

Builders Using HERS Index FAQ

Q: Is there any restriction for builders using the RESNET HERS Index from a rating from plans to market their homes that have not actually been rated?

A: This is addressed in each builder's MOU. Builders are allowed to market their model homes preliminary rating but inform their clients that it is based on a proposed from plans ratings and the actual rating for the home may vary. In order to assign a HERS Index to a specific home, the home must be rated according to RESNET's standards.

Q: There have been some concerns that homebuyers will not know the difference between a home that has actually been rated and one that is being marketed using a HERS Index and marketing label that was produced by a projected rating from plans. Is there any plan for ensuring that builders are not falsely marketing homes as having a specific HERS Index that has not actually been rated?

A: If a builder falsely advertises a home's HERS Index then RESNET will cancel the builder's MOU

Q: Can Rem/RATE rating software print a certificate with a builder logo?

A: Yes but in order to do this you need to contact the Architectural Energy Corporation

Q: How does the HERS rating compare to the DOE Home Energy Score?

A: The DOE E-Scale is the same as the RESNET HERS Index but graphically displayed differently. The DOE scale is based on a rating produced by a RESNET certified home energy rater according to the national home energy rating standards and the HERS Index score

Q: Can an existing home be rated using this system?

A: Yes, the HERS Index applies to both new and existing homes

Q: When will Energy Gauge have a similar certificate?

A: The Florida Solar Energy Center has informed RESNET that it is currently developing a HERS Index certificate for Energy Gauge

Q: Is "Rating" performed by a third party for all builders or can a builder rate the homes themselves?

A: Yes, if it is disclosed properly

Q: Based on increased code requirements will you recommend a minimum HERS?

A: This is difficult for a number of reasons. First the code is different among the many localities. Second the code is based on only heating, cooling and water heating while the HERS Index is based upon a whole house energy use assessment.

Q: What will RESNET do to increase consumer awareness and to market the HERS Home Performance Model?

A: RESNET is increasing the Search Engine Optimization of its web site so that consumers can easily find information on the HERS Index. RESNET has also produced a consumer brochure on the HERS Index. For an electronic copy of the new HERS Index brochure contact Steve Baden at sbaden@resnet.us RESNET staff have been making presentations on the HERS Index to key national conferences. A key part of the MOUs with builders is that the builders will market their homes HERS Index. Builders have much larger marketing budgets than RESNET.

Q: Can the buyer request a rating?

A: Yes

Q: Will the ENERGY STAR V3 Inspection Checklists still be used ? as well as the HVAC checklists ?

A: No. There is a difference between the RESNET standards and EPA's requirements for Version 3 of ENERGY STAR. The HERS Index is based on the RESNET national home energy rating standards and not ENERGY STAR.

Q: Why does a builder have to agree to rate all of their homes to participate in the program?

A: That is a basic tenet of the commitment. Builders can use a HERS Index score from a rater on any of their homes. Only those builders who are willing to commit to the agreement will receive the RESNET recognition.

Q: What is RESNET and the major builders involved doing to have a low HERS index rated home a value add for the homeowner i.e. EEMs

A: The leading builders are marketing their HERS Index scores in ads, signage at their homes and media releases. In terms of EEMs RESNET has partnered with the Leading Builders of America to advocate for the SAVE Act that would reform the way that the mortgage industry and real estate appraisers addresses the energy performance of homes. For more information go to the RESNET web site at <http://www.resnet.us/about/legislative-call-to-action>

Q: Are the RESNET electronic QA requirements also going to apply to homes receiving HERS index and not ENERGY STAR certifications?

A: Yes

Q: Can we use the RESNET logo/website for marketing this program?

A: Yes

Q: Does the MOU define the HERS Index that the builder is committing to?

A: No

Q: Can a builder commit to a whole subdivision but not all of the homes they are building?

A: Yes