

ENERGY CODES:

KNOW
YOUR
ENERGY
RIGHTS

What Consumers Need to Know

You have a right to a home that meets national standards for energy-efficiency!

Energy Codes are minimum requirements for efficient design and construction for new and renovated residential and commercial buildings. They form part of the overall building code that is adopted by your state or local government.

BUILDING ENERGY CODES ARE IMPORTANT BECAUSE THEY:

SAVE YOU MONEY

Buying a home is likely the most expensive investment you will ever make. Before you buy, you should think about how much it will cost to run it.

Did you know that the average U.S. home spends \$2,175 on utility costs per year? That's over \$180 per month! Buildings constructed to meet the model energy code use less energy, which reduces utility bills—and puts money back into your pockets.

PROTECT YOU AND YOUR FAMILY

By making sure your home was built to the model energy code, you can protect yourself and your family against high utility bills and shoddy construction. Builders must comply with energy codes as stringently as they comply with other parts of the building code to protect life, health and safety.



An energy efficient home that complies with the 2009 national energy code can save homeowners \$235 or more each year.



ENERGY CODES cont.

PROVIDE QUALITY AND COMFORT

You found your dream home—it's got a walk-in closet, granite countertops, and plenty of natural light. But how do you know it is built well? One way to measure quality construction is energy efficiency. Homes that meet or exceed national energy codes are built with the occupant's best interests in mind, which carry over to all facets of construction. Energy-efficient homes are also more comfortable, and require less heating and cooling.

ARE A COST-EFFECTIVE INVESTMENT

Would you rather spend a few dollars more on your monthly mortgage payments—while saving \$20 dollars or more on your utility bills—or spend thousands on an energy retrofit a few years down the line? It's much more cost-effective to build a home that meets the model energy code, than try to improve its efficiency later through an expensive retrofit. When energy-efficiency investments are spread out over the term of a standard mortgage, owners usually realize net savings within the first year!

REDUCE POLLUTION AND INCREASE RELIABILITY

Most buildings waste energy needlessly, which makes power plants work harder and puts stress on the electric grid. Buildings that meet the model energy code reduce pollution and help the environment, while improving grid reliability and making utility bills more predictable.

HELP YOU MAKE INFORMED DECISIONS

Would you buy a gallon of milk without checking the expiration date? Or a car without checking the miles-per-gallon? So don't buy a home without checking the monthly utility bill!

Before you buy, do your research. Ask the current residents how much they pay each month for electricity and fuel. If it's a new home, ask your builder to explain its energy efficiency features. Then check for yourself using our Home Energy Code Guide and Checklist, which give you the power to ensure that your home is well-built and will save you money.

For more information, visit: www.bcap-ocean.org or www.greenerchoices.org/energycodes



Leaky air ducts can be responsible for 10-30% of energy loss in a home. To comply with the 2009 energy code, builders need to seal duct systems, and test them for leaks.



Building Codes Assistance Project
www.bcap-ocean.org



Consumer Reports
www.GreenerChoices.org
www.ConsumerReports.org