

ENERGY STAR QUICK START GUIDE

1. Review Energy Star information

- a. The **Builders Option Package (BOP)** lists the **building materials** you must use in order to be rated as an Energy Star Home (heating equipment, insulation R-value, etc). Find the BOP for your county here: http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=bop.pt_bop_minnesota
- b. The **Thermal Bypass Checklist (TBC)** lists the **building methods** you must follow in order to be rated as an Energy Star Home (slab insulation, proper air barriers, etc). Find the TBC here: http://www.energystar.gov/ia/partners/bldrs_lenders_raters/downloads/Thermal_Bypass_Inspection_Checklist.pdf

2. Find a certified Energy Star Partner (ESP) OR Home Energy Rating System (HERS) Consultant

- a. An ESP will register and verify Energy Star homes. The HERS consultant is certified by the Residential Energy Services Network (RESNET) to evaluate and test new construction for energy efficiency compliance. Either will take you through the certification process. The choice is usually based on local availability of one or the other.
- b. Contact your local utility company first, they may be an Energy Star Partner or have a HERS consultant on staff. If you can't locate an ESP or HERS consultant through your local contacts, find the Energy Star directory here (though it does not list all possible contacts): http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?fuseaction=new_homes_partners.showHomesSearch
- c. Your ESP or HERS consultant will register the project (with the Dept of Energy and the Environmental Protection Agency) and work with you to ensure all the guidelines are met.

3. Steps in the Energy Star verification process

- a. **First step – Plan Check.** Your ESP or HERS consultant will go over your plans and specs, recommend any changes necessary to bring the design into Energy Star compliance, and approve the plans for construction (this is **in addition** to submitting the plans for review by the local building official for permit).
- b. **Second step – Site Visits.** Depending on your ESP or HERS consultant, you may only have two site visits. Before construction, work with your ESP or HERS consultant to decide on a schedule for the visits.
 - i. **Visit One: after framing and before insulation.**
 - ii. **Visit Two: after insulation and before sheet rock.**
 - iii. **Visit Three: final testing.** During this visit, a blower door (and possibly a duct blaster) test is conducted to determine the home's air leakage rate and calculate the home's overall efficiency.

4. Documentation

- a. After the testing is done and the build complete, the ESP or HERS consultant will submit the necessary documentation (it is their responsibility to track this through the build). The ESP or HERS consultant will provide you with an Energy Star Certificate, compute a yearly home energy use/cost estimate, and apply an Energy Star label to the house.

COST

There is no cost to register an Energy Star build, but the ESP or HERS consultant will typically have a rate schedule for the plan check, site visits, and final testing. Rates may vary by region, and some ESPs or HERS consultants may offer discounts for non-profit builds. As of the summer build season 2009, the average cost for the entire process (plans, visits, and final testing) was \$1,100.00 for a residential build in Minnesota.

For More Information, Visit the Energy Star Website: www.energystar.gov