

ENERGY STAR[®]

Residential New Construction Programs

Historical Document

This document is provided for reference because it has been superseded by a more recent Version or Revision. Please find current program documents on the [Program Requirements](#) webpage.

Use of older Versions and Revisions, such as this document, are typically limited to homes and buildings with a permit date (or, for manufactured homes, a production date) prior to a specified date. Consult the [Implementation Timeline](#) table to assess whether a home or apartment is still eligible to be certified using this document.

For questions or more information, contact us at energystarhome@energystar.gov.



National Water Management System Builder Requirements¹

ENERGY STAR Certified Homes, Version 3 / 3.1 (Rev. 10)

Builder Responsibilities:

- It is the exclusive responsibility of builders to ensure that each certified home is constructed to meet these requirements.
- While builders are not required to maintain documentation demonstrating compliance for each individual certified home, builders are required to develop a process to ensure compliance for each certified home (e.g., incorporate these requirements into the Scope of Work for relevant sub-contractors, require the site supervisor to inspect each home for these requirements, and / or sub-contract the verification of these requirements to a Rater²).
- In the event that the EPA determines that a certified home was constructed without meeting these requirements, the home may be decertified.

1. Water-Managed Site and Foundation

- 1.1 Patio slabs, porch slabs, walks, and driveways sloped ≥ 0.25 in. per ft. away from home to edge of surface or 10 ft., whichever is less.³
- 1.2 Back-fill has been tamped and final grade sloped ≥ 0.5 in. per ft. away from home for ≥ 10 ft. Alternatives in Footnote.³
- 1.3 Capillary break beneath all slabs (e.g., slab on grade, basement slab) except crawlspace slabs using either: ≥ 6 mil polyethylene sheeting, lapped 6-12 in., or ≥ 1 in. extruded polystyrene insulation with taped joints.^{4, 5, 6}
- 1.4 Capillary break at all crawlspace floors using ≥ 6 mil polyethylene sheeting, lapped 6-12 in., & installed using one of the following:^{4, 5, 6}
 - 1.4.1 Placed beneath a concrete slab; OR,
 - 1.4.2 Lapped up each wall or pier and fastened with furring strips or equivalent; OR,
 - 1.4.3 Secured in the ground at the perimeter using stakes.
- 1.5 Exterior surface of below-grade walls of basements & unvented crawlspaces finished as follows:
 - a) For poured concrete, masonry, & insulated concrete forms, finish with damp-proofing coating.⁷
 - b) For wood framed walls, finish with polyethylene and adhesive or other equivalent waterproofing.
- 1.6 Class 1 vapor retarder not installed on interior side of air permeable insulation in exterior below-grade walls.⁸
- 1.7 Sump pump covers mechanically attached with full gasket seal or equivalent.
- 1.8 Drain tile installed at basement and crawlspace walls, with the top of the drain tile pipe below the bottom of the concrete slab or crawlspace floor. Drain tile surrounded with ≥ 6 in. of $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ in. washed or clean gravel and with gravel layer fully wrapped with fabric cloth. Drain tile level or sloped to discharge to outside grade (daylight) or to a sump pump. If drain tile is on interior side of footing, then channel provided through footing to exterior side.⁹

2. Water-Managed Wall Assembly

- 2.1 Flashing at bottom of exterior walls with weep holes included for masonry veneer and weep screed for stucco cladding systems, or equivalent drainage system.¹⁰
- 2.2 Fully sealed continuous drainage plane behind exterior cladding that laps over flashing in Item 2.1 and fully sealed at all penetrations. Additional bond-break drainage plane layer provided behind all stucco and non-structural masonry cladding wall assemblies.^{10, 11}
- 2.3 Window and door openings fully flashed.¹²

3. Water-Managed Roof Assembly

- 3.1 Step and kick-out flashing at all roof-wall intersections, extending ≥ 4 " on wall surface above roof deck and integrated shingle-style with drainage plane above; boot / collar flashing at all roof penetrations.¹³
- 3.2 For homes that don't have a slab-on-grade foundation and do have expansive or collapsible soils, gutters & downspouts provided that empty to lateral piping that discharges water on sloping final grade ≥ 5 ft. from foundation, or to underground catchment system not connected to the foundation drain system that discharges water ≥ 10 ft. from foundation. Alternatives & exemptions in Footnote.^{4, 14, 15}
- 3.3 Self-adhering polymer-modified bituminous membrane at all valleys & roof deck penetrations.^{4, 16}
- 3.4 In 2009 IECC Climate Zones 5 & higher, self-adhering polymer-modified bituminous membrane over sheathing at eaves from the edge of the roof line to > 2 ft. up roof deck from the interior plane of the exterior wall.^{4, 16}

