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# What is an EPC/DEC?



# Overview

Buildings are responsible for almost 50% of all energy consumed in the UK; therefore it is vital that we make our buildings more energy efficient. At the forecast rate of building, a large proportion of current buildings will still be in use in 2050, so improving the performance of existing buildings is a particular priority to reduce carbon emissions.

Directive 2002/91/EC of the European Parliament and Council on energy performance of buildings came into force on January 2003. It has more recently been recast in Directive 2010/31/EU. It is intended to raise awareness of energy use in buildings, and thereby influence selection by building owners and tenants and lead to a substantial increase in investment in energy efficiency measures.

The key provisions of this directive are to introduce:

1. Minimum requirements for the **energy performance** of all new buildings and existing buildings subject to major renovation (already implemented through changes to the Building Regulations);
2. **Energy certification** of buildings accompanied by recommendations for cost-effective improvement to be made available when buildings are constructed sold or let. Buildings with a total useful floor area over 500m<sup>2</sup> that are occupied by public authorities, or by institutions providing public services to a large number of people, must have their Energy performance certificate on display in a prominent place and made clearly visible to the public.
3. Regular mandatory **inspections** of boilers and air-conditioning systems. Since January 2009 all air conditioning systems above 250 kW must be inspected, and since January 2011 those over 12 kW must also be inspected by certified air conditioning inspectors. Lodgement of air conditioning inspection reports became mandatory in April 2012.

# Introduction

Since 2008, EPCs and DEC's have been in operation. Energy certificates rate the energy performance of a building. Two types of energy certificate are required in different circumstances:

- Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs) for all buildings when they are constructed, sold or let; and

- Display Energy Certificates (DECs) for public buildings occupied by public authorities or institutions providing a public service to a large number of persons.

EPCs rate the **predicted** energy performance of a building under standard operating conditions whereas DEC's rate the **actual** energy performance of a building under real operating conditions.

# Energy Performance Certificates (EPC)

**Purpose:** to record how energy efficient a property is as a building. Allows prospective buyers, tenants, owners, occupiers and purchasers to see information on the energy efficiency and carbon emissions; so they can consider energy efficiency and fuel costs as part of their investment.

**Applicable to:** all buildings when constructed, sold or let

**Format:** *certificate* showing energy efficiency rating and carbon emissions of a building from A (very efficient) to G (very inefficient) and a *recommendation report* that lists cost effective and other measures (such as low and zero carbon technologies) to improve the energy rating of the building.

**Method:** Produced using standard methods with standard assumptions about energy usage so that the energy efficiency of one building can easily be compared with another building of the same type. The rating only represents the *predicted* performance of the building under standard operating conditions (temperature, occupancy etc.). Actual operation and performance can therefore vary significantly from this. DEC's better represent actual performance, including the impact of the occupants.

**Responsibilities:** the builder or person responsible for the construction is responsible for obtaining the certificate and providing it to the owner once construction is complete.

**Validity period:** 10 years.



## Buildings that don't require an EPC

- places of worship
- temporary buildings that will be used for less than 2 years
- stand-alone buildings with total useful floor space of less than 50 square metres
- industrial sites, workshops and non-residential agricultural buildings that don't use a lot of energy
- some buildings that are due to be demolished
- holiday accommodation that's rented out for less than 4 months a year or is let under a licence to occupy
- listed buildings - you should get advice from your local authority conservation officer if the work would alter the building's character
- residential buildings intended to be used less than 4 months a year

## Display Energy Certificates (DECs)

**Purpose:** To show the actual energy usage of a building (the Operational Rating)

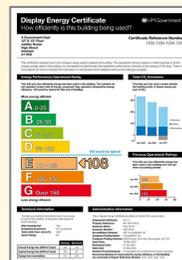
**Applicable to:** buildings occupied by a public authority or an institution providing a public service to a large number of persons AND with a total useful floor area greater than 250m<sup>2</sup>. (the total useful floor area was decreased from 500m<sup>2</sup> to 250m<sup>2</sup> on 9 July 2015). Whilst not obliged to, private organisations can have a DEC produced at their discretion.

**Format:** *Certificate* showing:

- The operational rating on a scale from A (lowest energy consumption) to G (highest energy consumption) and the asset rating (if available from the EPC).
- Historic operational ratings for the building from previous certificates
- A reference value such as a current legal standard or benchmark.
- The unique certificate reference number, the address of the building, the total useful floor area of the building, the name of the energy assessor, their employer (or trading name if self employed), the name of their accreditation scheme and the date when the DEC was issued.

- This certificate should be clearly displayed at all times in a prominent place clearly visible to the public to help the public see the energy efficiency of a building

An *Advisory Report* that lists cost effective measures to improve the energy rating of the building



**Method:** The Operational Rating is based on the energy consumption of the building as recorded by gas, electricity and other meters. Only accredited Energy Assessors can produce DEC's and Advisory Reports

**Responsibilities:** The public authority or relevant institution providing a public service is responsible for displaying a DEC and having a valid Advisory Report for each of their buildings affected by the legislation

**Validity period:** One year (accompanying Advisory Report is valid for 7 years)

**Penalty:** £500 for failing to display a DEC and £1,000 for failing to have possession of a valid advisory report

## Buildings that require a DEC

- Schools and higher education colleges (but not private schools)
- Universities
- Hospitals (but not private hospitals unless NHS patients are admitted)
- Police stations
- Courts
- Prisons
- Leisure Centres (but not private clubs)
- Public golf clubhouses
- Libraries
- Museums and Art Galleries sponsored by Public Authorities



## References and further information

1. <http://www.communities.gov.uk/planningandbuilding/theenvironment/energyperformance/>
2. <https://www.gov.uk/buy-sell-your-home/energy-performance-certificates>
3. <http://www.dfpni.gov.uk/content - energy performance of buildings-decs2>
4. [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/51164/A\\_guide\\_to\\_display\\_energy\\_certificates\\_and\\_advisory\\_reports\\_for\\_public\\_buildings.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/51164/A_guide_to_display_energy_certificates_and_advisory_reports_for_public_buildings.pdf)

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