

STRETCH CODE Summary/ Requirements

At the Spencer annual Town Meeting on November 27, 2018 the stretch code was adopted and became effective on July 1, 2019.

Stretch Code Summary: In 2009, Massachusetts became the first state to adopt an above-code appendix to the "base" building energy code-the "Stretch Code" (**780 CMR Appendix 115.AA**). The Stretch Code, which emphasizes energy performance, as opposed to prescriptive requirements, is designed to result in cost-effective construction that is more energy efficient than that built to the "base" energy code. Alongside the base code update to the IECC 2015, the Stretch Code is being updated, and is referred to as the 2015 Stretch code update.

(<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/building-energy-code#stretch-code-summary->)

What do you need to do?: A key feature of the Stretch Energy Code is that it is performance based. It requires new homes to meet a HERS (Home Energy Rating System) index rating target, rather than requiring the installation of specific levels of energy efficiency for each building element (e.g. windows, wall insulation, roof insulation, furnace etc.). The HERS rating is a measure based on a home's total expected energy use and overall efficiency. It is calculated by a certified HERS rater using accredited software, which uses information on the design of the energy systems in a home to calculate the annual energy needs of the home and give it a rating score. (*Provided by Green Communities Division, October 2017*)

Benefits: Stretch Code "Residential Cash Flow Analysis": In 2016, DOER hired an independent building energy consulting firm to look at the cost-benefit equation of building a representative set of new single-family and multi-family homes to the updated 2015 stretch code. The analyses were updated in August 2017. There are examples of both gas heated and non-gas heated homes, all of which show that homeowners see a positive cash-flow from day 1 from purchasing a 2015 stretch code home vs. a 2015 base code compliant home.

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Locate a HERS Rater by going online

<https://www.nehers.org/find-hers-rater>