



Technical Bulletin: How to Certify ENERGY STAR Modular Homes

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ENERGY STAR has long offered two ways to certify modular homes: a plant-certification path and a Rater-verification path. With the introduction of Revision 09, the infrequently used plant-certification was eliminated to reduce potential marketplace confusion. **Going forward, all modular homes permitted after January 1, 2019 should be verified using the same Rater-based process and program requirements as site-built homes.**

Briefly, this means both the site builder and plant should sign up as ENERGY STAR partners. Modular homes will be modeled in accredited Energy Rating Software program and must meet or exceed the ENERGY STAR ERI Target. Next, using the standard site-built checklists, a Rater will verify that all program requirements have been met in the constructed home. **Importantly, a Rater must verify any requirements in the plant that will not be able to be verified on-site (i.e., because a feature will be concealed prior to shipment). Beyond the limited builder-verified items, it is not permissible for plant QC staff to perform inspections on behalf of a Rater or submit photos in lieu of a Rater inspection.** Finally, the rated modular home must be registered in the RESNET registry.

What is a Modular Home?

A modular home is a prefabricated home that is made up 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.

Modular homes are distinct from manufactured homes, which are also constructed in a manufacturing plant, but are built to meet the federal Manufactured Home Construction and Safety Standards, commonly referred to as the 'HUD Code.' The plant-certification process for verifying ENERGY STAR manufactured homes through an EPA-recognized Quality Assurance Provider (or QAP), such as the Systems Building Research Alliance (SBRA) or Northwest Energy Works, remains unchanged.

Strategies for Cost-Effective Inspections at the Plant

Modular plants are sometimes far from the home's installation site. To make things more difficult, several trips to a plant are often required to inspect the multiple modules that make up each home. Partners have used two strategies to overcome this challenge:

1. A Rater near the installation site can partner with a Rater located near the plant. RESNET standards permit coordination between multiple Raters, though the arrangement must be approved by the Rating Provider who will ultimately submit the home to the RESNET registry. In this case, communication and coordination between the Raters is critical.
2. If a plant expects to regularly produce ENERGY STAR certified homes, a quality control staff member can become a Rater themselves. Again, the Rating Provider will need to approve of coordination between this Rater and the Rater at the installation site.

Learn More

Review the full [National Program Requirements](#) for ENERGY STAR modular homes.

Find out about [other recent changes](#) ushered in by Revision 09.

View past ENERGY STAR Homes technical bulletins [here](#).

Questions? Email us at energystarhomes@energystar.gov.

Best regards,

The ENERGY STAR Certified Homes team

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