DOE Challenge Home Policy Record

Last Update: July 22, 2013

How to Use This Document

DOE regularly receives partner questions and comments regarding various aspects of the program documents. This document is a record of 1) the issues that have been received since the release of the last revision to the program documents, **and** 2) program updates which have been implemented by DOE but did not result in direct changes to the DOE Challenge Home National Program Requirements document.

The primary purpose of this document is to allow all partners to have equal access to policy issues raised since the last revision of the program requirements along with a record of program changes that have been implemented but did not result in a direct change to the program requirements. If an issue in this record will result in a change to the program requirements, it will occur within the next revision cycle, and is marked as such. In such cases the change to the program requirements is typically enforced 60 days from the program requirements revision release. If an issue in this record does not result in a change to the program requirements but still does affect how homes qualify, it will remain listed in this policy record for partner access. Such issues may include clarifications which affect just a few homes and do not warrant additional footnotes in the National Program Requirements.

Partners may use the determinations in this record immediately, and if they do so should document the permit dates of the affected homes and include a copy of the policy record in the files retained by the Rater. Should the need arise, this will allow partners to demonstrate that they acted with the best information available.

ID	Log Date	Relevant Program Document & Anticipated Change(s)	Classification[1]	Topic
0099	6/4/13	DOE Challenge Home National Program Requirements No change to Program Requirements; clarification will remain listed in this Policy Record.	clarification	**Issue**: Current REM/Rate software does not recognize the allowance for windows used in passive solar designs (Footnote 11E in DCH National Program Requirements and Footnote 2 in the ENERGY STAR Thermal Enclosure Checklist). As a result, otherwise compliant homes may fail due to windows which do not meet Mandatory requirements.
				Resolution: If a design home meets the DCH Target HERS Index; and "windows do not meet the ENERGY

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				STAR V3.0 requirements" is the only non-compliance message generated in the DOE Challenge Home Verification Summary; and the design home's windows qualify for the exception in footnote 11E of the DCH specs, then the home can be qualified for DOE Challenge Home. To qualify the home, a Rater should model the home with windows matching the appropriate specifications from the ENERGY STAR V3 Thermal Enclosure Checklist, and use this model to generate the DCH certificate from the software. The resulting HERS Index shown on the certificate must align with the HERS Index of the actual design home. The Rater must also document and note the actual window specifications in the project records. The Rater must submit the DOE Challenge Home Verification Summary of the actual design home to DOE along with a brief explanation of the window adjustment.
0100	7/19/13	DOE Challenge Home National Program Requirements The National Program Requirements will be changed to show the phase-in timeframe, when they are next released.	change	**Issue**: Builder partners are phasing in re-designs of hot water distribution systems into their plans, and will achieve the DOE Challenge Home specification for hot water distribution in upcoming homes. Houses already in production may meet all other DOE Challenge Home specifications, but did not fully anticipate this provision and may not meet it. **Resolution**: If a design home meets all other provisions of DOE Challenge Home, it may temporarily waive the hot water distribution system provision listed in Table 1 of the National Program Requirements (Item #4). This allowance is in effect until September 15, 2013. Homes qualified after this date must adhere to the hot

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				water distribution provisions as described in Table 1.

1. Classifications:

- Change – The addition, deletion, or modification of a program requirement. A change will typically result from a partner question or feedback indicating that DOE's original intent is not being met or from changes in relevant standards. A change is the most significant type of edit for partners because it is likely to change the way that partners comply with the program.
- Clarification – The clarification of a program requirement, typically resulting from a partner question indicating confusion or ambiguity. Clarifications are not intended to significantly change the scope of the program guidelines, but rather to clarify the original intent of the requirement. A clarification is secondary in importance to a change; it should not significantly alter the way that most partners comply with the program.
- Refinement – A minor revision, such as an improved choice of words, a grammatical correction, or a correction to a typographical error. A refinement is the least important type of edit; it should have no impact on the way that partners comply with the program.
- Comment – A comment provided by DOE in response to a question, which results in no change to the program documents. This may occur, for example, if the question can be answered by referring to already established policy. Aside from the partner asking the question, such comments will typically have no impact on the way that partners comply with the program.
- Issue Under Review – An issue that has been submitted and that DOE is still evaluating. Once DOE has evaluated the issue, it will offer a resolution and reclassify the issue using one of the four categories above.