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What makes a new home an ENERGY STAR home?

In 1992, the EPA introduced a voluntary program called ENERGY STAR®. The goal of this program was to stimulate and promote innovation and advances in energy efficient products. The first ENERGY STAR labeled products were personal computers and monitors. Today, the ENERGY STAR label is one of the most recognized labels in the market. You can even get your home ENERGY STAR certified. As a third-party verifier for ENERGY STAR, EnergyWise Consultants works with the builder and their subs to ensure all requirements are being met to adhere to the strict ENERGY STAR standards. These are well above and beyond today's code built home. To be certified as an ENERGY STAR home all aspects of the building process are evaluated. This includes framing, HVAC design and installation, insulation, air sealing, indoor air quality measures, water management measures, type of appliances and lighting, and more.

What is the average energy savings that a homeowner can expect from an ENERGY STAR home?

Typically, home owners will see reduced energy usage from 15-30% when compared to today's code built, non-ENERGY STAR home. This equates to savings of hundreds of dollars every year for the home owner. These are savings that will be realized month after month, year after year.



What is the difference between an energy efficient home and an ENERGY STAR new home?

A home can be built with different features to make it more energy efficient. For example, windows with lower U-Values can be installed to decrease heat convection and conduction. Also, a home can be built using 2 by 6 construction on exterior walls to allow for more insulation. These measures by themselves are good moves in the direction of becoming more energy efficient. However, these do not make a home ENERGY STAR. It would be like a car manufacturer saying their cars were five-star safety rated, but not actually having them crash tested by a third-party. EnergyWise Consultants are approved verifiers by the EPA to perform the ENERGY STAR verification and certification on new homes to ensure their adherence to ENERGY STAR standards. The final "stamp of approval" is a blue ENERGY STAR label that is located inside the home's electrical box. Look for this label to see if your home is indeed ENERGY STAR-certified. It's either ENERGYSTAR or it isn't.

What is a HERS score?

A HERS score (Home Energy Rating System) is a nationally recognized energy usage rating system for new homes. It takes into account all aspects of the home building process, from framing and insulation to lighting and appliances. The lower the HERS the more efficient a home. A home with a HERS of 50 uses 50% less energy than a home with a HERS of 100. The HERS score is becoming more prevalent as energy efficiency is more on the mind of the consumer.

What qualifies an energy management professional to be qualified to rate ENERGY STAR homes?

EnergyWise is proud to employ energy raters with certifications from BPI (Building Performance Institute) and RESNET (Residential Energy Service Network), the leading institutions

in building science. These courses require many, many hours of study to ensure comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the aspects surrounding building science and energy efficiency. We have years of combined field experience to further our understanding of energy efficiency. EnergyWise is also a third-party verifying partner with ENERGY STAR.

What other services does Energywise Consultants offer?

EnergyWise Consultants also offers home energy assessments to existing home owners. As time passes new and more efficient ways to build homes are constantly being developed. It is typical, then, that we see older homes, even those built within the past 5-10 years, to have areas of improvement in terms of energy efficiency. Low attic insulation, lack of air sealing, and open crawl spaces are some of the more prominent issues we see. To perform a home assessment, we will come to your home and perform a blower door test. This depressurizes your home and brings in air from the outside through any small openings that may exist in the ceiling, walls, and any other areas of leakage. We then use an infrared camera to accurately identify these areas. After taking this information along with your home's energy usage records and other pertinent information about your home, we provide a comprehensive report in which we lay out all areas of your home that may benefit from energy efficient measures. We will go over this report with you and see if there are any measures we may be able to assist you with and determine which ones may be the most cost effective and beneficial. Additionally, there are many rebates and incentives that are available to home owners to help cover some of these costs, ranging from the assessment itself to air sealing and insulation.

We also offer HERS scores for new homes. Although a HERS score is already a part of an ENERGY STAR certification, we are able to provide a HERS score exclusively.

Are there incentives in place for builders to build to ENERGY STAR standards?

ENERGY STAR is a nationally recognized brand that brings with it quality, durability, lower energy usage, and value. This is true if you are buying an ENERGY STAR refrigerator or an ENERGY STAR house. A house certified as ENERGY STAR is built to higher standards than a code built home. Although a homeowner may not be able to visually see all of the extra aspects and effort that come with ENERGY STAR certification, they will notice it in their utility bills. They will feel it when they come home at the end of the day. They will recognize the extra mile you as the builder have taken. There also rebates involved when having a home ENERGY STAR certified. Basically, the higher percentage over code built a home is, the higher the rebate that is involved.

Looking for help with your home? Call the HBA of Northwestern Colorado at 970-245-0253 or visit www.hbanwco.com