

See also

**FMB Information Sheet 1/07/04: HOME INFORMATION PACKS (HIPs)**



## **Frequently asked questions**

### **1. What is an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC)?**

- The EPC provides an official energy efficiency rating for a building.
- The rating goes from A-G, with A being the most energy efficient and G being the least energy efficient.
- The rating will be accompanied by a report giving recommendations to improve the energy rating of the building.
- EPCs are a key component of the Home Information Pack (HIP).

### **2. When must EPCs be provided for different types of property?**

In England and Wales EPCs must be provided for:

- The construction of all new dwellings from 6<sup>th</sup> April 2008.
- For the construction sale or rent of non-domestic buildings with a floor area greater than 10,000m<sup>2</sup>, from 6<sup>th</sup> April 2008.
- For the construction, sale or rent of non-domestic buildings with a floor area greater than 2,500m<sup>2</sup> from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2008.
- For the construction, sale or rent of smaller non-domestic buildings and for the sale and rent of existing houses, from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2008.

Any building which is already on the market before these dates, and then remains on the market afterwards, will need an EPC by 1<sup>st</sup> October at the latest. If it is sold or rented out in the meantime, an EPC must be commissioned and handed over as soon as practicable.

When a house is sold without marketing, (eg by private treaty between family members), an EPC will be required from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2008.

In Scotland

- EPCs have been required for the construction of all new buildings since 1<sup>st</sup> May 2007.
- EPCs will be required when selling a house by 1<sup>st</sup> December 2008.
- EPCs will be required when selling or leasing a non-domestic building or renting a house by 4<sup>th</sup> January 2009.

In Northern Ireland the proposed timetable for providing EPCs is:

- For the sale of houses by 30<sup>th</sup> June 2008.
- For the construction of dwellings and non-domestic buildings by 30<sup>th</sup> September 2008.
- For the sale or rent of non-domestic buildings and the rent of houses by 30<sup>th</sup> December 2008.

### **3. When do air conditioning systems have to be inspected as part of the EPC?**

- All commercial premises in England, Scotland and Wales with an air conditioning system with an output of greater than 250kW will require an energy inspection report for their system by 4<sup>th</sup> January 2009.
- All remaining air conditioning systems over 12kW must be inspected by 4<sup>th</sup> January 2011.
- It is the responsibility of the user or operator to ensure that the energy assessment of air conditioning systems is carried out.
- The inspection will include an assessment of efficiency, a review of sizing and advice on improvements or replacements and alternative solutions.
- The inspection will need to be repeated at intervals not exceeding five years.

### **4. Who is responsible for providing the EPC?**

The builder or the person responsible for the construction of a new building must obtain an EPC and provide it to the owner free of charge. This is a duty under Building Regulations.

For existing buildings that are to be sold, the owner is responsible for ensuring an EPC is made available to all prospective purchasers. Where a Home Information Pack (HIP) is required on the sale of a house an EPC must be produced as part of the pack.

When buildings are to be rented out the landlord is responsible for ensuring an EPC is made available to all prospective tenants.

### **5. Who can produce an EPC?**

An EPC must be produced by an energy assessor belonging to an approved accreditation scheme. Check the websites for details of accreditation schemes.

For England and Wales [www.energy-assessors.org.uk/site/](http://www.energy-assessors.org.uk/site/)

For Scotland [www.sbsa.gov.uk/european\\_issues/epcprotocols.htm](http://www.sbsa.gov.uk/european_issues/epcprotocols.htm)

For Northern Ireland [www.dsdni.gov.uk/index/hsdiv-housing/hsdiv-energy\\_perf\\_certs.htm](http://www.dsdni.gov.uk/index/hsdiv-housing/hsdiv-energy_perf_certs.htm)

### **6. How long is the EPC valid for?**

The EPC is valid for ten years, unless the building is modified.

When a Home Information Pack (HIP) is required then the EPC must be no more than 12 months old when the property is first marketed.

**7. What are the penalties for not having an EPC for a commercial building?**

Owners who do not have certificates in place when the building is sold or rented face a fine fixed at 12.5% of the building's rateable value or £750 where this formula cannot be applied. The minimum penalty is £500 and the maximum penalty that can be levied is £5,000.

**8. What is a Display Energy Certificate (DEC)?**

Display Energy Certificates (DECs) show the actual energy use of a building, the operational rating based on energy consumption as recorded by gas, electricity and other meters.

These certificates are only required for buildings larger than 1000m<sup>2</sup> which are occupied by a public authority or an institution providing a public service and which are frequently visited by a large number of persons.

From 1<sup>st</sup> October 2008 DECs must be displayed in relevant buildings, they should be placed in a prominent place, clearly visible to the public.

**9. Where can I find further information?**

Further information on EPCs is available from:

- Department for Communities and Local Government  
[www.communities.gov.uk/planningandbuilding/theenvironment/energyperformance/certificates/energyperformancecertificates/](http://www.communities.gov.uk/planningandbuilding/theenvironment/energyperformance/certificates/energyperformancecertificates/)
- Energy Team, Scottish Building Standards  
Telephone: 01506 600400 [www.sbsa.gov.uk/epc.htm](http://www.sbsa.gov.uk/epc.htm)
- Department for Social Development Northern Ireland  
[www.dsdni.gov.uk/index/hsdiv-housing/hsdiv-energy\\_perf\\_certs.htm](http://www.dsdni.gov.uk/index/hsdiv-housing/hsdiv-energy_perf_certs.htm)

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