

Energy Codes and Standards Update

A Season of Change... For the Stretch Code

The seasons are not the only thing getting ready to change in Massachusetts. Starting on July 1st, some meaningful changes to the Stretch Energy Code will take place. These changes will impact all those who use the Energy Rating Index (ERI) Compliance Alternative path (R406 & C407.4) for all new construction of Group R buildings that contain dwelling units. However, these changes will not impact ERI compliance for major alterations, additions, or change of use projects.

The first item of note, as shown in Table R406.5 below, starting on July 1st the maximum ERI score will be lowered 10-13 points, depending on energy use type. Meaning those using R406 or C407.4 for compliance and are permitted on or after July 1st will now be required to be 10%-13% more energy efficient than projects with permits issued prior to July 1st.

Another change is a bit more subtle. Prior to July 1st, permit applicants using the ERI path for compliance were given a 3-point "trade-off" for including solar electric generation as a part of their project but starting on July 1st that "trade-off" will no longer be allowed. For those still looking for extra ERI points, a 3-point "trade-off" will still be given to all-electric buildings.

Table R406.5 (& C407.4) Maximum Energy Rating Index*

Clean Energy Application	Maximum HERS Index Score	
	New Construction permits until June 30th, 2024	New Construction permits as of July 1st, 2024
Mixed-Fuel Buildings	52	42
Solar Electric Generation	55	42
All-Electric Buildings	55	45
Solar and All-Electric Buildings	58	45

**Columns for Major alterations, Additions, or Change of Use are not shown as they will remain unchanged.*

Opt-In Specialized Energy Code Update

On July 1st, 2024, the Municipal Opt-In Specialized Energy Code (Opt-In Code) takes effect in 13 additional communities across the commonwealth, bringing the total to 32 communities. You can find a full list of communities that have adopted the Opt-In Code as well as their effective dates [here](#).