



ENERGY STEP CODE

BUILDING BEYOND THE STANDARD

Marketing the High-Performance Home

Important information for B.C.
residential real-estate professionals

In the coming years, new homes in British Columbia are about to get measurably healthier, quieter, more durable, and more energy efficient than those on the resale market. What does this mean for REALTORS®?

What's Going On?

As part of its work to address climate change, British Columbia's provincial government is tightening up energy efficiency requirements for new construction.

The province has set a goal that by 2032, all new homes – condos, houses, townhomes, and everything in between – will need to meet an exceptionally high level of energy efficiency. By that year, new builds will be up to 80 per cent more energy efficient than those of today. Cities are using a regulation called the BC Energy Step Code to get there.

While 2032 might seem a long way off, the province has also set interim targets; the first one is in 2022.



Highly energy-efficient homes are known as "high-performance homes." And thanks to the BC Energy Step Code and the province's climate plan, more of them will be hitting the MLS in the coming years. Your buyers will be asking you questions.



How Do High-Performance Homes Get That Way?

Builders use familiar materials blended with new techniques to reach high levels of energy efficiency, and it takes specialized training and coaching to dial in the details. Here are a few of the details and what they will mean for your buyer.

High-Performance Feature	Benefit for Your Buyer
	Additional insulation inside the walls, underfoot, and overhead.
	Improved ventilation, delivering a constant supply of filtered outside air.
	A "Goldilocks" heating system – one that's not too big, nor too small.
	Better-quality windows.
	It keeps the home comfortable year round, and also helps make it quieter.
	It makes the home healthier, and free of pollen and smoke.
	You won't be paying more than you need to, to keep the home comfortable year-round.
	Let in plenty of natural light while keeping the home comfortable and draft-free.

What Will this Mean for REALTORS®?

New home shoppers are showing unprecedented interest in energy-efficient homes. In a recent Canadian Home Builders Association (CHBA) national survey, nine out of 10 respondents said they either "really want" or "must have" an energy-efficient home.

The ongoing market shift to high-performance homes presents a marketing challenge for real estate professionals on at least two fronts:

- 1 **First**, as more high-performance product comes onto the market, sellers of older homes will be at a disadvantage, because they will increasingly be competing with much higher energy efficient homes. To address this, buyers might consider energy efficiency upgrades prior to sale, just as they would freshen up an outdated kitchen or bathroom.
- 2 **Second**, it's impossible to gauge a given home's performance just by looking at it, because many of the features that make it that way are hidden inside the walls or under the foundation. From a marketing perspective, we might speak about a high-performance home as:
"A comfortable and healthy place to live."
"A home with a lower overall cost of ownership because it's better built and uses less energy."
"A more reliable and durable home, built and verified to meet exacting standards."



If you are putting a home on the market, be certain to highlight any energy-efficiency features or upgrades on the listing or sell sheet. Such features will increasingly attract a buyer's eye.

For more info about the BC Energy Step Code, visit energystepcode.ca