



## U.S. Department of Energy Zero Energy Ready Home™

# VERIFIER PARTNER AGREEMENT

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## Instructions for Partnering with U.S. Department of Energy

Organizations interested in partnering with DOE Zero Energy Ready Home™ as a Verifier Partner should take the following steps:

1. Review the ***DOE Zero Energy Ready Home National Program Requirements*** and this **Partner Agreement**.
2. Register by entering your contact information online. There must be an authorized signature to accept the terms of the agreement. Additional contacts may be added.
  - Select “Verifier” as organization type.
  - **IMPORTANT:** You must read and agree to the terms and conditions stated in the Builder Partner Agreement. Click on the toggle next to “I have read and agree to the terms and conditions stated in the DOE Zero Energy Ready Home Sponsor Partner Agreement.” This serves as your electronic signature. You may access the Partner Agreement online at any time by logging into your account.
  - Upload your logo for display in the locator tool and to include in customized brochures.
  - Choose all states in which you conduct business for locator tool searches.
  - Click register. You will receive an email with a login password asking you to confirm your participation.
  - Your registration will be reviewed by DOE Zero Energy Ready Home staff. Once approved you are entered into the DOE Zero Energy Ready Home database and are considered a partner. Your contact information will go live on the DOE Zero Energy Ready Home locator. You may use your password to login anytime to change contact information or remove yourself from the program. Should you choose to discontinue the partnership, please allow reasonable notice and a written rationale for discontinued participation.
3. Start working with partners to design and verify homes to meet the Zero Energy Ready.
4. Review the ***Guidelines for Correctly Using the DOE Zero Energy Ready Home Name and Logo*** and use the logos, labels and other materials to market and sell your homes. These are available by logging in to your partner account.

# U.S. Department of Energy Zero Energy Ready Home Terms of the Agreement

## VERIFIER PARTNER

### *Introduction*

Through this agreement, the registered organization (“Partner”) joins in partnership with the Department of Energy (DOE). Partner recognizes that by accepting this agreement they are expected to verify homes to meet the *DOE Zero Energy Ready Home National Program Requirements*.

The DOE Zero Energy Ready Home offers leading builders a timely solution for differentiating their product from existing homes as well as minimum code new homes. The DOE Zero Energy Ready Home label – the symbol of excellence in home building - makes it easy for consumers to identify zero net-energy ready homes that are so efficient a small renewable energy system can offset most or all annual energy consumption.

### *Program Definitions and Eligible Organizations*

1. Eligible organizations: Verifier partners must be accredited Home Energy Raters, Building America team members, or participate in other accredited verification programs recognized by DOE.
2. Definitions:
  - a. **DOE Zero Energy Ready Home** is a home that meets all of the criteria found in the *DOE Zero Energy Ready Home National Program Requirements*. DOE Zero Energy Ready Homes are verified by a registered third-party verifier partner and are at least 40%-50% more energy efficient than a typical new home. This generally corresponds to a Home Energy Rating System (HERS) Index Score in the low to mid-50s, depending on the size of the home and region in which it is built.
  - b. **Zero net-energy ready homes** are so efficient a small renewable energy system can offset most or all annual energy consumption.
  - c. **DOE Zero Energy Ready Home logo** distinguishes certified homes as being among the top performing homes in the nation.
  - d. **DOE Zero Energy Ready Home certificate** is automatically generated from compliance software. It includes energy savings information as well as a HERS Index Score.
  - e. **DOE Zero Energy Ready Home verification form** provides information needed to calculate program savings. It can be generated from compliance software.

## General terms and commitments made between DOE Zero Energy Ready Home Program and Verifier Partners

### ***DOE's Commitments to DOE Zero Energy Ready Home Verifier Partners***

1. DOE will work to increase awareness of the DOE Zero Energy Ready Home Program as the trusted government-backed symbol for zero net-energy ready homes.
2. DOE will provide partners with timely program updates, information, and resources via the DOE web site, webinars, newsletters, e-mail, and presentations.
3. DOE will provide partners with recognition for their participation in the program through vehicles such as the DOE website, awards, and other media.
4. DOE will provide participants with access to the DOE Zero Energy Ready Home partner logos. DOE retains rights to the DOE Zero Energy Ready Home name, logo and label. Use and reproduction of the logo and graphic without specific authorization and full compliance with *Guidelines for Correctly Using the DOE Zero Energy Ready Home Name and Logo* for the DOE Zero Energy Ready Home are prohibited.
5. DOE will respond swiftly to any requests for information or clarification on program policies.
6. DOE does not provide warranty and cannot be held liable for construction defects or deficiencies resulting from the proper or improper application of program guidelines.

