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**National Construction Code (NCC) updates mean energy efficiency ratings expansion for new homes**

Energy efficiency ratings for new residential buildings are about to change with updates to the National Construction Code (NCC) bringing an overhaul to the Nationwide House Energy Rating Scheme (NatHERS).

Building Ministers from across Australia agreed to update the NCC with new minimum energy efficiency standards. As the NatHERS tools measure a home’s energy efficiency, Energy Ministers also agreed to expand NatHERS to support the NCC updates.

The expansion is the biggest change to NatHERS since the scheme began in 1993.

NatHERS currently provides a rating out of 10 stars that takes into account the home’s design and construction materials including walls, insulation, windows and roofs. NCC updates will see the minimum star rating for new homes increase from 6 to 7 stars.

In addition, updates to the NCC mean the energy performance of appliances used for hot water, heating and cooling, solar energy generated onsite and battery storage will be included in a new Whole of Home rating.

This will provide a second rating out of 100, encouraging residential builders and designers to consider the efficiency of appliances they recommend to their clients.

Energy efficiency changes to the Code are voluntary from 1 October 2022, with a transition period until 1 October 2023 (but may vary by state and territory).

The changes will give the community and industry the ability to design and build energy efficient, comfortable and cost effective homes.

More than 150,000 homes are built every year – these efficiency measures will help reduce energy demand which is vital to support the economy’s transition to net zero.

The measures ensure we are building energy efficient homes for the future.