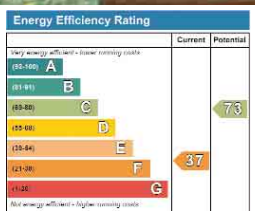




# Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs) and New Homes: A Builder's Guide

Improving the energy efficiency of new homes



From **6 April 2008** it will be law to provide an **Energy Performance Certificate** for all new and newly built homes that are completed after that date.

An Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) gives information on the building's energy efficiency.



# What does this mean in practice?

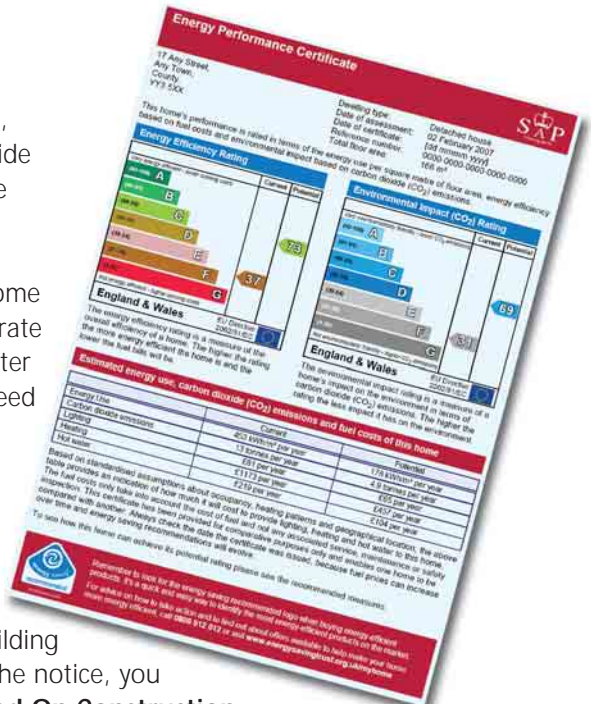
If you are a **builder**, you will most likely be working to the Building Regulations that were revised in 2002 and amended in 2006. As part of this you will be providing an energy rating to building control for your new homes using SAP (Standard Assessment Procedure).

For all homes that are physically completed on or after 6 April 2008, there will be a requirement to provide an EPC to the owner, with evidence shown to Building Control.

If you do any building work to a home which creates (or combines) a separate dwelling\* that has heating, hot water or air conditioning, then you will need to provide an EPC for the home(s).

When you finish your building work, Building Control ask you to submit a notice which includes an energy rating to demonstrate your building complies with the Building Regulations. By the same date on the notice, you must get an EPC from an **accredited On Construction Energy Assessor**, give the EPC to the owner of the building and tell building control that this has been done.

This is what you have to do under the Building Regulations, Approved Inspector Regulations and the Energy Performance of Buildings Regulations, and Building Control will not give you a final completion certificate until they are sure that everything has been done.



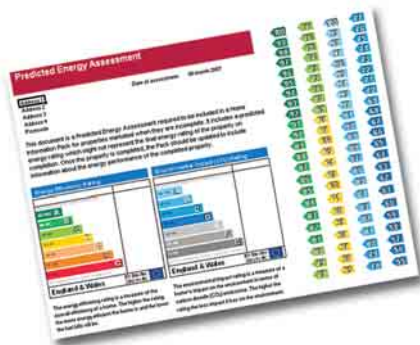
\*A separate dwelling is one which is suitable for separate occupation by an independent household and may have its own front door and its own cooking and washing facilities. Applies to work under 2006 Building Regulations.





## Energy efficiency and new homes

In 2006, the Government in England and Wales introduced new Building Regulations which raised the energy efficiency standards which new homes must meet. New homes that are built to meet these regulations save more energy, have lower carbon emissions and cost less to run.



In order to meet the Building Regulations, builders need to make sure that any new homes they build meet a minimum target for energy performance.

## **Why do we need Energy Performance Certificates?**

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Energy Performance Certificates tell owners and potential buyers and tenants about the energy efficiency of a home and how it can be improved.

