companies can distinguish themselves by building a reputation for due diligence.

Learn More

Download the ENERGY STAR Rater Field Checklist (Rev. 08) at energystar.gov/newhomesrequirements and review Footnote #1 on page 6.

View past editions of the ENERGY STAR Certified Homes Technical Bulletins [here](#).

Questions? Email us at energystarhomes@energystar.gov.

Best regards,

The ENERGY STAR Certified Homes team

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