

**Version Tracking Document for  
ENERGY STAR Certified Homes for California Version 3.1 (Rev. 09)  
09/01/18**

In the time since Revision 08 of the Version 3.1 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, primarily in response to partner questions and comments. This document is a summary of these edits, organized by the program document containing the change. EPA has also posted the revised program documents, labeled Version 3.1 (Rev. 09), on its [Website](#).

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 Program Requirements**

#### **1. Change – Elimination of plant-certification pathway for modular homes**

The plant-certification path for modular homes has been eliminated because it is not frequently utilized and may be causing confusion among partners.

To further clarify the remaining certification process for modular homes, the first line of the Eligibility Requirements section has been updated to explicitly encompass modular homes as follows:

“The following site-built or modular homes are eligible to earn the ENERGY STAR:”

To indicate that a Rater must verify any requirement in the plant not able to be verified on-site because a feature will be concealed prior to shipment, the following sentence has been added to Step 4 of The ENERGY STAR Certification Process section:

“For modular homes, a Rater must verify any requirement in the plant not able to be verified on-site because a feature will be concealed prior to shipment.”

And a new Footnote has been added as follows:

“A modular home is a prefabricated home that is made of multiple modules or sections that are manufactured and substantially assembled in a manufacturing plant. These pre-built sections are transported to the building site and constructed by a builder to meet all applicable building codes for site-built homes.”

Finally, the Version of the program requirements applicable to a modular home, which was based upon the home’s “sale date”, has been changed to be based upon the “permit date”, to align with the policy for other site-built homes.

#### **2. Change – Determining program implementation date in California**

The criteria for determining the implementation date in California has been changed such that when a jurisdiction approves a home plan and its efficiency features for use on a specific lot or tract, the date that this approval occurs will be used to determine the version required to certify a

home constructed with that plan and efficiency features. To accommodate the unique permitting process in California, Footnote 9 has been modified as follows:

“The ‘plan approval date’ is the date that a jurisdiction approves a home plan and its efficiency features for use on a specific lot or tract. The Rater may define the ‘permit date’ as either the date that the permit was issued or the date of the contract on the home. In cases where permit or contract dates are not available, Providers have discretion to estimate permit dates based on other construction schedule factors. These assumptions should be both defensible and documented.”

**3. Change – Eligibility Requirements: Criteria for dwelling units in four and five story buildings**

To address the challenge that partners experienced meeting eligibility requirements for four and five story buildings, criteria related to heating, cooling, and hot water systems have been removed.

The eligibility requirement in the fourth bullet of the Eligibility Requirements section has been revised as follows:

“Dwelling units in multifamily buildings with 4 or 5 stories above-grade where dwelling units occupy 80% or more of the occupiable square footage of the building. When evaluating mixed-use buildings for eligibility, exclude commercial / retail space when assessing whether the 80% threshold has been met.

Footnote 4 has been revised as follows:

“These units may earn the ENERGY STAR through either the Certified Homes Program or the Multifamily High Rise (MFHR) Program. If participating in the Certified Homes Program and the dwelling unit is served by a central heating, cooling, or hot water system, use the RESNET Guidelines for Multifamily Ratings for modeling the specified central system(s) is recommended.”

Footnote 5 has been revised as follows:

“If permitted prior to July 1, 2012, units in multifamily buildings with 4 or 5 stories above-grade may earn the ENERGY STAR through either the Certified Homes Program or the Multifamily High Rise (MFHR) Program, without assessing whether the 80% threshold has been met.”

**4. Clarification – Explicit requirement for homes to be registered and receive rating**

To ensure that ENERGY STAR certified homes in California are encompassed by an oversight organization’s quality assurance protocols, ENERGY STAR Certified Homes are now explicitly required to receive a rating and be registered with a CEC-approved HERS Provider. The first paragraph under Step 4 of the ENERGY STAR Certification Process has been updated as follows:

“4. Using a Rater, verify that all requirements have been met in accordance with the Mandatory Requirements for All Certified Homes and with Data Input requirements and On-Site Inspection Procedures for California HERS Ratings. Finally, register the rated home with a CEC-approved HERS Provider. The Rater is required to keep electronic or hard copies of the completed and signed National Rater checklists and the National HVAC Design Report.”

**5. Refinement – Footer: Removal of implementation date**

To reduce unnecessary complexity and avoid potential confusion, the implementation dates for Revisions and their associated Footnotes have been removed from the footers of program documents. Furthermore, these dates have been integrated into the Effective Date Sections of the program requirements documents.

The first sentence of Footnote 9 has also been removed as it has been integrated into the Effective Date Sections of the program requirements documents.

**6. Refinement – Updating document titles for consistent naming format**

To avoid potential confusion, and use a consistent naming format, the title of and references to the Rater Checklists and other mandatory requirements, namely the “Rater Field Checklist”, “Rater Design Review Checklist”, “HVAC Design Report”, “HVAC Commissioning Checklist”, and “Water Management System Builder Requirements”, have been updated to “National Rater Field Checklist”, “National Rater Design Review Checklist”, “National HVAC Design Report”, “National HVAC Commissioning Checklist”, and “National Water Management System Builder Requirements”, respectively.

**7. Refinement – Effective Date Section: Revised structure and format of Implementation Timeline**

To help ensure partners are aware of the implementation timeline(s) applicable to the homes that they certify, the Effective Date section has been revised as follows:

**Effective Date**

To determine the program Version and Revision that a home is required to be certified under, look up the permit date of the home in Exhibit 2. Program requirements for other locations can be found at [www.energystar.gov/newhomesrequirements](http://www.energystar.gov/newhomesrequirements).

This Exhibit contains all implementation timelines applicable on or after September 1, 2016. Implementation timelines applicable prior to this date can be obtained by contacting [energystarhomes@energystar.gov](mailto:energystarhomes@energystar.gov).

**Exhibit 2: ENERGY STAR Certified Homes Implementation Timeline for California**

State / Territory	Homes With Plan Approval Date and Permit Issue Date On or After This Date Must Meet the Adjacent Version & Revision	Version	Revision
CA	04-01-2016	California v3.1	Rev. 08
	07-01-2018	California v3.2	Rev. 08
	01-01-2019	California v3.2	Rev. 09

**8. Change – Exhibit 2: Continued Use of Rev. 08 HVAC Design Report**

To reflect that previously collected Rev. 08 HVAC Design Reports are permitted to be used after the release of the next Revision of the program requirements, so long as no aspect of the system design changes, a new Footnote has been added to Exhibit 2, as follows: “Homes certified under Rev. 09 of the program requirements are permitted to use either Rev. 08 or 09 of the National HVAC Design Report.”