

GUIDANCE LEAFLET

AN INTRODUCTION TO ENERGY PERFORMANCE CERTIFICATES (EPC)

EPC - 01

What is an Energy Performance Certificate?

The Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) was introduced through European legislation – the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD). The certificate provides an illustration of the energy efficiency of a building based on standard assertions for occupation and use. The EPC shows the rating range for a building as **A-G**, with **A** being the most efficient. The certificate also shows how the rating could be improved if specific improvements were made. The improvements range from inexpensive, cost effective measures (£500 or less for dwellings, or a payback period of three years or less for non-domestic buildings), to more expensive options.

How is the EPC rating calculated?

The EPC is produced using the UK Government's calculation methodologies. For dwellings the Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) is used and for non-domestic buildings the Simplified Building Energy Model (SBEM) or an alternative approved modelling tool.

SAP and SBEM are applied using computer programmes that provide an analysis of energy use in a building based on a standard use pattern. The software calculates the energy use and carbon dioxide emissions of a building based on the size and layout of the building, the construction, lighting, heating, ventilation and insulation. Further details on the technical aspects of the calculation methodologies and the Government approved software packages are available from the BRE website at:

- For dwellings and SAP: <http://www.bre.co.uk/sap2009/> , including a list of software approved for use in Scotland.
- For non-domestic buildings and SBEM: <http://www.ncm.bre.co.uk/>. Software approved for use in Scotland is listed on the [Building Standards Division Section 6 software page](#).
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Do I have to implement the energy efficiency improvements?

No, but by implementing these measures you can improve the energy efficiency of your building and reduce your fuel bills over time.

How are the Energy Efficiency Improvements for the building identified?

The software package contains a list of energy efficiency improvement measures. Based on their expertise, an EPC assessor (see '*Who can produce an EPC?*') will identify and recommend any of these measures which are relevant to the property. For non-domestic

building assessments, the assessor can also add further recommendation for improvement.

When will I need an EPC?

An EPC must be produced:

- when a new building has been constructed (at the completion stage of the building warrant process); and
- if you intend to sell or rent a building to a new tenant

For sale or rental, an existing EPC can be used where this is still valid. Otherwise a new EPC must be obtained.

The EPC and accompanying recommendations report must be available to any prospective buyer or tenant. Any commercial advertising of a building for sale or rent must contain the 'energy performance indicator' from the EPC to identify the rating of the property e.g. EPC=C.

Are there any types of buildings which do not need an EPC?

Yes. These are:

- stand alone buildings (other than dwellings) with a useful floor area of less than 50 m²
- temporary buildings with a planned use of two years or less
- buildings with a low energy demand – i.e. non-residential agricultural buildings and workshops
- buildings sold for the purpose of demolition

Who can produce an EPC?

EPCs can only be produced by an EPC assessor who is a member of an 'Approved Organisation'. Scottish Government has entered into a protocol agreement with a number of organisations who have members with the skills and expertise to produce EPCs and make recommendations on improvement measures which are relevant to that building. Approved Organisations members are subject to quality assurance procedures and, from 2013, each Approved Organisation will be audited by the Scottish Government.

The only exception to the above is that EPCs for new buildings need not be produced by a member of an Approved Organisation where the building is the subject of a building warrant applied for before 9 January 2013 (see our leaflet '*Energy Performance Certificates and New Construction*' for further information).

What should I do with the EPC when I get it?

It is a requirement under law that the EPC must be 'affixed' to the building. Building standards guidance suggests that the EPC be located in the boiler or meter cupboard. We also recommend that a copy should be retained with other legal papers relating to your property.

Are the EPCs stored anywhere?

Yes, but this is being introduced in stages. At present, all EPCs produced for existing dwellings must be lodged on the Scottish Government EPC database to be legally valid. This will be done by the person producing the EPC via approved software. If the certificate is damaged or lost you may access the EPC database to produce a duplicate providing that you know the unique report reference number (RRN) – which is shown on the top right hand corner of the certificate.

This process will also apply to EPCs for existing non-domestic buildings from January 2013 and shortly after to EPCs for new buildings which are the subject of a building warrant applied for on or after 9 January 2013.

Can anyone else access the EPC?

An EPC can only be retrieved by members of the public using the RRN for that certificate. Access to the EPC and the data used to create it is also available to authorised bodies such as Approved Organisations, who will have the facility to search for an EPC by building address.

EPC data lodged to the register can be used for the purposes of promoting energy efficiency and building owners and occupiers can opt out of making their data available for such purposes. Information on how to do this is provided in the recommendations report and on the Scottish Government website at: www.scotland.gov.uk/epc.

If I'm not happy with the EPC, what can I do?

You should contact the EPC assessor in the first instance. If the issue is not resolved by your assessor, contact the Approved Organisation scheme manager who will investigate further. Each Approved Organisation has a complaints procedure, code of conduct, and disciplinary process in place. If the Approved Organisation cannot address your concerns, the matter should then be referred to the Building Standards Division.

Contact Information

Produced by the Building Standards Division of the Scottish Government

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Further advice and information is available at: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/epc>

Advice on how to improve the energy efficiency of your business can also be obtained from the Carbon Trust at: www.carbontrust.com

Advice on how to improve the energy efficiency of your dwelling can also be obtained from the Energy Saving Trust at: www.energysavingtrust.org.uk