

Alabama Energy Code

home inspectors checklist



Use this checklist to assess homes and offer advice on expected energy use for clients interested in buying homes that meet national minimum standards for energy efficiency. Meeting or exceeding the new energy code requirements is an indication of quality construction.

This guide does not cover all aspects of the Alabama energy code. It addresses the requirements that are easiest to identify after construction is complete. Older homes will not meet these requirements, but the checklist can still be used to pinpoint opportunities for energy efficiency improvements.

Lighting

- At least half of the home's lighting fixtures are high efficiency lights

Ducts

In Attic:

- Ceiling and walls are insulated, OR:
- Ducts are sealed and insulated to a value of R-6

Effective July 1, 2013, ducts must be sealed and insulated to a value of R-8

Whole House:

- All ducts are sealed with mastic (Duct tape is not sufficient)

Insulation

- Crawl space walls and/or floor above are properly insulated
- Attic access hatch or door is weather-stripped and insulated

Fireplace

- The fireplace doors are sealed with gaskets

Air Sealing

- All holes between floors and through walls have been sealed with caulk or foam
 - where phone and cable wires enter the house
 - where plumbing goes through walls, floors, and ceiling

Windows

	Window U-Factor	Skylight U-Factor	Solar Heat Gain Coefficient
<input type="checkbox"/> Baldwin & Mobile Counties	0.65	0.75	0.30
<input type="checkbox"/> All Other Counties	0.50	0.65	0.30

Tests

- The blower door test resulted in a score of seven air changers per hour (ACH) or less (if applicable)
- The builder tested the ducts for air leakage

Energy Certificate

- (Voluntary) Energy Certificate located on circuit breaker box is completed and signed
- Please see reverse side for an example and more details.

Alternative Compliance Path

If these requirements are not met, ask the builder for documentation showing the home meets minimum standards for energy consumption.



This energy certificate from the 2009 RECA illustrates the energy efficiency standards which are required in every new home in Alabama. This sample form has been completed with the **minimum** standards for each building element in the home, meaning that the certificate in new homes should meet these standards or better. Look for this certificate in or near the home's circuit breaker box or electric panel box. Make sure that it has been signed by the builder and identifies the other contractors.

If you have any questions about what is reported on the certificate, ask your builder or your local building permits office.

U-factors

These are the requirements for the insulation value of a home's windows, doors, and skylights. U-values on the home's energy certificate should be **less than or equal to** those shown in the certificate below.

R-values

These are the minimum requirements allowed for the home's insulation in order to meet the code. R-values on the form should be **greater than or equal to** those shown here.

Heating and Cooling (HVAC)

The way heating and cooling systems are rated and the minimum levels for efficiency depend on the type installed, and fuel used. These abbreviations: SEER, AFUE, and HSPF indicate efficiency. The higher the rating, the more efficient the heating or cooling system is. Use the chart below to determine the minimum rating allowed for each system.

type	min rating
air conditioner	SEER-13
electric furnace	AFUE: 78%
electric boiler	AFUE: 80%
gas boiler	AFUE: 75%
heat pump	HSPF: 7.7

Water Heater

The minimum efficiency factor (EF) for water heaters depends on the size and fuel type used. The higher the number, the more efficient the water heater is.

Minimum EFs for Water Heaters

size	gas	electric
30 gal	0.63	0.95
40 gal	0.62	0.95
50 gal	0.60	0.95
65 gal	0.75	1.98
75 gal	0.74	1.97

2009 IRC Energy Certificate		
Mobile and Baldwin Counties		
Compliance Method	Date	
PRESCRIPTIVE	6-30-11	
Insulation	R-value	
Ceiling/Roof	30	
Walls	13	
Floors	13	
Ducts	6	
Basement Walls	0	
Window and Door Ratings	U-factor	
Windows	0.65	
Doors	0.65	
HVAC Equipment	Type	Rating
Heating	GAS BOILER	75% AFUE
Air Conditioning	FORCED AIR	SEER-13
Water Heating	Type	EF value
Water Heater	50 GAL GAS	0.60
General Contractor: RTS CONTRACTORS		
Insulation Contractor: SMITH + SON		
Form Completed By: <i>John Smith</i>		