Comparison of Enterprise Green Communities Criteria and the National Green Building Standard

In 2007, the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) and the International Code Council (ICC) partnered to establish a nationally-recognizable standard definition of green building. The resulting ICC 700 National Green Building Standard is the first and only residential green building rating system to undergo the full consensus process and receive approval from the American National Standards Institute (ANSI). Because the ICC is also the author of the nation's building codes, the National Green Building Standard may be adopted by local jurisdictions as a code requirement or as a designation for residential construction that is considered "green" in its construction or rehabilitation. In 2012, the NAHB and ICC released a new version of the National Green Building Standard.

PARTICIPATION AND ELIGIBILITY:

While the Standard may apply to any residential construction, it is targeted at market- rate residential construction. The Standard can also be applied to land development (Section 4 Site Design and Development).

Projects eligible for the National Green Building Standard include:

- Single-family homes (including townhomes that share a common vertical wall)
- Low-rise Multifamily (1-3 story buildings, including duplexes or other stacked housing units that share a common ceiling or floor)
- High-rise Multifamily
- Renovations of existing homes
- Additions to single family structures that equal less than 75% of existing square footage

All projects participating in the NGBS certification program must use a NGBS Accredited Verifier. See “Certification” for more details about the certification process.

POINT STRUCTURE:

The Standard has few mandatory requirements but requires an accumulation of points by categories and performance levels, as shown below. This was intended to allow builders flexibility in attaining green certification without compromising the environmental performance of the project.

The final certification level is determined by the number of points achieved in each category. The categories, along with points available and required, include:

Green Building Categories	EGC Alignment	Pre-reqs	Optional	Point Floor
Lot and Site Development (5)	2/3	0	222	0
Resource Efficiency (6)	6	4	242	0
Energy Efficiency (7)	5	18	279+	30/32
Water Efficiency (8)	4	0	110	0
Indoor Environmental Quality (9)	6/7	17	268	14
Operations, Maintenance & Education (10)	8	3/15	18/19	1/6
Totals	**-**	**42/54**	**1140+**	**45/52**

The project can only be certified to the lowest certification level achieved in any category. For example, if the home achieved Emerald in all of the categories, but only the Bronze level in Indoor Environmental Quality, the home can only be certified as Bronze. The performance level requirements in each category, along with totals include:

Green Building Categories	Performance Levels			
	Bronze	Silver	Gold	Emerald
Lot and Site Development (5)	39	66	93	119
Resource Efficiency (6)	45	79	113	146
Energy Efficiency (7)	30	60	100	120
Water Efficiency (8)	14	26	41	60
Indoor Environmental Quality (9)	36	65	100	140
Operations, Maintenance & Education (10)	8	10	11	12
Additional Points	50	100	100	100
Total Points	**222**	**406**	**558**	**697**

For the Green Subdivision Category, the point structure is as follows:

Green Subdivision Category	Performance Level (Stars)			
	One	Two	Three	Four
Site Design and Development (4)	79	104	134	175

CERTIFICATION PROCESS:

The NAHB Research Center provides national certification services for projects seeking certification under the NGBS and also serves as the Adopting Entity. In that role, the Research Center qualifies, trains, and accredits Green Verifiers. For any residential project to be certified, the Research Center requires that all green building practices claimed by a builder must be confirmed through inspection by an Accredited Verifier. The Research Center reviews every verification report and issues the certification to ensure national consistency in the NGBS interpretation and application.

- Score the building using the Green Scoring Tool: Builders, developers and remodelers seeking certification to the NGBS use a free, web-based application that simplifies and streamlines the design and certification process. The Green Scoring Tool is available online and is designed to help builders incorporate green building practices into their projects.
- Hire an accredited verifier who will register the project and obtain a unique Project ID. Currently, there are over 373 Accredited Verifiers in 48 states. The list of Accredited Verifiers can be found online.
- Send the design information to the verifier. If the now-retired online scoring tool was used, choose the Send Data File to Verifier from the Reports option. If the scoring spreadsheet was used, forward that to your verifier and schedule a rough inspection before the drywall is installed.
- Home Innovation Research Labs will send a Builder's Agreement to new builders. Sign the completed rough Verification Report, which the verifier will send to Home Innovation Labs for review.
- Schedule a final inspection with your verifier, and sign the final Verification Report which the verifier will send to Home Innovation Labs for review.
- Home Innovation Labs will review the report and issue a "Home Innovation NGBS Green Certified" certificate, provided all documentation is complete

National Green Building Standard Pricing

	Single Family (per bldg)	**Multifamily Housing (per bldg + unit)**
NAHB Member	$200	$200 + $20
Non-member	$500	$500 + $20

Note: Multifamily buildings are defined as buildings that are not included in the IRC. Row homes, town homes, duplexes, and quads are considered single-family buildings. Multifamily buildings typically have one unit above another. Verification fees are set by the verifier and vary by market.

Land Development Certification Fees

	1 to 10 Lots	**11 to 24 Lots**	**25 or more Lots**
NAHB Member	$1000	$2000	$2500
Non-member	$2500	$5000	$6250

SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES WITH GREEN COMMUNITIES CRITERIA:

Similarities:

- The National Green Building Standard (NGBS) is a quality standard backed up with an extensive technical manual. Both NGBS or the Enterprise Green Communities (EGC) Criteria standard would produce truly green buildings.

- Both programs cover all forms of residential construction type - new construction and rehabilitation of existing buildings – and building typologies – single family and multifamily buildings.
- Both programs include the same environmental performance categories

Differences:

- EGC is designed with more mandatory measures (prerequisites) than NGBS.
- NGBS has fewer mandatory standards and relies on accumulating optional points much more than meeting mandatory requirements.
- EGC has a binary certification, whereas NGBS has four performance levels: Bronze, Silver, Gold, and Emerald.
- The Research Center has developed a Green Approved Products program to complement and help builders comply with the NGBS. Building products are “green approved” when they have been pre-qualified to meet specific green building practices in the Standard. EGC references several standards that will meet the criteria, but does not maintain a list of pre-approved products. Builders hoping to qualify under more than one program will have the task of comparing the technical requirements from different agencies to determine what materials would comply with both.