

Energy Performance Certificates – Guidance Notes

June 2008



- **What are Energy Performance Certificates?**

Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs) have been introduced to comply with the European Directive 2002/91/EC on energy efficiency. The relevant legislation for Northern Ireland is The Energy Performance of Buildings (Certificates and Inspections) Regulations (NI) 2008.

An EPC is a statement of prescribed information about the energy efficiency of a building. EPCs will allow prospective buyers or tenants to compare properties for their energy efficiency.

An EPC will be required when any building is sold, rented, constructed or undergoes major modification works.

- **What information will an EPC provide?**

EPCs will provide details of the energy efficiency of a building calculated from its structure and energy management systems. The ratings will range from A (very efficient) to G (very inefficient). Scores between 1 and 150 will also be given in respect of CO₂ emissions, with a lower score indicating lower CO₂ emissions.

An EPC will include a recommendation report which will contain suggestions for improving the energy efficiency of the building. At present there is no obligation to implement any recommendations given.

- **When do the Regulations come in to effect?**

The timetable for implementation of the Regulations is as follows:

Dwellings	Sale	30 June 2008
	New Builds	20 September 2008
	Rental	30 September 2008
Buildings other than dwellings	Sale	30 December 2008
	New Builds	30 September 2008
	Rental	30 December 2008

The precise date when a property is placed on the market for sale is not material. The provision applies to any dwelling that is on the market for sale from 30 June 2008, irrespective of how long it has been on the market prior to this date.

- **Whose responsibility is it to obtain an EPC?**

It is the responsibility of a Vendor to provide an EPC for the sale of a property.

It is the responsibility of a Landlord to provide an EPC for a rental property.

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In cases of properties under construction, the responsibility lies with the person or company responsible for having the construction works carried out.

The purchaser or tenant cannot waive the requirement for an EPC to be provided.

The EPC must be provided free of charge by the Vendor/Landlord to the prospective Purchaser/tenant at the earliest opportunity and in any event, before entering into a contract for sale, rental or building.

- **Are there any exemptions to the Regulations?**

EPCs are not required for buildings used as places of worship, industrial sites, certain temporary buildings, workshops, non-residential agricultural buildings with low energy demand and non dwelling stand alone buildings less than 50 square metres.

If a building is being demolished following completion of a sale, an EPC is not required.

- **Who prepares an EPC?**

An EPC is issued by an Energy Assessor who must be a member of an accreditation scheme approved by the Department of Finance and personnel (DFP). Energy Assessors must use reasonable care and skill in carrying out their assessment.

- **How much will it cost?**

The price of an EPC is not fixed by any Government body. Energy assessors who supply EPCs will compete with each other so the market will essentially decide on the price of an EPC.

- **For how long is an EPC Valid?**

Ten years. An EPC will attach to the property rather than the person who obtained it, therefore it could potentially cover a number of transactions within the validity period.

- **What if an EPC is not produced?**

Part 7 of the Regulations deals with enforcement and makes provision for this by way of civil penalties. Depending on the breach, penalties may range from £200 to £5000. There is a right to appeal.

- **Display Energy Certificates**

A Display Energy Certificate (DEC) applies to any building with a total useful floor area over 1000 square metres which are occupied by public authorities and by institutions providing public services to a large number of persons and are frequently visited by those persons.

From 30 December 2008 the occupier of any building of this type must display a valid energy certificate in a prominent place clearly visible to the public. The occupier must also have in their possession a valid advisory report.

DECs must be renewed annually.

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- **Further Information**

A copy of the Regulations are available at:

http://www.opsi.gov.uk/sr/sr2008/pdf/nisr_20080170_en.pdf

Information is available on the DFP website at:

www.buildingregulationsni.gov.uk and www.epb.dfpni.gov.uk

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