The SAP rating shown on the certificate is the same number as is needed for Building Regulations but it is shown in a format similar to the energy labels that are now often used for many appliances and cars. The Environmental Impact rating is also shown, which shows how much CO<sub>2</sub> the home is expected to generate through its energy use.

All EPCs come with a Recommendation Report which includes advice and suggestions on improvements you could make to save money and energy. The certificate also shows the rating that could be achieved if all the recommendations are followed.

In the case of new homes, you will get a shorter Recommendation Report which contains more advanced energy improvements such as solar panels. This is because most money-saving improvements will have already been included in the design of the home (so the actual and potential ratings are likely to be very similar).

## **Providing information about energy for homes that have not been built yet (off-plan sales)**

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If you are selling a home before it has been built, you will need to provide information about energy efficiency in a Predicted Energy Assessment (PEA). This is simply the predicted SAP and Environmental Impact (CO<sub>2</sub>) rating from the SAP calculations you do at the design stage, to check whether you will meet energy-saving targets.

You can use a spreadsheet template to create the graphics from the SAP rating. There is no need for PEAs to be produced by an accredited On Construction Energy Assessor and they do not need to have a Recommendation Report.

If the home is completed on or after 6 April 2008, you will need to give the owner a full EPC and Recommendation Report once the property is completed.

## How do I get an Energy Performance Certificate?

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By law, Energy Performance Certificates can only be produced by an **accredited On Construction Energy Assessor**.\* People who are currently doing SAP calculations to show that they meet Target Emission Rates as part of Building Regulations will need to join an accreditation scheme before they can produce EPCs.

The accreditation schemes protect builders and potential homeowners by making sure Energy Assessors have the appropriate skills to carry out energy assessments, and that EPCs are always of the same high quality.

So that they can produce an EPC, the On Construction Energy Assessor will need to use an approved version of the SAP software. The current SAP software is being upgraded so that it can produce EPCs.

Energy Performance Certificates must be registered and stored in the national register at [www.EPCregister.com](http://www.EPCregister.com). with a unique reference number. This must be done by the On Construction Energy Assessor in conjunction with their accreditation scheme.

\*An On Construction Energy Assessor will not need to visit the property to produce an EPC. The EPC will be the result of the As Built check which is an extension of the SAP calculation needed for Building Control.





## **What happens if I am not happy with the energy assessment or EPC?**

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If you are worried about any part of the energy assessment or the quality or accuracy of the EPC, you should contact the Energy Assessor in the first instance. If the matter is not resolved you should contact the accreditation scheme of the energy assessor who produced the EPC.

## **Building sustainable homes**

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From April 2008 the Government will be mandating a rating against the Code for Sustainable Homes for all new homes. The Code lets home builders show buyers how sustainable the home is. The rating is based on how well a home performs in the areas of energy efficiency, saving water, managing surface-water, managing site-waste, managing household-waste and using materials. The rating ranges from one star to six stars, (with six stars reflecting the best level of sustainability that a home can have). Under the Code, energy efficiency is worked out using the same method as EPCs.

Builders will have to provide new owners with a Code certificate when a home reaches the Building Notice stage of the building control notification process. This can be done via:

- An assessment against the Code by an accredited assessor, who will issue a Code certificate stating how sustainable the home is, or
- The provision of a “zero star” certificate where the home has not been assessed against the Code. Communities and Local Government will be making these zero star certificates available for free via the internet.

## For more information, see the following

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### **Energy Performance Certificates**

Communities and Local Government

Phone: 0845 365 2468

E-mail: [help@epbduk.info](mailto:help@epbduk.info)

Website: [www.communities.gov.uk/epbd](http://www.communities.gov.uk/epbd)

### **Building Regulations Part L and the Code for Sustainable Homes**

Website: [www.planningportal.gov.uk](http://www.planningportal.gov.uk)

A Welsh translation is available on request by calling 0870 1226 236.

Mae'r daflen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg hefyd drwy ffonio 0870 1226 236.

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