Spring 2017 Newsletter - TNMP High-Performance Homes Program

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Dear TNMP High-Performance Homes Program 2017 Builders and Raters,

On behalf of the Texas-New Mexico Power (TNMP) High-Performance Homes Program team, we want to welcome you to the new program year! The database is OPEN! Here are some important reporting requirement reminders:

1. Home starts must be entered or uploaded to the database within 45 days of the permit date. Qualifying homes with final inspections on and after October 1, 2016 may be submitted to the 2017 program. Home starts can be easily batch uploaded to the database or you may email a list of your homes starts using the approved template to george.cornwell@icf.com to comply with this 45 day rule.
2. All qualifying homes MUST be submitted to the database for processing within 60 days of the final certification date to the database to be eligible for incentives.

As your partner in this program, we want to help you build more efficient homes that out-perform your competition. We have an Air Sealing and Duct Sealing training webinar coming up to help you tighten your high-performance homes and lower your performance testing scores to be eligible for the Tier incentive dollars! Stay tuned for more details. The ICF Team also offers path-to-performance consulting: an analysis of your current building practices that identifies cost-effective measures that can be performed to help your homes achieve higher energy savings and leverage incentive dollars. Contact us today to schedule a consultation.

We are always looking for builders to participate in our program and to be part of the elite energy-efficient builders in South Houston and Dallas. If you have not yet applied for the 2017 Program, please call or email George Cornwell or Lauren Grochmal to register and enroll.

Did you know we offer Sales Trainings for your sales staff? Now that summer is approaching, it is time to arm your sale consultants with the tools they need to sell and speak to the benefits of energy-efficient measures in your homes. Contact us today to schedule a training!

We look forward to working with you in this new program year. Thank you.

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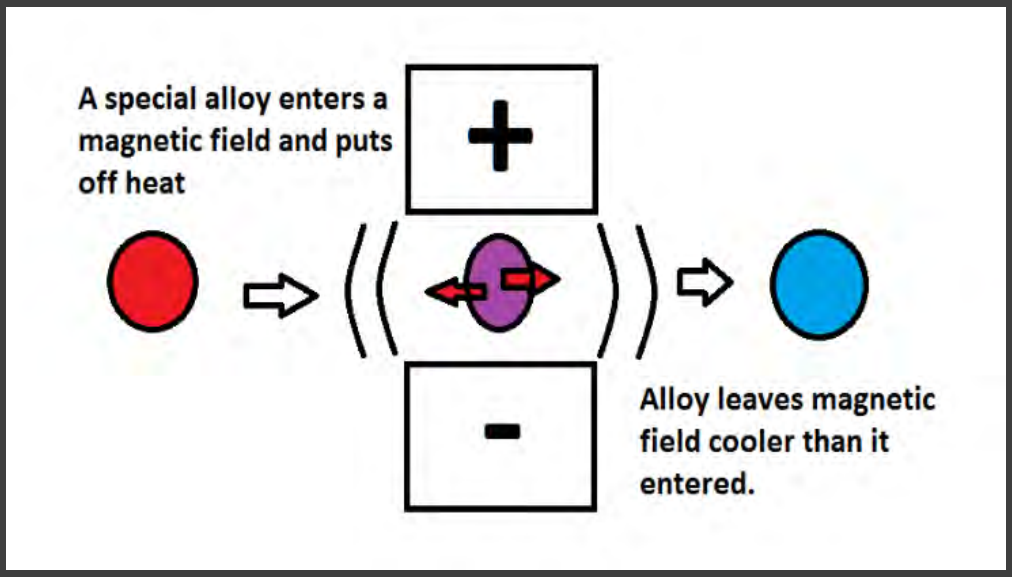

TECH TIP with Tim:
Looking towards the future - Magnetic Refrigeration

With today's building codes bringing the minimum efficiency of a new home up to what was previously considered to be a high-performance home, innovations are required to find new ways of earning the high-performance moniker. That's exactly what the good folks at Oak Ridge National Laboratory are doing with a research project that aims to reduce typical residential refrigerators usage by 25% using a new cooling process called Magneto-caloric Refrigeration.

What the heck is magneto-caloric refrigeration you ask? This technology is similar to a heat pump in that it will move heat out of your refrigerator and into your home, resulting in a cooled refrigerator space. This difference is that the magneto-caloric cycle relies on the heat harvested from a special alloy that emits heat when in the presence of a magnetic field. Conversely, when removed from a magnetic field the alloy cools. By cycling and controlling the magnetic field with a familiar fluid and heat exchanger process engineers have shown this technology has the potential to be a viable alternative to the ubiquitous vapor compression cycle. While the first residential application targeted by this technology is in home refrigeration, the technology could be further developed for use in residential space heating and cooling as well. We're always excited to see new technology improve our homes efficiencies so we'll be keeping our eyes on this one!

Written by: Tim McConkie - ICF Technical Lead

Appraisals Will Soon Include HERS Scores

Among the many factors consumers should consider when buying a home is the cost of ownership -- recurring expenses that are variable and not always obvious. One of those is energy costs, which are estimated to consume up to 4% (roughly $2,200 per year) of the average household's income, *before* taxes. Building more energy efficient homes, however, has helped decrease electricity demand, which was down 1.1% in 2016. That's certainly great news, but many consumers in the market for a home have little or no information on the energy efficiency of homes they may be interested in buying. A new effort by Residential Energy Services Network (RESNET) and the Appraisal Institute, the association of professional real estate appraisers, will make home energy efficiency more transparent to buyers.

New Guide Shows Bad Installs Hurt HERS Scores

Industry pros familiar with HERS ratings are no doubt aware that insulation installation quality impacts their HERS score. However, many often wonder just how much those

installation Grades I through III really impact a given home in their part of the country. To help answer this question, the Insulation Institute just released a new guide which shows the HERS score impact of poor installations on two different modeled homes in each climate zone. Just how significant the impact can be might surprise you. But a guide that just shows the magnitude of the problem would be incomplete without proposing solutions. The second part of the guide is a checklist of recommended practices on how to consistently deliver Grade I installations. This checklist is based on the collected input from top building industry professionals and specifies the role of the builder, HERS rater and contractor in achieving the target in a consistent and repeatable manner.

DOWNLOAD THE GUIDE

UPCOMING EVENTS

State of the Industry Summit
Thursday, April 13, 9:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
Crowne Plaza Addison, 14315 Midway Rd, Addison, TX 75001
Register here: http://web.dallasbuilders.com/events

Bay Area Builders Association Mid-Year Forecast Luncheon
Tuesday, May 2, 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
La Brisa Grill, 501 N. Wesley Dr, League City, TX 77573
Register here: http://www.ghba.org/calendar

Bay Area Builders Association Mid-Year Forecast Luncheon
Tuesday, June 6, 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
La Brisa Grill, 501 N. Wesley Dr, League City, TX 77573
Register here: http://www.ghba.org/calendar

Have topics you are curious about or want to see them covered in this newsletter? Or have general feedback about the quarterly newsletters? Email inquiries and requests to Lauren.Grochmal@ICF.com.