



Natural Resources
Canada

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Canada



ecoENERGY
an ecoACTION initiative

Building An Energy-Efficient Home?

10 Questions To Ask Your Builder



Canada

Before building an energy-efficient home, ask your builder these ten questions:

1

Any builder can claim to build energy-efficient homes. How do I know that your homes are truly energy efficient?

The energy efficiency of a home can be measured using Natural Resources Canada's (NRCan's) EnerGuide rating system. The EnerGuide rating system determines the home's level of energy efficiency on a scale from 1 to 100. The average newly built home rates at approximately 72 on the EnerGuide scale. Highly energy-efficient homes rate at 80 or more. Homes that use no purchased energy at all have a rating of 100.

The national R-2000* initiative and regional energy efficiency initiatives such as ENERGY STAR® for New Homes, Power Smart New Homes, Built Green™, Yukon GreenHome and Novoclimat™ require homes to meet minimum EnerGuide ratings.

Find out if your builder is constructing your home in partnership with one of those initiatives or if the home will receive an EnerGuide rating of 80 or higher.

2

Since all builders must meet the requirements of the building code, what makes your homes different from other builders' homes?

Homes built with an EnerGuide rating of 80 or higher go beyond the energy requirements of the building code. They are more energy efficient, which can translate into lower energy costs. Often, these homes offer better indoor air quality and include environmentally responsible products in their construction.

*R-2000 is an official mark of Natural Resources Canada.

5

Can you predict what my energy costs will be?

Your home's energy costs will depend on the living patterns of its occupants. However, builders of EnerGuide rated homes can use the energy target of your home to predict your annual energy costs based on standard operating conditions. Typically, homes that receive an EnerGuide rating of 80 or higher cost approximately one third less to operate than conventional new homes.

What steps do you take to improve the energy efficiency of the homes you build?

4

To meet an EnerGuide rating of 80 or higher, builders often use high levels of insulation, incorporate passive solar energy into their designs, install high-performance heating and ventilation systems and use thorough air sealing to improve energy efficiency and to ensure excellent indoor air quality.

3

How do your building techniques reflect the latest developments in housing technology?

Builders who are licensed by NRCan to build EnerGuide rated homes are part of a network of trained, innovative professionals who voluntarily include the EnerGuide rating process in their home building.

The R-2000 Standard is an evolving standard that reflects more than 25 years of research and development by the Government of Canada and the home-building industry. This standard provides the foundation for technical requirements of the regional energy efficiency initiatives such as ENERGY STAR for New Homes, Power Smart New Homes, Built Green, Yukon GreenHome and Novoclimat.

Builders using these initiatives are committed to being industry leaders and take training to be aware of the latest developments in home building technology.

6

What makes your homes more environmentally friendly than others?

Homes account for 17 percent of all energy used in Canada. Homes that have higher EnerGuide ratings work to lower that statistic because they are more energy efficient and produce fewer greenhouse gas emissions that harm our environment.

Also, environmentally conscious builders often use “green” building materials, encourage the use of energy-efficient appliances and produce less waste material during construction.

Are you licensed by the Government of Canada to build energy-efficient homes?

7

Builders of EnerGuide rated homes must be registered and licensed by NRCan. This enables NRCan to monitor builder certifications, training, marketing initiatives, and to perform quality assurance on EnerGuide labelled homes.

8

Do you affix a government-backed energy label to the home?

Homes built using the national R-2000 initiative and regional energy efficiency initiatives such as ENERGY STAR for New Homes, Power Smart New Homes, Built Green, Yukon GreenHome and Novoclimat receive an official EnerGuide label or a label that is designed for a specific regional initiative such as the ENERGY STAR for New Homes label.

These labels contain contact information, specify the initiative that the house was built under and can help with resale because prospective buyers can see the government-backed endorsement of your home’s energy efficiency. The EnerGuide labels also include the home’s energy rating on the scale from 1 to 100.



Only builders who have been trained and licensed by the Government of Canada can build EnerGuide rated homes.

Not getting the answers you want?

Visit www.newhomes.nrcan.gc.ca/findaparticipant so you can ask a licensed builder of energy-efficient homes.

For more information about NRCan's energy efficiency initiatives for newly built homes, visit the Office of Energy Efficiency's Web site at newhomes.nrcan.gc.ca

Or write to:

ecoENERGY for Buildings and Houses (newly built homes)
Office of Energy Efficiency
Natural Resources Canada
580 Booth Street, 18th Floor
Ottawa ON K1A 0E4

To order publications about energy efficiency for new houses, call 1-800-387-2000 (toll-free)

Do you build homes that receive an EnerGuide rating of 80 or higher?

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Find out if your builder is constructing your home in partnership with regional energy efficiency initiatives such as ENERGY STAR for New Homes, Power Smart New Homes, Built Green, Yukon GreenHome and Novoclimat or if the home will receive an EnerGuide rating label of 80 or higher.

9

Do independent, licensed professionals inspect the quality of your homes?

NRCan conducts random quality assurance on R-2000 homes and homes built with energy efficiency initiatives such as ENERGY STAR for New Homes, Power Smart New Homes, Built Green and Yukon GreenHome. These homes are evaluated, inspected and tested for energy efficiency by independent professionals who have been trained and licensed by the Government of Canada.