

Energy Efficient Rebate for New Homes Questions and Answers

1. What is the Energy Efficient Rebate Program for New Homes?

The Energy Efficient Rebate for New Homes is a program that provides incentives to Saskatchewan residents who are building an energy efficient home that is ENERGY STAR® qualified, R-2000 certified or has an EnerGuide for New Homes rating of 80 or above.

The program helps offset the cost premium and certification fees that can be associated with building an energy efficient home.

2. Why did the Province implement a rebate program for new homes?

The goals of the rebate program include:

- Increasing the number of new energy efficient homes being built in Saskatchewan
- Reducing energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions
- Providing long-term savings to homeowners on utility bills, future maintenance costs, and constructions costs
- Educating builders and homebuyers on the value of energy efficiency and opportunities for renewable energy sources such as solar design

3. Who is eligible?

Homebuyers qualify for the rebate if they **purchase a newly constructed home and provide certification that the home is ENERGY STAR qualified, R-2000 certified or has an EnerGuide for New Homes rating of 80 or above.**

To be eligible, applicants must have the new home certified within 6 months of possession (Natural Resources Canada defines a home to be lived in after 6 months) and the application must be mailed to SaskEnergy within 12 months of your new home possession date.

4. How do I apply?

You must complete the application form in full, sign and have postmarked no later than 12 months after your possession date. Copies of certificates/receipts are required, as indicated on the form. SaskEnergy administers the program on behalf of the Ministry of Environment.

To request an application form, please call (800) 567-8899 or visit www.saskenergy.com

Please allow at least 3-4 weeks for your application to be processed and receive your rebate.

5. What rebates are available under the program?

Upon the purchase of a newly constructed home that is **certified as ENERGY STAR qualified, R-2000 certified or has an EnerGuide for New Homes rating of 80 or above, homeowners qualify for a \$1,000 rebate.**

In addition you may be eligible for a rebate if you purchased and installed any of the following:

- \$1,000 rebate for the purchase and installation of a solar domestic hot water heating system that is certified to the CAN/CSA F379 standard and provides a minimum energy contribution of 6 GJ/yr.
- \$150 rebate for the purchase and installation of a drain-water heat recovery (DWHR) system that is 30 % efficient or three-quarters (3/4) of a metre in length, and/or
- \$3,500 rebate for the purchase and installation of a CAN/CSA-C448 compliant Geothermal system.*
- \$100 rebate for the purchase and installation of one qualifying natural gas appliance – for two qualifying natural gas appliances the rebate increases to \$250. Qualifying natural gas appliances include clothes dryers, barbecues, cooktops, and ranges.

*The Geothermal rebate option, funded by SaskPower, is effective for homeowners who have taken possession of their new home. In order to qualify for the rebate you must meet all of the following criteria:

- Geothermal systems must be CAN/CSA-C448 compliant and certified by the Canadian GeoExchange Coalition (CGC). Please submit a copy of the CGC Certificate with your application.
- There is no access to natural gas+. If a home does have access to natural gas, in order to be eligible for the Geothermal rebate option the homeowner must install an onsite renewable energy source++ large enough to offset the estimated increased electrical load and have a net metering system installed (or not be connected to the electrical grid).

+Definition of “no access to natural gas” – there is currently no natural gas service to the property and the cost of having SaskEnergy install a natural gas service line is equal to or greater than \$9,000 (excluding winter surcharges).

++Examples of renewable energy sources – solar or wind.

6. I have heard about the Saskatchewan EnerGuide for Houses Grant Program, is this the same thing?

No. The Saskatchewan EnerGuide for Houses Retrofit grant program (SEGH) is an incentive for existing homes. The SEGH program assists homeowners who are planning to undergo energy efficient retrofits that will help reduce their energy costs and their greenhouse gas emissions. For more information on SEGH, call (800) 567-8899 or visit www.saskenergy.com

7. Do I need to have an inspection completed to qualify for the rebate?

Yes. Check with your homebuilder to be sure that your home has undergone the necessary inspection to qualify your home as a newly constructed ENERGY STAR qualified, R-2000 certified or an EnerGuide for New Homes rating of 80 or above home. A certificate proving this should be issued and provided to you when you take possession.

ENERGY STAR qualified homes undergo quality assurance testing during construction and a de-pressurization test after the home is completed.

