



Introduction and Acknowledgements

The purpose of this guide is to provide basic information about key residential energy code provisions and to provide an online reference for designers, builders, and code officials. The goal is to promote new residential construction that is more energy efficient as well as more comfortable, healthy, and durable.

Format

This guide is divided into three sections that generally correlate with the organization of the energy code. When a topic, such as vapor retarders, is addressed by the International Residential Code (IRC) or the International Mechanical Code (IMC) it has been grouped in the most appropriate chapter and section. When a topic, such as multifamily building tightness testing, is not specifically addressed in the energy code it has been grouped with the most appropriate chapter and section. There are also introductory articles that discuss building science issues that form the basis of many code provisions.

This Guide Is Not the Code

The current residential energy code for Montana is the amended 2012 IECC. This guide attempts to portray these energy code provisions as accurately as possible. However, building codes are subject to interpretation and you should refer to the actual code language and seek clarification from the local code official who has the ultimate authority to make interpretations.

Montana Energy Code Is Applicable Statewide

The Montana state energy code is applicable to all residential buildings constructed in Montana with the exception of garages and storage buildings. The energy code is enforced on residential buildings of less than five units located outside local code enforcement jurisdictions through the “dwelling self-certification program.” Montana law requires, as an element of the self-certification program, that the builder provide a signed document to the building owner stating that the house complies with the state energy code.

What Buildings Must Comply?

This guide applies to residential buildings. Residential buildings, according to the 2012 IECC, include detached one- and two-family dwellings, multiple single-family dwellings, and townhouses. Group R-2, R-3, and R-4 buildings less than four stories in height fall under the residential provisions of the energy code.

The energy code applies to additions, alterations, renovations, and repairs, as well as new construction. However, the energy code is not retroactive. Unaltered portions of the original building do not need to comply. A good rule of thumb is that if it is new then it has to meet the energy code. However, there are several exceptions. Storm windows installed over existing windows do not have to meet the energy code, nor do glass-only replacements.

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The information included in this online reference is based on the 2012 IECC as amended by the State of Montana in 2014.