



**A comparison of 2015 Enterprise Green Communities Criteria
and ICC 700 National Green Building Standard**

Released: February 19, 2016

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The ICC 700 National Green Building Standard (NGBS) and the 2015 Enterprise Green Communities Criteria (2015 Criteria) both offer guidelines for project teams seeking to design and construct projects to a green building standard, yet there are key differences between the programs. The 2015 Criteria is designed exclusively for the affordable housing market and addresses rehabs of existing buildings as well as new construction, while NGBS may apply to all types of residential construction. The 2015 Criteria offers one level of certification that includes measures customizable for every project, and yet all certified projects meet certain baseline performance standards across eight distinct categories of green guidelines. NGBS offers several different levels of certification, which also include measures across distinct categories of green guidelines. However NGBS does not mandate certain combustion safety and ventilation measures that are critical to the 2015 Criteria program.

INTRODUCTION: ICC 700 NGBS

In 2008, the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) and the International Code Council (ICC) partnered to establish a nationally-recognizable standard definition of green building. The resulting ICC 700 National Green Building Standards (NGBS) is the first residential green building rating system to undergo the full consensus process and receive approval from the American National Standards Institute (ANSI). Because the ICC is also the author of the nation's building codes, the National Green Building Standard may be adopted by local jurisdictions as a code requirement or as a designation for residential construction that is considered "green" in its construction nor rehabilitation. In 2012, the NAHB and ICC released a new version of the National Green Building Standard.

PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY: ICC 700 NGBS

While NGBS may apply to any residential construction, it is targeted at market-rate residential construction. The Standard can also be applied to land development.

Projects eligible for the National Green Building Standard include:

- Single-family homes (including townhomes that share a common vertical wall)
- Low-rise Multifamily (1-3 story buildings, including duplexes or other stacked housing units that share a common ceiling or floor)
- High-rise Multifamily
- Renovations of existing homes
- Additions to single family structures that equal less than 75% of existing square footage

All projects participating in the NGBS certification program must use a NGBS Accredited Verifier.

POINT STRUCTURE: ICC 700 NGBS

The Standard has a few mandatory requirements and requires an accumulation of points by categories and performance levels, as shown below. The final certification level of the project is determined by the number of points achieved in each category. The categories, along with points available and required, include:

| Green Building Categories | EGC Category Alignment | NGBS Pre-reqs | NGBS Optional | NGBS Point Floor |
|--|------------------------|---------------|---------------|------------------|
| Lot and Site Development (5) | 2/3 | 0 | 222 | 0 |
| Resource Efficiency (6) | 6 | 4 | 242 | 0 |
| Energy Efficiency (7) | 5 | 18 | 279+ | 30/32 |
| Water Efficiency (8) | 4 | 0 | 110 | 0 |
| Indoor Environmental Quality (9) | 6/7 | 17 | 268 | 14 |
| Operations, Maintenance & Education (10) | 8 | 3/15 | 18/19 | 1/6 |
| Totals | - | 42/54 | 1140+ | 45/52 |

The project can only be certified to the lowest certification level achieved in any category. For example, if the project achieved Emerald in all of the categories, but only the Bronze level in Energy Efficiency, the project may only be certified as Bronze. The performance level requirements in each category, along with totals, include:

| Green Building Categories | Performance Levels | | | |
|--|--------------------|------------|------------|------------|
| | Bronze | Silver | Gold | Emerald |
| Lot and Site Development (5) | 39 | 66 | 93 | 119 |
| Resource Efficiency (6) | 45 | 79 | 113 | 146 |
| Energy Efficiency (7) | 30 | 60 | 100 | 120 |
| Water Efficiency (8) | 14 | 26 | 41 | 60 |
| Indoor Environmental Quality (9) | 36 | 65 | 100 | 140 |
| Operations, Maintenance & Education (10) | 8 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| Additional Points | 50 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Total Points | 222 | 406 | 558 | 697 |

CERTIFICATION: ICC 700 NGBS

Home Innovation Research Labs provides national certification services for projects seeking NGBS Green Certification. They qualifies, trains, and accredits Green Verifiers. Home Innovation Research Labs reviews every verification report and issues the certification to ensure national consistency in the NGBS interpretation and application. To certify to NGBS, project teams will:

1. Score the building using a downloadable scoring spreadsheet.
2. Hire an accredited verifier who will register the project.
3. Send the design information and scoring spreadsheet to the verifier and schedule a rough inspection.
4. Home Innovation Research Labs will send a Builder's Agreement to new builders.
5. Sign the completed rough Verification Report, which the verifier will send to Home Innovation Labs for review.
6. Schedule a final inspection with your verifier, and sign the final Verification Report which the verifier will send to Home Innovation Labs for review.
7. Home Innovation Labs will review the report and issue a "Home Innovation NGBS Green Certified" certificate, provided all documentation is complete.

Verification fees will be negotiated between the Green Verifier and the project team.

See more: http://www.homeinnovation.com/services/certification/green_homes

FEES: ICC 700 NGBS

Pricing varies by building type and size, and by NAHB membership. Please refer to the latest pricing information available online:

http://www.homeinnovation.com/services/certification/green_homes/resources/ngbs_certification_fees

SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES WITH THE 2015 GREEN COMMUNITIES CRITERIA:

- Both programs address varieties of construction typology—multifamily and single-family, new construction and rehabs of existing buildings.
- The 2015 Criteria contain more mandatory measures (prerequisites) than does NGBS, including certain key measures relating to combustion safety and ventilation.
- Certification to the 2015 Criteria has a single certification level, whereas NGBS has four performance levels.

- Home Innovation Research Labs has developed a Green Approved Products program to complement and help builders comply with the NGBS. Building products are “green approve” when they have been pre-qualified to meet specific green building practices in the Standard. The 2015 Criteria references several standards that will meet this standard, but does not maintain a list of pre-approved products.