

New Threshold ENERGY STAR[®] Labeled Homes in California

Beginning January 1, 2002, qualifying levels for ENERGY STAR labeled homes within the state of California will be referenced to the state energy code as embodied in the latest Title-24 requirements (effective June 1, 2001). Upon that date, any home that is 15 percent above Title-24 standards for its relevant climate zone is eligible for ENERGY STAR certification, provided:

1. The energy budget for the home is calculated using California Energy Commission-approved computer method.
2. The home is verified using a home energy rating system (HERS) approved by the California Energy Commission (i.e., California Home Energy Efficiency Rating System). This verification may also use an approved sampling process per California Energy Commission rules.

Homes may be certified to meet the new ENERGY STAR threshold prior to January 1, 2002 as long as HERS analyses are performed to document at least 15 percent energy savings compared to the latest Title-24 requirements.

Homes permitted under the 1998 Title-24 standards and under construction as of December 31, 2001 can be certified using the old ENERGY STAR threshold until December 31, 2002. The only exception to the time limit in this provision is if the homes in question:

- are being built under binding agreements with utility-sponsored efficiency programs that provide incentives based on reaching or exceeding ENERGY STAR qualifying efficiency levels; AND
- such program agreements allow completion of such homes after December 31, 2002 to qualify for such incentives.

Under these circumstances, ENERGY STAR will honor the agreements between the utilities and their constituent builders and apply the applicable termination dates outlined in the utility-builder agreements, provided such agreements expire on or before December 31, 2003. However, should the builder choose to terminate their agreement with the utility, but still wish to apply for ENERGY STAR certification, then this exemption no longer applies.