

EPC's

Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs) gives information on how to make your home more energy efficient and reduce carbon dioxide emissions. All homes being either sold or let are required by law to have an EPC. The Energy Performance Certificate is basically similar to the labels now provided with domestic appliances such as refrigerators and washing machines.

This requirement is the responsibility of the home owner/landlord and is overseen by the Estate Agent or Letting Agent. From 1st October 2008 all domestic properties to be let must have an EPC completed before the Letting Agent can start viewings. From March 2010 all residential properties for sale must have an EPC instigated prior to marketing, having 28 days grace to be received by the Selling Agent. The Home Information Pack (HIPS) was suspended in March 2010 and one section of the sellig pack included the EPC.

Energy Performance Certificates contain:

1. Information on your home's energy use and carbon dioxide emissions.
2. A recommendation report, with suggestions, to reduce energy use and carbon dioxide emissions (CO₂).

Energy Performance Certificates carry ratings that compare the current energy efficiency and carbon dioxide emissions with potential figures that your home could achieve. Potential figures are calculated by estimating what the energy efficiency and carbon dioxide emissions would be, if energy savings measures were put in place.

The rating measures the energy and carbon emission efficiency of your home, using a grade from 'A' to 'G'. An 'A' rating is the most efficient, whilst 'G' is the least efficient. The average efficiency grade to date is 'D'. All homes are measured using the same criteria, so you can compare the energy efficiency of the different homes. This allows prospective buyers/tenants to see information on the energy efficiency and carbon emissions, so they can consider energy efficiency and fuel costs, as part of their investment/monthly outgoings.

An EPC is always accompanied by a recommendation report, showing what you could do to help reduce the amount of energy you use and carbon dioxide emissions. The report lists:

1. Suggested improvements, like fitting lost insulation.
2. Possible cost savings per year, if the improvements are made.
3. How the recommendations would change the energy and carbon emission rating of the property.

You do not have to act on the recommendations in the report. However, if you decide to do so, it could make your property more attractive for selling or renting, by making it more energy efficient.

The following buildings do not need an EPC, when they built, rented or sold:

1. Places of worship
2. Temporary buildings that will be used for less than 2 years.
3. Stand alone buildings with total useful floor area of less than 50sq meters that are not used to provide living accommodation for a single household.
4. Industrial sites, workshops and non-residential agricultural buildings that do not use a lot of energy.

Owners of commercial buildings, also have to provide an EPC when they sell or let commercial premises.

In summary, all domestic properties to be sold or rented must have an EPC to comply with the law and is a record of how efficient a property is as a building. The recommendations can be acted upon to make the property more energy efficient and desirable as a home or rented proposition. For more information visit www.rics.org/usefulguides.

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