4. Water-Managed Building Materials

- 4.1 Wall-to-wall carpet *not* installed within 2.5 ft. of toilets, tubs, and showers.
- 4.2 Cement board or equivalent moisture-resistant backing material installed on all walls behind tub and shower enclosures composed of tile or panel assemblies with caulked joints. Paper-faced backerboard shall not be used.¹⁷
- 4.3 In Warm-Humid climates, Class 1 vapor retarders not installed on the interior side of air permeable insulation in above-grade walls, except at shower and tub walls.⁸
- 4.4 Building materials with visible signs of water damage or mold *not* installed or allowed to remain.¹⁸
- 4.5 Framing members & insulation products having high moisture content *not* enclosed (e.g., with drywall).¹⁹
- 4.6 For each condensate-producing HVAC component, corrosion-resistant drain pan (e.g., galvanized steel, plastic) included that drains to a conspicuous point of disposal in case of blockage. Backflow prevention valve included if connected to a shared drainage system.

Footnotes:

1. These requirements are designed to improve moisture control in homes. However, these features alone cannot prevent all moisture problems. For example, leaky pipes or overflowing baths can lead to moisture issues and negatively impact the performance of the home.
2. The term 'Rater' refers to the person(s) completing the third-party verification required for certification. The person(s) shall: a) be a Certified Rater, Approved Inspector, or an equivalent designation as determined by a Verification Oversight Organization such as RESNET; and, b) have attended and successfully completed an EPA-recognized training class. See www.energystar.gov/newhomestraining.



National Water Management System Builder Requirements¹

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3. Swales or drains designed to carry water from foundation are permitted to be provided as an alternative to the slope requirements for any home, and shall be provided for a home where setbacks limit space to less than 10 ft. Also, tamping of back-fill is not required if either: proper drainage can be achieved using non-settling compact soils, as determined by a certified hydrologist, soil scientist, or engineer; OR, the builder has scheduled a site visit to provide in-fill and final grading after settling has occurred (e.g., after the first rainy season).
4. Not required in Dry (B) climates as shown in 2009 IECC Figure 301.1 and Table 301.1.
5. Not required for raised pier foundations with no walls. To earn the ENERGY STAR, EPA recommends, but does not require, that radon-resistant features be included in homes built in EPA Radon Zones 1, 2 & 3. For more information, see www.epa.gov/indoorairplus.
6. For an existing slab (e.g., in a home undergoing a gut rehabilitation), in lieu of a capillary break beneath the slab, a continuous and sealed Class I or Class II Vapor Retarder (per Footnote 7) is permitted to be installed on top of the entire slab. In such cases, up to 10% of the slab surface is permitted to be exempted from this requirement (e.g., for sill plates). In addition, for existing slabs in occupiable space, the Vapor Retarder shall be, or shall be protected by, a durable floor surface. If Class I Vapor Retarders are installed, they shall not be installed on the interior side of air permeable insulation or materials prone to moisture damage.
7. Interior surface of an existing below-grade wall (e.g., in a home undergoing a gut rehab.) listed in Item 1.5a is permitted to be finished by:
 - Installing a continuous and sealed drainage plane, capillary break, Class I Vapor Retarder (per Footnote 8) and air barrier that terminates into a foundation drainage system as specified in Item 1.8; OR
 - If a drain tile is not required as specified in Footnote 9, adhering a capillary break and Class I Vapor Retarder (per Footnote 8) directly to the wall with the edges taped/sealed to make it continuous.

Note that no alternative compliance option is provided for existing below-grade wood-framed walls in Item 1.5b.

8. The 2009 IRC defines Class I vapor retarders as a material or assembly with a rating of ≤ 0.1 perm, using the desiccant method with Proc. A of ASTM E 96. The following materials are typically ≤ 0.1 perm and shall not be used on the interior side of air permeable insulation in above-grade exterior walls in warm-humid climates or below-grade exterior walls in any climate: rubber membranes, polyethylene film, glass, aluminum foil, sheet metal, and foil-faced insulating / non-insulating sheathings. These materials can be used on the interior side of walls if air permeable insulation is not present (e.g., foil-faced rigid foam board adjacent to a below-grade concrete foundation wall is permitted).