### ***Verifier Partner Commitments***

1. Partner shall ensure that verified homes meet all requirements set forth in the *DOE Zero Energy Ready Home National Program Requirements*.
2. Partner shall maintain an active partnership by qualifying at least one home to earn the DOE Zero Energy Ready Home label within any ongoing 12-month period. Partners not fulfilling this requirement will be deemed 'inactive' and must promptly cease all use of the DOE Zero Energy Ready Home name and logo, including removal from marketing and point-of-sale materials. DOE will reinstate Partner as active upon verification of a labeled home.
3. Partners will verify that homes are compliant with the *DOE Zero Energy Ready Home National Program Requirements*.
4. Partner shall follow Guidelines for using *DOE Zero Energy Ready Home Name and Logo* when using DOE Zero Energy Ready Home name, logo and/or any other associated marketing materials in conjunction with a registered builder or qualified home(s).
5. Partner will participate in a DOE Zero Energy Ready Home orientation presentation either via webinar or online (<http://energy.gov/eere/buildings/doe-zero-energy-ready-home-resources>). Partner will also participate in an annual program update hosted by DOE or sponsor partner to learn about and take advantage of the latest partner opportunities.

### ***General Terms and Conditions***

1. This agreement is voluntary and may be amended by written agreement between the Parties. This Agreement may be terminated by either party upon reasonable written notice to the other Party.
2. Partners will assume good faith as a general principle for resolving conflicts that may arise in relation to their program partnership and will seek to resolve all matters to preserve maximum public confidence in DOE and the DOE Zero Energy Ready Home program.
3. Partners shall not construe, claim, or imply that participation in the DOE Zero Energy Ready Home program constitutes DOE approval, acceptance, or endorsement of anything other than partners' participation in the DOE Zero Energy Ready Home program. Partnership does not constitute DOE endorsement of the partner, its homes, or services.
4. Partners understand that the activities undertaken in connection with the DOE Zero Energy Ready Home are voluntary and not intended to provide services to DOE. As such, partners may not submit claims for compensation to DOE in regards to activities related to the Agreement.
5. Partners must adhere to the *Guidelines for using DOE Zero Energy Ready Home Name and Logo* and ensure that authorized representatives, such as advertising agencies, distributors, and subcontractors, also comply.
6. Qualification of a home to earn the DOE Zero Energy Ready Home label shall not be used by Partners to guarantee that it is structurally sound or safe, constructed in accordance with applicable laws, regulations or codes, free of mold or mildew, free of volatile organic compounds or allergens, or free of soil gases including radon.
7. This Partner Agreement is strictly for internal purposes for each of the parties. It is not legally enforceable and shall not be construed to create any legal obligation on the part of either party. This Partnership Agreement shall not be construed to provide a private right or cause of action for or by any person or entity.

### ***Dispute Resolution***

Partner and DOE will assume good faith as a general principle for resolving conflicts under the DOE Zero Energy Ready Home program. Both parties will endeavor to resolve all matters informally, so as to preserve maximum public confidence in the DOE Zero Energy Ready Home. Parties agree to seek to mutually resolve any matter in dispute. The Partner Agreement may be terminated by reasonable advance written notice of intent to terminate by either party.

### ***Entry into Force and Duration of Agreement***

Both parties concur that this agreement and the terms outlined in the supporting documents will be effective when signed electronically by both parties. By completing registration you are electronically signing this agreement, and, as an official representative of your organization, you agree to these terms. By electronically approving your registration, DOE agrees to the terms of this partnership.

***The duration of this agreement is one year from DOE's approval of your online registration. The agreement must be maintained with activity and must be renewed annually. Activity is defined as building, designing,***

*selling, certifying, training or otherwise contributing to the construction of homes that meet the goals of the DOE Zero Energy Ready Home.*

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Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 20 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Office of the Chief Information Officer, Records Management Division, IM-23, Paperwork Reduction Project (1910-5184), U.S. Department of Energy, 1000 Independence Ave SW, Washington, DC 20585-1290; and to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), OIRA, Paperwork Reduction Project (1910-5184), Washington, DC 20503.