

ENERGY STAR CERTIFIED HOME ALTERNATIVE COMPLIANCE FOR 1203 ENERGY EFFICIENCY



Summary

This interpretation allows homes seeking 2020 NGBS certification following the Chapter 12 Certified Compliance Path for Single-Family Homes, Townhouses, and Duplexes to be deemed compliant with **§1203 ENERGY EFFICIENCY** if the home meets the mandatory requirements listed in 1203.1 and qualifies as an ENERGY STAR Version 3.1 Certified Home.^[1] This interpretation is consistent with **NGBS 701.1.4 Alternative Bronze and Silver level compliance** which allows any building that qualifies as an ENERGY STAR Version 3.1 Certified Home to achieve the Silver level for Chapter 7.

Overview

The Chapter 12 Certified Compliance Path was added to the 2020 NGBS to provide a more streamlined method for homes to earn NGBS Green certification. Unlike NGBS Chapters 5-10 which include a mix of mandatory practices and voluntary practices, where the voluntary practices earn points toward the desired certification level, all Chapter 12 practices are mandatory, and no additional points are required to earn certification. Thus Chapter 12 is binary, a home is either compliant or not compliant.

The Consensus Committee also recognized that the Adopting Entity might have an additional need for flexibility, and thus they added the following language in the beginning of the Chapter:

1200 Substitution of practices. The adopting entity shall be permitted to substitute one or more practices with alternatives that achieve the overall intent of this standard. The determination of intent and equivalency is in the purview of the adopting entity.

This interpretation draws on that flexibility, but also remains consistent with the Consensus Committee's intent regarding the energy performance baseline for homes compliant with Chapter 12 and the acceptance of EPA's ENERGY STAR program as an alternative compliance path for the energy efficiency minimum for compliant buildings.

Chapter 12 practices are drawn from the Chapter 5-10 mandatory practices which were deemed the most impactful to a home's environmental performance. The practices also focus more on construction practices, product selection, and systems that the builder can control, as opposed to land development

^[1] For purposes of NGBS Green certification, homes following this alternative compliance path must earn the ENERGY STAR Homes Certification as proof of compliance.

items that are often determined by the land developer. To compensate for the fewer number of green practices required for certification, the 2020 NGBS Consensus Committee deemed the baseline energy performance for a 2020 NGBS Certified home to be equivalent to the 2020 NGBS Chapter 7 Silver certification level for energy efficiency. Thus, a home that earns Chapter 12 Certified would be expected to perform at the same level as a Silver level home for Chapter 7 Energy Efficiency.

§ 1203.1 Mandatory requirements states that to be compliant, the building shall comply with § 1203.1 through § 1203.9 in addition to one of the following: § 1203.10 (Energy Performance Path); § 1203.11 through § 1203.14 (Energy Prescriptive Path); or § 1203.15 (ERI Target Path). Sampling shall not be permitted for this alternative compliance path.

The above does not have an Alternative Compliance Path for ENERGY STAR Ver 3.1 which, for new construction, is inconsistent with Chapter 7. This interpretation allows ENERGY STAR Ver 3.1 as an alternative compliance path would, in fact, make Chapter 12 more consistent with the compliance options in Chapter 7 while maintaining the expectations of energy performance for homes following the Certified Path. As with all the paths above, homes following the new ENERGY STAR Ver 3.1 Path would also have to be compliant with § 1203.1 through § 1203.9 to earn NGBS Green certification.