Note that this list is not comprehensive and other materials with a perm rating ≤ 0.1 also shall not be used. Also, if mfr. spec.'s for a product indicate a perm rating ≥ 0.1 , then it may be used, even if it is in this list. Also note that open-cell and closed-cell foam generally have ratings above this limit and may be used unless mfr. spec.'s indicate a perm rating ≤ 0.1 . Several exemptions to these requirements apply:

- Class I vapor retarders, such as ceramic tile, may be used at shower and tub walls;
 - Class I vapor retarders, such as mirrors, may be used if mounted with clips or other spacers that allow air to circulate behind them.
9. Alternatively, either a drain tile that is pre-wrapped with a fabric filter or a Composite Foundation Drainage System (CFDS) that has been evaluated by ICC-ES per AC 243 are permitted to be used. Note that the CFDS must include a soil strip drain or another ICC-ES evaluated perimeter drainage system to be eligible for use. In an existing home (e.g. in a home undergoing a gut rehab.) a drain tile installed only on the interior side of the footing without a channel is permitted. Additionally, a drain tile is not required when a certified hydrologist, soil scientist, or engineer has determined that a crawlspace foundation, or an existing basement foundation (e.g., in a home undergoing a gut rehab.), is installed in Group I Soils (i.e. well-drained ground or sand-gravel mixtures), as defined by 2009 IRC Table R405.1.
 10. These Items not required for existing structural masonry walls (e.g., in a home undergoing a gut rehabilitation). Note this exemption does not extend to existing wall assemblies with masonry veneers.
 11. Any of the following systems may be used: a monolithic weather-resistant barrier (i.e., house wrap) shingled at horizontal joints and sealed or taped at all joints; weather resistant sheathings (e.g., faced rigid insulation) fully taped at all "butt" joints; lapped shingle-style building paper or felts; or other water-resistive barrier recognized by ICC-ES or other accredited agency.
 12. Apply pan flashing over the rough sill framing, inclusive of the corners of the sill framing; side flashing that extends over pan flashing; and top flashing that extends over side flashing or equivalent details for structural masonry walls or structural concrete walls.
 13. Intersecting wall siding shall terminate 1 in. above the roof or higher, per manufacturer's recommendations. Continuous flashing shall be installed in place of step flashing for metal and rubber membrane roofs.
 14. The assessment of whether the soil is expansive or collapsible shall be completed by a certified hydrologist, soil scientist, or engineer.
 15. Any of the following are permitted to be used as alternatives to Item 3.2: a) a roof design that deposits rainwater to a grade-level rock bed with a waterproof liner and a lateral drain pipe that meets discharge requirements per Item 3.2; b) a rainwater harvesting system that drains overflow to meet discharge requirements per Item 3.2; or c) a continuous rubber membrane (e.g. EPDM) that is aligned with the foundation wall from final grade to ≥ 8 in. below grade and then slopes ≥ 0.5 in. per ft. away from the home for at least 5 ft., with Group I Soils (as defined in Footnote 9) covering the membrane to within 3 in. of final grade.
 16. As an alternative, any applicable option in 2009 IRC Section R905.2.8.2 is permitted to be used to meet Item 3.3 and any option in 2009 IRC Section R905.2.7.1 is permitted to be used to meet Item 3.4. EPA recommends, but does not require, that products meet ASTM D1970. In addition, any option in 2009 IRC Section R905.13 is permitted to be used to meet either Item 3.3 or 3.4.
 17. In addition to cement board, materials that have been evaluated by ICC-ES per AC 115 may also be used to meet this requirement. Monolithic tub and shower enclosures (e.g., fiberglass with no seams) are exempt from this backing material requirement unless required by the manufacturer. Paper-faced backerboard may only be used behind monolithic enclosures or waterproof membranes that have been evaluated by ICC-ES per AC 115, and then only if it meets ASTM mold-resistant standards ASTM D3273 or ASTM D6329.
 18. If mold is present, effort should be made to remove all visible signs of mold (e.g., by damp wipe with water and detergent). If removal methods are not effective, then the material shall be replaced. However, stains that remain after damp wipe are acceptable. Lumber with "sap stain fungi" is exempt from this Item as long as the lumber is structurally intact.
 19. For wet-applied insulation, follow manufacturer's drying recommendations. EPA recommends that lumber moisture content be $\leq 18\%$.