



Energy performance certificates for commercial properties



Approximately 50% of the carbon dioxide emissions in the UK are accounted for by buildings and their needs for light, power, heating and cooling. Approximately 20% of this figure is generated solely by commercial property and clearly this energy use has both financial and environmental implications.

In an effort to reduce the above, the EU issued the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD) 2002/91/EC. The EPBD came into force on 4 January 2003 with the objective being to promote the improvement of energy performance of buildings within the European community. It is hoped that the implementation of the EPBD will encourage owners and tenants to choose more energy efficient buildings when seeking new accommodation and to improve the performance of buildings they occupy. In addition, all new buildings and those subject to major refurbishment must meet the minimum requirements set out by the EPBD.

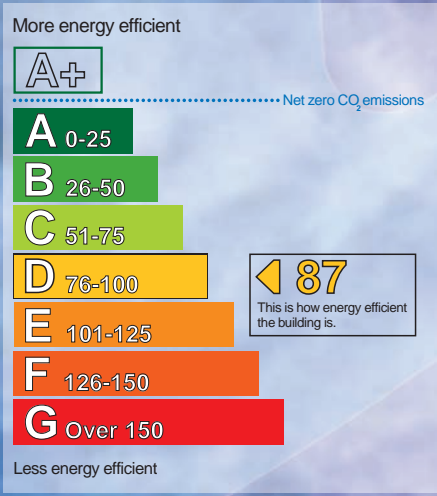


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Energy





In order to allow this process to be developed, Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs) must be made available to prospective buyers and tenants, whenever a building is constructed, sold or rented. A building is defined as "a roofed construction having walls for which energy is used to condition the indoor climate and a reference to a building includes a reference to a part of a building which has been designed or altered to be used separately."

Display Energy Certificates (DEC's) apply to buildings with a total useable floor area over 1,000sqm occupied by public authorities and institutions, providing public services to a large number of persons.


An EPC will provide an energy rating for a building and is based on the performance potential of the building itself (the fabric) and its services (such as heating, ventilation and lighting). The energy rating which is provided on the certificate compares the energy performance of the building, relative to a benchmark of a notional building which can then be used to make comparisons with other properties.

The EPC will be accompanied by a recommendation report, giving guidance on how the energy performance of the building could be enhanced, together with an indication of the appropriate pay back periods.

In creating the requirement for the EPCs, a time frame has been introduced to allow all properties to be assessed as follows:-

Floor Area	Date
Those buildings with a total useable floor area greater than 10,000 sq m	6 April 2008
Those buildings with a total useable floor area greater than 2,500 sq m	1 July 2008
All remaining buildings with a floor area greater than 50 sq m	1 October 2008
All public buildings with a total useable floor area greater than 1,000 sq m will require a DEC	1 October 2008
First inspection of air conditioning units with a capacity greater then 250 kilo watts	4 January 2009
First inspection of all remaining air conditioning systems over 12 kW	4 January 2011





In order to accommodate the extent of the building stock, transitional arrangements have been put in place for those buildings brought to the market prior to the 6 April (>10,000sqm) and 1 July (>2500sqm) which remain on the market after those dates. These allow the requirement for the EPCs to be extended until the 1 October 2008.

The requirement for the provision of the EPC rests with the developer for all new build properties, the landlord for all new leases, the vendor for all sales and the assignor for all lease assignments.

Whilst an EPC will remain valid for 10 years, if a building is modified creating more or less parts that are designed to be used separately and the modification includes the provision or extension of any fixed services for heating, hot water, air conditioning or mechanical ventilation, then an EPC must be undertaken upon completion of the work. Conversely, an internal refit with new heating, hot water, air conditioning or mechanical ventilation would not trigger the requirement for an EPC unless the building were also to be converted so as to comprise more or less parts for separate use.

The directive will be enforceable by Trading Standards, with the penalty for failure to comply set at 12% of the rateable value of the property, ranging from £500-£5000. Where this calculation can not be applied, the fine will be set at £750.

As part of the Sanderson Weatherall building consultancy division's commitment to providing comprehensive timely advice, our chartered building surveyors now have the necessary accreditation to both inspect and provide Energy Performance Certificates on your properties.

This service is offered across our office network in Leeds, London, Newcastle, Manchester and Teesside and from these locations, we have the ability to cover the whole of the country.

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