R-2000 certified homes and EnerGuide for New Homes rating of 80 or above homes receives an inspection and depressurization test once the home is built.

Most often, inspections are arranged by your homebuilder during the construction phase and costs associated with the inspections are included as part of your home's total purchase price. Speak with your homebuilder to ensure your home is certified.

8. What is an ENERGY STAR qualified Home?

An ENERGY STAR qualified home is a home that has been built by a licensed ENERGY STAR for New Homes builder who incorporates resource efficient features into the home so that it can meet technical specifications.

Upon completion of the qualified new home, an independent ENERGY STAR for New Homes evaluator verifies that the home has been built to technical specifications. After the verification process is complete, Natural Resources Canada issues an ENERGY STAR for New Homes label and certificate to the homeowner. The label is usually placed on the home's electrical panel and includes a seal of authenticity.

The ENERGY STAR for New Homes technical specifications have been customized for Saskatchewan.

9. What is an R-2000 certified home?

Developed in partnership with Canada's residential construction industry, R-2000 is an initiative of NRCan's Office of Energy Efficiency. Its aim: to promote the use of cost-effective energy-efficient building practices and technologies.

Since being introduced the R-2000 standard has set the benchmark for home building in Canada. The standard is continually upgraded through ongoing research to ensure that the R-2000 standard remains at the leading edge of cost-effective energy-efficient construction technology.

R-2000 homes can be built only by builders trained and licensed by the Government of Canada through Resource Efficient Housing Incorporated in Saskatchewan. Once the home is inspected and certified the homeowner will receive an R-2000 sticker for the electrical panel that will include the R-2000 certificate number specific to their home.

10. What is an EnerGuide for New Homes rating?

EnerGuide for New Homes rating of 80 or above is recommended primarily for people who are constructing a new home on their own without going through a registered Saskatchewan Home Builder.

Anyone can claim that a house is energy efficient, but an EnerGuide for New Houses label proves it. Developed by Natural Resources Canada, EnerGuide for New Houses is a rating system to measure a home's energy performance.

Your home's energy efficiency level is rated on a scale of 0 to 100. A rating of 0 represents a home with major air leakage, no insulation and extremely high energy consumption. A rating of 100 represents a house that is airtight, well insulated and sufficiently ventilated and requires no purchased energy. To qualify for the rebate, your home must meet a minimum rating of 80.

****If you plan to build your home to this energy efficient standard please contact Resource Efficient Housing Inc (REHI) or AmeriSpec prior to starting construction.**

The EnerGuide rating service starts with an analysis of your new house plans by an EnerGuide rating service energy advisor. The advisor recommends energy-saving upgrades and works with you to develop a report that lists various cost-effective options. When construction is done, the EnerGuide advisor verifies the applied energy upgrades and performs testing to ensure your home has met the requirements. A certificate will be issued showing your New Home EnerGuide rating.

11. What is the difference between ENERGY STAR, R-2000 and EnerGuide for New Homes ratings?

To homebuyers there are subtle differences but to builders there is a significant difference. ENERGY STAR, R-2000 and EnerGuide for New Homes rating of 80 or above homes provide different methods to design and verify resource efficient new housing.

All three types of homes are all highly energy efficient and environmentally responsible and are designed to achieve similar levels of energy efficiency.

To learn about the building specifications and features of ENERGY STAR qualified, R-2000 certified homes or EnerGuide for New Homes rating 80 or above visit www.oee.nrcan.gc.ca

12. What are the benefits of owning an ENERGY STAR qualified or R-2000 certified home?

You can be assured that your ENERGY STAR qualified or R-2000 certified new home has been built to strict technical specifications by a licensed builder and that it has been verified by an independent energy evaluator to ensure state-of-the-art performance. You will benefit from it in a variety of ways:

Lower cost - You will be pleased to see the monthly energy savings in an ENERGY STAR qualified or R-2000 certified new home. If you pay a mortgage, these savings will more than compensate for any additional costs that may be charged initially for the energy-saving features.

Improved air quality = health and comfort - Air movement in your house, especially in winter, causes drafts that make you feel uncomfortable. You will quickly notice the difference in an ENERGY STAR qualified or R-2000 certified home. Higher levels of air tightness and a heat recovery ventilation system (HRV) give you a greater sense of coziness as they keep indoor air fresh and maintain humidity at the level you find comfortable.

