

## DOE Zero Energy Ready Home Waiver for ENERGY STAR and Indoor airPLUS Certification when using Prescriptive Compliance where ZERH is Required by Code

*November 2023 Revision*

The initial policy from November 2020 (below) is no longer needed and is not allowed for any homes or dwelling units permitted on/after 1/1/2024 that are seeking ZERH certification. This policy is no longer necessary because single family homes permitted on/after 1/1/2024 must certify under the ZERH Single Family Version 2 program version, which does not have a prescriptive compliance path. Additionally, dwellings units in multifamily buildings permitted on/after 1/1/2024 certifying under the ZERH program (using V1 Revision 9 or ZERH Multifamily V2) will be required to certify under an ENERGY STAR Multifamily New Construction program version which does offer a prescriptive compliance path.

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Zero Energy Ready Home (ZERH) certification has been adopted as a code requirement in some jurisdictions in order to advance the energy efficiency and performance of new homes. DOE recognizes that home builders value flexibility in how they pursue code compliance, including the ability to use Performance or Prescriptive options for code compliance.

The DOE ZERH program offers a Prescriptive compliance option which does not require energy modeling for certification. However, DOE ZERH also requires that homes be certified under ENERGY STAR Home. The ENERGY STAR Certified Home program no longer offers a Prescriptive compliance pathway leaving Performance compliance with energy modeling as the only option to certify homes under the program. Therefore, the ENERGY STAR Certified Home prerequisite indirectly requires builders to use energy modeling, even when pursuing Prescriptive compliance with the DOE ZERH program.

This DOE ZERH waiver policy provides an exemption from the energy modeling associated with the ENERGY STAR Certified Home prerequisite, where homes are being certified under DOE ZERH in a jurisdiction where DOE ZERH certification is a code requirement. The following terms apply to the application of this waiver:

- A home may be certified under DOE ZERH using the Prescriptive Pathway, as described in the DOE Zero Energy Ready Home [National Program Requirements](#)
- The DOE ZERH program requirements for a qualifying home to be certified under ENERGY STAR Certified Homes and Indoor airPLUS will be waived if the home otherwise meets all program requirements for both ENERGY STAR Homes and Indoor airPLUS, and all checklists and program documentation are completed by the rater.
- A home using the Prescriptive compliance path for DOE ZERH and utilizing this waiver must be reported to DOE using the [Prescriptive compliance form](#) in order to be certified. Prescriptive compliance forms for DOE ZERH shall be emailed to [zero@newportpartnersllc.com](mailto:zero@newportpartnersllc.com).
- The builder must complete the DOE Zero Energy Ready Home - Homeowner Checklist and provide a copy to the homeowner.

These provisions are subject to any local requirements or regulations which may otherwise limit or restrict them. When this waiver policy is used, the home cannot be labeled or certified under the ENERGY STAR Certified Home or Indoor airPLUS programs.

For questions on this waiver policy please contact the DOE Zero Energy Ready Home program at [zero@newportpartnersllc.com](mailto:zero@newportpartnersllc.com).