**May 30, 2006**

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## *System**Vision*** Program Changes

As the seasons and codes change, so do energy efficiency programs. As many of you may have noticed the code, federal regulations and manufactures have been making the products we use in our homes more efficient. In order to stay ahead of this curve, the Energy Star™ program will be increasing its requirements. Because every *System**Vision*** home is Energy Star certified, our requirements are also changing. The new requirements will go into effect on July 1, 2006, and will mean small changes to the products you order and the way you build. The new requirements will apply for any home which has its permit issued after July 1, 2006.

We understand your limitations on cost, and we have performed cost comparisons on all of the items to ensure that upgrade costs do not exceed the grant money you receive from the N.C. Housing Finance Agency. If you find that the funding is not covering your cost, please inform Advanced Energy of the problem.

The changes are listed below, and some changes have a brief description. A complete copy of the new standards can be downloaded from our website (www.systemvision.org).

**Air Tightness of the Home**

This standard will be changing to .30CFM50 per square foot of envelope area.

This change in regulation means the homes themselves will need to be tighter. This may not be a big cause for concern, though. In the past five years that the program has been operating, more than 900 homes have been built, and only eight homes have failed the blower door air tightness test. Extra care will need to be taken when caulking and air sealing to ensure that you stay well below the new target, but we are confident this change will be seamless for most homes.

**Ventilation**
Air cyler or air cycling thermostat is no longer required.

The *System**Vision*** program is removing this item for several reasons, including excessive customer complaints and the possibility of adding additional moisture to the homes. For more information, please contact us. Removing this item should reduce the cost of your ventilation system. The rest of the ventilation system, including the amount supplied, will stay the same.

**Insulation**
R-38 attic insulation is now required for all *System**Vision*** homes.

**Windows**
Lo-E window
U-value </= .35
SHGC </= .38

**HVAC System**
Heat pumps must be 14 SEER with an HSPF of 8.2.
Gas furnaces must be 90 percent efficiency with a SEER of 13.

**Water Heater**
Electric energy factor (EF) of .93
Gas energy factor (EF) of .61

**Appliances**
Energy Star™ rated refrigerator
Compact fluorescent lights

As always, Advanced Energy is here to walk you through this process. If you have any questions or concerns, please give us a call. We will help integrate the new requirements into your process.

## A New Model for Quality Control

We are happy to inform you of the immanent shift away from the *System**Vision*** quality control hotline. Starting July 1, 2006, most participants in the *System**Vision*** program will move to a process that offers more individualized attention and a better response time than calling the quality control hotline. Advanced Energy would like to maintain excellent customer service for all participants as the *System**Vision*** program grows.

Currently, Advanced Energy acts as a clearinghouse for all *System**Vision*** related activities. Builders send plan review forms to us and call the hotline to schedule framing, insulation and final quality control visits. We either schedule internal staff or contact a building performance specialist [BPS] to cover the visits. In the new *System**Vision*** **model**, most builders and developers will work directly with BPS, which means scheduling all quality control visits directly with the BPS. All the BPS organizations listed below have an extensive history with Advanced Energy and are thoroughly familiar with the *System**Vision*** program. After July 1, 2006, Advanced Energy will continue to provide operational support to the BPS and feedback to the participants about their progress in the program.

One of Advanced Energy's primary goals is to make sure this is a smooth transition. Throughout the next few months, we will start teaming you with a nearby BPS. *Until you know which BPS you will be working with please continue to use the hotline*. Although our network is extensive, there are a few participants in areas that our BPS do not cover. Those affiliates are mostly located in the eastern part of the state, and Advanced Energy will continue to serve them as the quality control resource.

Building Performance Organizations working with *System**Vision***
Building Performance Specialists based in Wilmington, N.C.
Energy Solutions based in Lewisville, N.C.
Environmental Building Solutions based in Charlotte, N.C.
Home Energy Partners based in Asheville, N.C.
Southern Energy Management based in Raleigh, N.C.

The *System**Vision*** initiative launched by Advanced Energy in 2000.

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