Less energy expended = fewer pollutants - Homes account for 17 percent of all energy use in Canada. As ENERGY STAR qualified or R-2000 certified homes are more energy-efficient than standard code built houses, they can help reduce air pollution and lessen other environmental problems, such as climate change.

13. What type of savings can I expect from an ENERGY STAR, R-2000 or EnerGuide for New Homes rating of 80 or above home?

You expect to save the following with the purchase of an energy efficient home:

- Energy efficient homes are 30-40% more efficient than homes built to minimum standards which equals annual savings of \$800 to \$1,000 in energy costs
- Better protection against cold, heat, drafts, moisture, pollution and noise
- Produces fewer greenhouse gases
- Plus, ENERGY STAR qualified new homes require equipment to be installed that will result in a reduction in annual electrical and water use.

14. I am building a home on my own without going through a registered Saskatchewan Home Builder. I am building it according to ENERGY STAR and/or R-2000 guidelines. Do I qualify for the rebate?

If you are building your own home, you can complete the EnerGuide for New Homes process to qualify for the rebate. Your new home must have a final minimum rating of EnerGuide 80. The EnerGuide rating service starts with an analysis of your new house plans by an EnerGuide service energy advisor.

Before building your home, contact REHI or AmeriSpec to discuss the EnerGuide for New Homes process and the associated inspection costs.

15. I would like to build an ENERGY STAR qualified or R-2000 certified home but my homebuilder indicated they are not registered to build to these standards. What should I do?

Encourage your homebuilder to contact REHI or Amerispec to discuss how they can become qualified or certified to build registered energy efficient housing.

16. Why do I have to use a certified or licensed builder to register my home as being ENERGY STAR qualified or R-2000 certified?

Building or purchasing a newly constructed home through a homebuilder that has been registered to built ENERGY STAR qualified or R-2000 certified homes means a high level of quality assurance and a guarantee that your home is built above the industry standard.

You can have peace of mind knowing your homebuilder has been trained according to regulations specified by Natural Resources Canada.

17. Will an ENERGY STAR, R-2000 or EnerGuide for New Homes rating of 80 or above home cost more than a conventionally built home?

An energy efficient qualified or certified home may cost a bit more, but energy, electrical and water savings will more than pay for the extra upfront investment.

You may also benefit from increased resale value on your home.

18. What is the Canadian GeoExchange Coalition (CGC)?

The CGC was created in 2003 by the Canadian Electricity Association and industry stakeholders with start-up funding from the Federal Government (Natural Resources Canada). CGC addresses market barriers to geothermal systems through education and an accreditation program.

The CGC Global Quality Geothermal™ Program® is a comprehensive voluntary quality assurance program with the ultimate objective of protecting residential and commercial purchasers of the equipment.

19. How large does a renewable power source need to be to offset the increased electrical load of a geothermal system in a home?

The amount of electricity needed will vary, depending on the size and type of house, location and type of geothermal system that you choose.

In order to streamline the program SaskPower has established the following criteria. In order to qualify customers must install at a minimum a 6 kilowatts (kW) solar system or a 3.5 kW wind system. These systems would produce approximately 7,500 kWh per year. On average, generating this amount of electricity from a renewable energy source would offset the estimated increased electrical load from a geothermal system.

If you have any additional questions about renewable power sources please contact SaskPower Eneraction at (306) 566-5803.

20. Who can I contact for more information?

Saskatchewan residents interested in building a home that is ENERGY STAR qualified, R-2000 certified, or EnerGuide for New Homes rating of 80 or above should contact their local homebuilder.

Homebuilders who would like to become certified or require more information should contact Resource Efficient Housing Incorporated (REHI) or AmeriSpec.

For full details regarding the installation and certification of a CAN/CSA-C448 compliant Geothermal System visit the Canadian GeoExchange Coalition (CGC) website at www.geo-exchange.ca

For details on the SaskPower Net Metering Program, contact the Saskatchewan Research Council (SRC) through their web site at www.src.sk.ca or by calling (306) 933-5400.

For an Energy Efficient Rebate for New Homes application form or more details about the rebate program please contact SaskEnergy at (800) 567-8899 or visit www.saskenergy.com