



Setting the Standards for
Home Energy Efficiency

RESNET Home Energy Rating Standards of Practice

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Table of Contents

1.	Purpose and Scope	2
2.	Overview	3
3.	Minimum Rated Features	5
4.	Rating Report	5
5.	Rater Financial Interest Standard Disclosure	5
6.	General Limitations and Exclusions	5

1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purposes of these standards of practice are to ensure that accurate and consistent home energy ratings, water efficiency ratings and energy code compliance are performed by accredited home energy rating systems nationwide, to increase the credibility of the rating systems with the housing and mortgage finance industries and building code officials, and to promote voluntary participation in an objective, cost-effective, sustainable home energy rating process. This document is intended to be a summary for information purposes only.

The Residential Energy Services Network (RESNET) Home Energy Rating Standards of Practice establish minimum and uniform standards for Home Energy Rating Raters (HERS Raters) and Rating Field Inspectors (RFIs) who are certified by RESNET-accredited rating providers. Home energy ratings performed to these standards of practice are intended to provide the home owner/home builder with a certified rating according to the RESNET's Mortgage Industry National Home Energy Rating Standard, ANSI RESNET/ICC Standard 301, ANSI RESNET/ICC Standard 380 and ANSI RESNET/ICC Standard 850. These standards are posted at <https://standards.resnet.us/>

The HERS Rater reports to a RESNET accredited Rating Provider, who is responsible for entering the results from the home energy rating into the RESNET National Registry and for quality control of the rating. The RFI reports to the HERS Rater.

HERS Raters and RFIs will follow the provisions set forth in the RESNET national standards. The standards specifically recognize the authority of each state through legislation or regulation that governs rater licensing or certification.

The national home energy rating standard applies to existing and proposed, site-constructed or other residential buildings excluding hotels and motels.

The HERS Rater shall be responsible for:

- Inspecting and testing the home's minimum rated features listed in RESNET/ANSI Standard 301-2019 Appendix B.
- Entering the data collected into a RESNET-accredited HERS rating software tool.
- Providing the client with the home's rating reports, including RESNET's rating financial standard disclosure form, generated by the rating software tool.

The standards of practice are not intended to limit raters from:

- Including other inspection services, systems, or components in addition to those required in the standards of practice.
- Providing consulting services to the client on how to improve the energy performance of the rated home.

- Undertaking the energy improvements of the home as long as the rater provides the RESNET rating financial standard disclosure form to the client and the accredited rating provider.

2. OVERVIEW

Residential Energy Services Network – RESNET’s mission is to make the energy use of all homes transparent, thereby driving residential sector energy use toward net zero. RESNET is a membership 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. RESNET’s activities focus on:

- Adopting and maintaining the national standards for home energy ratings.
- Accrediting Energy Rating Quality Assurance Providers, Rater Training Providers, and Home Energy Rating Software Programs.
- Working with the mortgage industry in developing innovative residential energy efficiency financing products.
- Educating the public and the housing industry on the benefits of residential energy efficiency.

Overview of Home Energy Ratings – Home energy ratings using the HERS Index are governed by the ANSI RESNET/ICC 301-2019 Standard approved by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI). They provide a standard measurement of a home’s energy efficiency. Ratings are used for both new and existing homes. In new homes, ratings often verify energy performance for the ENERGY STAR® homes program, energy efficient mortgages, builders marketing the energy performance of their homes and energy code compliance. Homeowners who want to upgrade their home’s energy efficiency can use the energy rating to evaluate and pinpoint specific, cost-effective improvements. In existing homes, homeowners receive a report listing cost-effective options for improving the home’s energy rating. An energy rating allows a home buyer to easily compare the energy costs for homes being considered.

There are three types of ratings:

- **Projected ratings** – Ratings performed prior to the construction of a home or prior to the installation of energy improvements to an existing home
- **Confirmed ratings** – Ratings completed using data gathered from an on-site inspection, which could include performance testing of the home
- **Sampled ratings** - An application of the Home Energy Rating process whereby fewer than 100% of a builder’s new homes are randomly inspected and tested in order to evaluate compliance with a set of threshold specifications.

Confirmed ratings involve an on-site inspection and performance testing of a home by a residential energy efficiency professional: a HERS Rater or RFI. HERS Raters and RFIs are certified by a RESNET Accredited Rating Providers.

The HERS Rater or RFI inspects the home to identify its energy characteristics, such as insulation levels, window efficiency, wall-to-window ratios, the heating and cooling system efficiency, the solar orientation of the home, and the water heating system. Performance testing, such as the blower door test for air leakage and the duct leakage testing, is part of the assessment.

The data gathered by the HERS Rater or RFI is entered into an accredited rating software program that computes a HERS Index Score. An estimate of the home's energy uses and costs are also provided.

Unlike an energy audit or a weatherization assessment, a home energy rating is a recognized tool in the housing market. Home energy ratings can be used in a variety of ways in the housing industry. The HERS Index Score provides an easily understandable means to compare more efficient homes by their relative energy efficiency, since a rating quantifies the energy performance of the home.

The housing industry and the states recognize the necessity of this accreditation process for home energy rating programs. The housing and mortgage industries, government, and residential energy efficiency programs use this accreditation process to measure and label a home's energy performance in a uniform and consistent manner.

