



With updates to Enterprise Green Communities criteria, what do you need to know in NYC? - by Pratt, Dhirwani and Grossman

November 17, 2020 - Design / Build



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The Enterprise Green Communities certification criteria just updated from the 2015 requirements. Now, the Enterprise Green Communities (EGC) 2020 criteria includes:

New certification point thresholds;

Energy Star certification for new construction developments (Energy Star Multifamily New Construction or Energy Star Certified Homes based on this EPA decision tree);

Additional testing and verification for building rehabilitations; and

A new partnership with the International WELL Building Institute (IWBI).

In New York City, all HPD-funded projects* require a solar feasibility analysis to ensure the development can easily comply with Local Laws 92 and 94 (solar and green roof requirement). You can read more about the NYC overlay of EGC 2020 for HPD projects [here](#).

Here are some of the most frequently asked questions we have received about the new EGC 2020

criteria.

What are the new NYC/HPD point thresholds?

Substantial and Moderate Rehab projects are required to earn at least 55 optional points, while New Construction projects are required to earn at least 60 points. This may add technical consulting time to your projects, so plan accordingly.

What triggers Energy Star certification?

New construction, which can include significant gut rehabilitations if the building is able to meet all the program requirements. If a substantial rehab considers itself a full gut rehab and can meet the Energy Star program requirements, it may elect to do so voluntarily.

What are the major differences between EGC 2015 and EGC 2020 for moderate or substantial rehabs versus new construction?

EGC 2020 has an even stronger focus on communities which is evident through resident engagement and surveying during project pre-development processes.

While certain criteria have changed slightly and new criteria have been added, (see the full 2020 criteria here), the major changes are for rehabs, which now require compartmentalization (blower door) and HVAC functional testing, as well as insulation inspection grading. Those can add time to your project timeline.

For new construction projects, the major change is that EGC 2020 requires an Energy Star certification. EGC 2015 had a non-certification pathway option for new developments. This is no longer an option for new developments seeking EGC certification.

This mandatory building performance pathway was chosen to encourage project developers to analyze their Energy Use Intensity (EUI) and Greenhouse Gas Emissions (GHG) relative to Local Law 97 targets.

EGC 2020 also encourages material transparency and healthier material selection. Since people are now spending more time within their residences, it is even more important to limit exposure to toxic building products.

What is required in terms of a solar analysis?

The solar feasibility analysis includes estimating potential 25-year cash flow for a solar array on the roof using HPD's solar screening tool. HPD asks that projects submit a solar analysis early in the design process.

*As a reminder, only substantial rehabilitation projects are required to meet EGC for HPD. HPD

considers projects “substantial rehabilitations” when all three of the following items are included in the scope:

Replace entire heating system (including distribution system)

Work in 75% of units including plumbing or electrical work within the kitchen and/or bathroom

Substantial work on the building envelope that will upgrade the thermal properties of the building envelope including at least one of the following:

Replace or add roof insulation (entire roof area)

Insulate at least 50% of exterior walls

Window upgrades to at least 90% of windows

EGC’s definitions are a bit different:

Substantial Rehab: A project where the work area exceeds 50% of the aggregate area of the building

Moderate Rehab: A project where the work area does not exceed 50% of the aggregate area of the building (the work scope is less than an ICC level 3 alteration) yet is still able to comply with the energy performance requirements of Criterion 5.1b.

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