

Qualifying Modular Homes for the ENERGY STAR® Label ENERGY STAR Version 2.5

Responses to questions from the U.S. EPA Webinar September 14, 2011

1. **Q:** There are some local HERS raters that are under the impression that the in-plant inspectors need to be approved HERS inspectors. Our understanding is that this is not true and how can you get this information into the field HERS raters so they are clear?

A: Plant inspectors DO NOT need to be HERS qualified inspectors. The best way to convey this information to the HERS Rater retained by the builder is to make sure they understand that the home is qualified under the EPA-accepted ENERGY STAR modular building process as described in the program guidelines (<http://www.research-alliance.org/pages/SBRA.Modular.Program.Guide.v2.5.pdf>).

2. **Q:** We are modular plant and currently have every home tested on site. One slide said that only 1 out of 7 needed to be tested. Is this correct?

A: Yes, the protocol requires that the HERS Rater retained by the builder conduct envelope air infiltration and duct leakage tests on 1 in 7 homes installed by the builder. However, the Rater must test the first two homes produced by each builder and must visually inspect all homes in completing the checklists.

3. **Q:** Is it possible to get a copy of this presentation? If so, how?

A: A copy of the presentation is available by clicking this link:
http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=bldrs_lenders_raters.homes_guidelns_modular

4. **Q:** What happens if the plant meets the requirements for the v2.5 with label, submits paperwork to homeowner/builder and they do not complete the home in the field? Does this impact the plant's ability to continue to build and label homes under the ENERGY STAR program? We build in over 27 states out of one facility so we have several builders.

A: If the home is NOT completed in the field and the checklists are NOT completed and reviewed by a Rater, it cannot qualify as an ENERGY STAR home and will not be issued the blue EPA ENERGY STAR home label. The blue label is the only proof that the home is an ENERGY STAR qualified home. While not completing the home does not negatively impact the plant's ability to continue to sell and build homes that are ready to earn the ENERGY STAR, it creates a situation where the homeowner may be misled into believing they are getting an ENERGY STAR home, reflecting negatively on both the factory producer and their builder. Before agreeing to build an ENERGY STAR home, plants need to be confident that their participating builder is prepared to take steps to fulfill their responsibilities under the program.

If a home is marketed or sold as an ENERGY STAR home, by either the plant or builder, and that home does not earn the ENERGY STAR label or is labeled without having met all ENERGY STAR requirements, SBRA and EPA will investigate the matter and determine what, if any, action is necessary by the plant and/or builder to ensure the home meets all ENERGY STAR requirements and earns the ENERGY STAR label. Plants and builders participating in promoting and building homes under SBRA's compliance program for ENERGY STAR modular homes must make a good faith effort in taking any actions necessary, as determined by SBRA and EPA, to address and resolve problems with any of the ENERGY STAR-related requirements of their modular homes and to address and resolve any issues related to the plant's or builder's use of the ENERGY STAR brand in promoting and selling their modular homes. Failure to do so may result in suspension or expiration of the plant's and/or builder's participation in promoting and/or building ENERGY STAR qualified homes. Please note that, according to the ENERGY STAR program's Brand Identity Guidelines (www.energystar.gov/logos), no home may be promoted or sold as an ENERGY STAR home until it

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has earned the ENERGY STAR label. Also, no entity may promote themselves as directly building, constructing, or otherwise providing an ENERGY STAR home to consumers unless they are directly responsible for final construction of the home. In addition, participating plants must fully communicate and educate their builders on the builder's role and responsibilities in promoting and building ENERGY STAR qualified homes including the hiring of a third-party home energy rater. Any questions regarding use of the ENERGY STAR brand can be sent to energystarhomes@energystar.gov.

5. **Q:** Do all Raters and local authorities having jurisdiction (LAHJ) readily accept the SBRA tract to ENERGY STAR certification?

A: The Modular ENERGY STAR program compliance path maintained by SBRA and the RESNET-maintained compliance procedures are both accepted and endorsed by EPA. Therefore, Raters and LAHJ should recognize both compliance options, although the SBRA path is designed exclusively for modular builders. Any questions from raters or LAHJs about the modular program can be directed to SBRA (gkoch@research-alliance.org).

6. **Q:** How does v2.5 mesh with NGBS?

A: The NGBS recognizes ENERGY STAR qualification as an avenue to receiving green certification. In addition, SBRA developed and maintains a green building program for modular builders based on the NGBS, called CertifiedGreen for Modular Homes (<http://www.certifiedgreenmodular.org>).

7. **Q:** Do plants log modular ENERGY STAR homes into "Information Manager" similar to how they enter & log HUD-code homes?

A: At this time, Information Manager is a web-based ENERGY STAR home tracking software used by factory homebuilders to track only manufactured HUD-code homes built under the program. A similar recording tool is under consideration for producers of modular homes.