Rater Certification Overview – A HERS Rater must successfully complete training by a RESNET-accredited Rater Training Provider and must be certified by a RESNET accredited Rating Quality Assurance Provider.

- Rater Training – A HERS Rater completes training by an accredited rater training organization prior to performing rating tasks. The training is conducted in accordance with rater knowledge, skills and abilities adopted by RESNET. The minimum knowledge base and skill sets that a HERS Rater must have are posted at <https://standards.resnet.us/>
- Field Training – Each HERS Rater must perform five probationary ratings overseen by a Certified Field Assessor. At least three of the five probationary ratings shall be accomplished using field verification of all rated features of the home in accordance with ANSI/RESNET/ICC 380-2016 and shall be completed in the presence of a RESNET Certified Field Assessor, at least one of which shall be completed one-on-one.
- Professional Development – Each HERS Rater must complete a minimum of 18 hours of approved professional development credits during each three-year period of certification.
- Minimum Rater Competencies – Certified HERS must pass examinations that demonstrate a practical, working ability to effectively use the knowledge and

skills in the RESNET national home energy rating standards to produce accurate and fair home energy ratings.

Rating Field Inspector Certification – Pass the RESNET Combustion Appliance Test and perform a graded field evaluation under the observation of a Candidate Field Assessor. Complete at least three mentored rating field inspections observed by a certified HERS rater or a RESNET Candidate Field Assessor. The certified HERS Rater or RESNET Candidate Field Assessor shall use the RESNET graded field evaluation to document the results of mentored inspections. The mentored Rating Field Inspections shall comprise at a minimum the following tasks.

Professional Development- Each Rating Field Inspector must pass the RESNET graded field evaluation overseen by a RESNET certified Candidate Field Assessor once in a three-year period.

3. MINIMUM RATED FEATURES

The certified HERS Rater or RFI (overseen by a HERS Rater) is responsible for a whole house inspection and for testing the energy features of a home. ANSI RESNET/ICC Standard 301, ANSI RESNET/ICC Standard 380 and ANSI RESNET/ICC Standard 850 contains the specific on-site protocols for inspecting and testing the home's rated features.

4. RATING REPORT

The HERS Rater Inspector shall generate a report for each rating through a RESNET accredited Rating Software Program that contains the information included in the ANSI RESNET/ICC Standard 301 and the ANSI RESNET/ICC Standard 850.

5. RATER FINANCIAL INTEREST STANDARD DISCLOSURE

The HERS Rater shall prepare and present to the client the RESNET rating standard financial disclosure form that indicates any financial interest the HERS Rater may have in the home being rated. The financial disclosure form can be viewed on RESNET's web site at https://www.resnet.us/wp-content/uploads/disclosure_form-1.pdf

6. GENERAL LIMITATIONS AND EXCLUSIONS

General limitations:

The energy use information contained in the rating report does not constitute any warranty of energy cost or savings.

Inspections performed in accordance with these standards of practice:

- Are not technically exhaustive.
- Will not identify concealed conditions or latent defects.

- The home energy rating is not intended to be an inspection of the structural soundness of the home or any other attributes of the home other than the home's energy features.
- The home energy rating is not applicable to building design and construction features except those specified in the minimum rated features listed in section 3.

General Exclusions

HERS Raters and RFIs **are NOT required** to perform any action or make any determination unless specifically stated in the standards of practice.

HERS Raters and RFIs **are NOT** required to determine:

- The condition of systems or components that are not readily available.
- The remaining life of any system or component.
- Compliance with regulatory requirements (non-energy related codes, regulations, laws, ordinances, etc.).
- Future conditions, including but not limited to failure of systems and components.
- The market value of the home or its marketability.
- The presence of environmental hazards, including but not limited to mold, indoor air quality, toxins, carcinogens, and contaminants in soil, water, and air.
- The effectiveness of any system installed or methods used to control or remove suspected hazardous substances.
- The presence of potentially hazardous plants or animals, including but not limited to wood destroying organisms, or diseases harmful to humans.
- The acoustical properties of any system or component.

HERS Raters and RFIs **are NOT required** to offer or perform:

- Any act or service contrary to law.
- Engineering or design services.
- Heating or cooling system design or sizing consulting.
- Indoor air quality consulting.
- Work in any trade or any professional service other than home energy rating.
- Warranties or guarantees of any kind.

HERS Raters and RFIs **are NOT required** to operate:

- Any system or component that is shut down or otherwise inoperable.
- Any system or component that does not respond to normal operating conditions.
- Shut-off valves.

HERS Raters and RFIs **are NOT required** to inspect or test:

- Systems or components that are not installed.
- Systems or components located in areas that are not entered in accordance with these standards of practice.

- Detached structures.

HERS Raters and RFIs **are NOT required** to:

- Enter any area that will, in the opinion of the HERS Rater/RFI, likely be dangerous to the HERS Rater/RFI or other persons or damage the property or its systems or components.
- Perform any procedure or operation that will, in the opinion of the Rater/RFI, likely be dangerous to the Rater/RFI or other persons or may damage the property or its systems or components.
- Move suspended ceiling tiles, personal property, furniture, equipment, plants, soil, snow, ice, or debris.
- Dismantle any system or component, except as explicitly required by the standards of practice.