

What strategies for increasing energy code compliance can the Committee agree on?

Possible "buckets": 1) legislation, 2) EFG/DOE-funded Plan, 3) EVT/Efficiency Utilities, or 4) other.

Possible phasing: 1) in 2024, 2) by 2026, 3) by 2030, or 4) other

1. Recognize that energy code is mandatory now.

- A. (See RBES/CBES statute, 30 VSA § 51(b) and § 53(b).)
- B. Amend CBES/RBES update cycle, recognizing the present compliance gap and that updates beyond net-zero-ready will be technical rather than higher standards.

2. Use easily available avenues to raise awareness in industry and with consumers.

- A. Design bill stuffers for municipal property tax bills (Aug) and utility bills (Feb).
- B. Update OPR's Contractor and DFS's Trades listing webpages.
 - i. Include clear statement that RBES is mandatory.
 - ii. Add field to Contractor's/Trade's listing indicating status of RBES/CBES training.
 - iii. Identify precise list of specific trades that RBES/CBES training applies to.
 - iv. Identify list and create "tags" for construction specialties (e.g., "roofers," "framers").
 - v. Improve webpage search and filter functions (e.g. to find by various specialties).

3. Add minimally invasive requirements to increase awareness.

- A. Use other existing state and municipal interfaces, such as zoning permit, septic design and sewer hookup applications, to emphasize RBES/CBES requirements.
- B. Require Contractors (OPR) and Trades (DFS) to disclose at registration and renewal whether they have obtained training and continuing ed in RBES/CBES appropriate to their trade.
 - i. OPR coordinate with DFS to vet and approve third-party training and certification.

4. Improve bureaucratic supports.

- A. Ensure compliance certificates are easy to understand, include relevant details (R-values, blower door number, heating type and efficiency, etc.), and are be easy to file in a centralized location, including both a web form and mail-in option.
- B. Identify and update as needed a central database for RBES/CBES compliance certificates, publicly available and searchable.
 - i. Consider whether the [Vermont Property Transfer Tax](#) could serve this purpose with an added field indicating presence of certificate and an uploaded PDF copy (See [Form PTT-172](#)). (Funding required for database and Town Clerk training.)
- C. Identify locus and role for AHJ: code administration including promulgation, interpretation, conflict resolution, variance determination, plan review, site visits, etc.
 - i. Recognizing that DFS is most appropriate locus, but is not currently equipped to handle, authorize DFS to contract out that expertise in the immediate term.
 - a. Coordinate with PSD for program-level support.
 - b. Develop plan for third-party energy professionals (e.g., energy consultants, HERS raters) to provide project-level technical support to DFS.
 - c. Identify costs and revenue needed to support AHJ implementation.
- D. Develop mechanism for EEs to support energy code compliance in order to justify builder training, support and meaningful incentives.
- E. OPR, DFS design and implement continuing ed program in RBES/CBES and general building science appropriate to their trade.

5. Increase close support of builders.

- A. Engage third-party energy consultants (energy auditors and consultants, HERS raters, Weatherization staff, HEAT Squad, etc.) to provide direct support to builders.
 - i. Identify appropriate OPR/DFS certification for third-party consultants.
- B. Implement project-level support using energy consultants to —
 - provide plan review and/or meeting prior to construction;
 - do site inspection with blower-door test at critical junctures during construction. Initially, new contractors would get touches at close-in prior to insulation, at insulation prior to interior wall cladding, at substantial completion;
 - assist owner-builders with consultation, advice and filing of compliance certificate.
- C. Integrate existing EVT Energy Code Assistance Center and EEU builder trainings.
- D. Utilize DOE-funded Vermont Energy Code Administration Project grant to EFG to support these efforts, including a full-time “energy code circuit rider” position.

6. Current practice is not rational for the long term.

- A. Having a mandatory residential energy code without a residential building code is incongruous. Ultimately Building Energy Standards should be administered with building codes, since both relate to safety and durability of buildings.
- B. A new study committee should be formed to recommend whether and how to adopt a residential building code.

7. Coordinate with EFG and the DOE grant in support of the Vermont Energy Code Administration Project to develop and implement a longer-term plan.

- A. This project will address the following elements:
 - i. Overall Project Management and Planning.
 - ii. National Collaborative and Technical Assistance Engagement
 - iii. Project Advisory Committee
 - iv. Energy Code Administration Plan & Implementation
 - v. Research a sustainable funding model
 - vi. Energy Professionals Workforce Education, Training and Support
 - vii. Contractor Registry Training Certifications
 - viii. Circuit Rider
 - ix. Municipality Outreach and Education
 - x. Community Benefits Plan
 - xi. Energy Code Administration Plan & Implementation
 - xii. Energy Professionals Workforce
 - xiii. Education, Training and Support