

## **CHANGES TO THE ONTARIO BUILDING CODE**

At Thermo Seal Insulation Systems, we stay informed on pending and current building code changes, so you don't have to worry. The building code provides relevant information about what is required to meet Ontario Building Standards. As of December 31, 2011, all new building permits (residential and commercial) must adhere to building code changes that resemble the energy efficiency standard of EnerGuide 80.

### **What is EnerGuide 80?**

EnerGuide 80 is a rating of energy efficiency. According to Natural Resources Canada, "An EnerGuide rating shows a standard measure of your home's energy performance. It shows you (and future buyers) exactly how energy efficient your home is." The rating is calculated based on standard operation assumptions so that you can compare the energy performance of one house against another.

The home's energy efficiency level is rated on a scale of 0 to 100. A rating of 0 represents a home with major air leakage, no insulation and extremely high energy consumption. A rating of 100 represents a house that is airtight, well insulated, sufficiently ventilated and requires no purchased energy on an annual basis.

The program started out to assist builders in quantifying the energy efficiency of the homes they built. The Ontario Building Code has since adopted this practice and has determined that all new homes should at least be built to the minimum standard of EnerGuide 80.

### **How Does EnerGuide 80 Compare to Older Homes?**

Homes built under the previous building code were comparable to an EnerGuide rating of 65 to 72. Under the new code changes, you will see improvements made to the requirements of insulation, furnace and hot water tank efficiency, air tightness, and over all energy consumption.

## **BUILDING CODE NEWS - JANUARY 2012**

Whether you're a new homeowner, first time builder or seasoned contractor, this section will provide you with the information you need to stay compliant with building code changes in Ontario.

### **Changes to Residential Building in Ontario**

If you applied for your building permit after December 31, 2011 and are building a home with the intention of having year-round occupation, you will have to meet new standards of energy efficiency in Ontario.

Part 12 of the building code is called "SB12 - Resource Conservation" and it intends to do just that. Until now, Part 12 of the building code was optional for builders wanting to provide their customers with a more efficient home and in preparation for things to come.

### **Complying with Part 12: Resource Conservation**

Part 12 of the building code gives 3 options for compliance: prescriptive, performance and Energy Star built homes. Prescriptive-based compliance provides several charts to outline R-values and efficiency levels that must be met to achieve a rating equivalent to EnerGuide 80. Performance-based compliance requires the use of an approved software such as HOT2000 to meet the rating of EnerGuide 80.

It's up to you to decide which path of compliance you wish to follow. While there are benefits to both methods, it may be easier to follow the guided outline of the prescriptive option. Doing so will guarantee the results of your home's energy efficiency without having to hire an energy advisor to design the specifications to meet an EnerGuide 80 rating.

One downfall of the prescriptive path if you're building in Muskoka is that we see many waterfront homes that contain more than 22% window coverage. The new code states you cannot use the prescriptive model unless you are able to demonstrate the same energy cost usage as a compliance package modeling 22% window coverage.

If the intended use of your home or cottage is seasonal, then you will need to refer to Part 10 of the Ontario Building Code