

# Building or renovating a home? Learn more about the Vermont Residential Standard.



## Energy Code Assistance Center

Toll-free 855-887-0673



The Energy Code Assistance Center is a project of the Vermont Department of Public Service and is implemented by Efficiency Vermont.

## About the residential code

The Vermont Residential Energy Code — officially called the Vermont Residential Building Energy Standards (RBES) is a minimum standard for energy efficient construction practices that apply to all new residential construction, additions, and most renovations, alterations, and repairs in residential buildings.

**NEW**

### Insulation requirements

Many of the thermal envelope requirements of the 2020 VT RBES have changed since the 2015 edition, as well as the application of compliance options. Refer to the 2020 VT RBES Handbook for a complete list of these thermal envelope and reporting requirements.

## Free energy code resources

- **Get a free handbook.** The Vermont Residential Building Energy Code Handbook is a home builder's guide to meeting RBES. The handbook provides step-by-step instructions on how to meet the energy code requirements. It summarizes and offers quick reference of RBES for residential construction. The Handbook does not replace the official code standards found on the ICC website. Download a copy from the Vermont Department of Public Service website at <https://publicservice.vermont.gov/content/2020-draft-rbes-handbook> or call the Energy Code Assistance Center to request a hardcopy.
- **Call the Energy Code Assistance Center.** The Energy Code Assistance Center provides free technical assistance on how to meet the requirements of the current RBES.

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855-887-0673



## Questions about the Commercial Energy Code?

To get the latest information about the commercial building energy standards visit the website of the Vermont Department of Public Service at [https://publicservice.vermont.gov/energy\\_efficiency/cbes](https://publicservice.vermont.gov/energy_efficiency/cbes). To request a free copy of the Commercial Building Energy Standards (CBES), call the Energy Code Assistance Center.

# Building to the Energy Code — Path to Success

1

## Follow the steps to meet the code

The energy code applies to:

- all new single family homes (including modular & log homes);
- new multifamily homes (in buildings up to three stories);
- additions, alterations, renovations, and repairs (this only applies to the part of the home being worked on and effect such work has on the energy use of the home and safety of combustion).

Note: There are some exceptions which can be found in the Introduction of the Vermont Residential Energy Code Handbook.

2

## Complete the basic requirements

The basic requirements are a list of fixed requirements that are mandatory for all buildings. These include:

- Ventilation & combustion safety
- Air leakage
- Insulation
- Windows
- Lighting
- HVAC equipment

3

## Complete the technical performance requirements

The Energy Code is simple and flexible in the ways a home can meet the technical requirement. You select one of three compliance paths that works best for your design.

4

## Choose a compliance path

1. **Prescriptive Method.** Choose a “package” of building envelope performance requirements and achieve a set number of points based on the building size.
2. **ResCheck Software Method.** Use your computer with REScheck software to easily analyze almost any design and determine whether any modifications are needed to meet the Code. REScheck software can be downloaded from the Vermont Department of Public Service website.
3. **Home Energy Rating Method.** This approach provides flexibility and gives full credit for air tightness, efficient hot water and space heating, solar orientation, and other efficient features of the home. For more information about home energy ratings, contact Efficiency Vermont toll-free at 888-921-5990

5

## Fill out the paperwork

When a new house, renovation, or addition is finished, the builder or general contractor must complete and sign a Vermont Residential Building Energy Standards Certificate certifying that the home or addition complies with the code.



**If a home that is required by law to meet the Energy Code does not comply, a homeowner can seek damages in court.**

6

## Post, file and mail the certificate

Post the original, signed RBES compliance certificate on the breaker box door or on the heating equipment. File a copy with the Town Clerk where the home is located.

Lastly, mail a copy to:  
Vermont Department of Public Service  
Efficiency & Energy Resources Division  
112 State Street  
Montpelier, VT 05620

### Call 855-887-0673

For a free copy of the Residential Energy Code Handbook and free technical advice on how to get the most out of the Vermont Energy Code.

### Visit

[publicservice.vermont.gov/](http://publicservice.vermont.gov/)  
and search for residential energy code.

