

**Building Energy Code Study Committee: Responsibilities and Authority for Single Family Homes (SFHs)**

9/11/2023



- Principles (1) Vermont governance is as simple and efficient as possible. That means one authority over single family homes.  
 (2) Most Vermonters are happy to do the right thing when they know what it is.

Responsibility	STATUS QUO			BY 2024			BY 2026			SOME DAY
	DFS	PSD	OPR	(TBD)	PSD	OPR	(TBD)	PSD	OPR	(TBD)
General authority over private single family homes				•			•			•
Building energy codes (RBES)		•		•			•			•
Ability to delegate to municipalities				•			•			•
Clear chain from municipality up to Legislature				•			•			•
Promulgation of RBES base code		•					•			•
Promulgation of RBES stretch code		•			•			•		with PSD
Variances & code-conflict resolution		**		•			•			•
Appeals process				•			•			•
Ability to stop work				•			•			•
Operate call center that can interpret RBES		info only		•			•			•
Simple, statewide online RBES application							•			•
Builder closes out application in database							•			•
Maintain database of applications/certifications							•			•
Report to Legislature on progress towards goals		•			•			•		with PSD
Develop targets for future energy codes		•			•			•		with PSD
License building trades	•		*	•		*	•		*	•
Establish RBES training standards for all trades				•			•			•
Certify education for homebuilders, goes to OPR				•			•			•

\* Currently OPR registers homebuilders (no certification or licensure) for fraud purposes. Building inspectors are also licensed by OPR.

No one licenses solar installers, energy consultants, or HERS raters.

\*\* No variance process outlined in RBES so technically it does not exist. Exemption is allowed for historic buildings, but no process of approval for gut rehabs.

Division for Historic Preservation is not listed on this chart, but it too has responsibility for historic homes.

**What does this mean in terms of authority and cost?**

- 2024 Give one entity general authority over owner-occupied single family homes. Clarify statute to channel authority to municipalities through it. This authority begins to oversee all building trades including setting standards for education (voluntary for homebuilders for the foreseeable future). Set up a database and a statewide application process for RBES.
- (RECOMMENDED) Simplify base energy code to make initial training easier. Adopt minimally amended 2024 IECC for quick update.

2024 or 2026: Move base code promulgation of RBES to the unified authority. Keep stretch code at PSD.