

Rater Meetings Recap:

A recent round of rater meetings has just concluded. Meetings were held during the last 2 months of 2010 in the following locations; Soldotna, Wasilla, Fairbanks, Anchorage. The following is a recap of the information presented and discussed at the meetings. Raters who were unable to attend these meetings may be able to participate in a conference call or “go to meeting” opportunity to attend future rater meetings organized by their fellow raters.

Notes from AHFC agenda:

- AHFC will be available for, but will not organize future rater meetings. It will be up to the raters to organize and invite AHFC.

Rater renewal:

Future rater renewal requires:

- a current Building Analyst certification through the Building Performance Institute (BPI). BPI establishes standards and CEUs, not AHFC.
- **and** current BEES compliance certificate.

You can view the status of your BPI, BEES, and agreements in the Rater Training Status Spreadsheet (http://www.ahfc.state.ak.us/iceimages/energy/rater_training_status_renewed.pdf).

Those who have not yet renewed their agreement, they will need to meet all of the training requirements that were implemented in 2010 and are described on the Energy Rater web site (http://www.ahfc.state.ak.us/energy/energy_rater_renewal_2010.cfm).

Communication with customers:

- raters are 100% of customer service support. If it is your policy to communicate with customers only via email, make sure the customer knows this **before** they hire you to do a rating.
- In order to comply with the Alaska Energy Rater Manual, Rev. 1, Section 2000.02 requirement to educate customers on AHFC programs, AHFC prepared and distributed informational flyers on AHFC programs to raters who responded to our query. The flyers are also available at the Energy Rater Home Page (http://www.ahfc.state.ak.us/energy/energy_rater_info.cfm , scroll down to “References”) to send via email or print your own. A low-graphic, black & white version is available for easy home printing.

Rater manual updates to note:

- As stated in the Alaska Energy Rater Manual, Rev 1, Section 5001.01, “Minimum Required Technical Elements,” combustion safety testing is required for all energy ratings. This includes ‘as is’ ratings and BEES ratings

- Revision 1 of the Alaska Energy Rater Manual was released January 2011. Revision 0 remained available online through the notification period (3/2/2011) but is no longer available.
 - please review the revision history to learn what changes have been made to the manual.
 - Some information from the previous rater manual has been incorporated into the AkWarm© help menus. Please read through the AkWarm© help menus to be fully compliant with rating procedure.

Commercial/Public Facilities Retrofits

- Alaska Energy Efficiency Revolving Loan Fund program for public facilities is underway.
- CEA/CEM (Certified Energy Auditor/ Certified Energy Manager) certification through the Association of Energy Engineers is required to do audits.
- AHFC has offered subsidized training through Wisdom & Associates and Cascadia. See the AHFC Training Calendar at http://www.ahfc.state.ak.us/iceimages/workshops/training_schedule.pdf .

Funding:

- Funding recommendation has been made to the Governor to continue Energy Rebate Program.
- Legislature will decide how much, if any, funds will be allocated to continue the program.
- AHFC will not know results until after the legislative session ends in April.

Questions/concerns raised during meetings:

Extensions

- AHFC policy is NO EXTENSIONS
- Only Rosie can allow extensions. Extension request must be in writing.
 - Verified illness to participant or military deployment may be accepted reasons for extension.
 - AHFC may allow reasonable time extension to **actively correct** life-safety (failed comb safety tests, ventilation) on case-by-case basis through Rosie. Extension would apply only to life-safety improvements. Homeowner, not rater, must request an extension in writing to Rosie.

Combustion Safety

Will AHFC support an energy rater's decision to with-hold a post rating if the home fails combustion safety test? (AHFC spoke with Vicky Murphy from BPI for clarification and BPI position on shutting down a heating system)

- Customer hires and AHFC dispatches energy rater to generate an energy rating **report**. Energy rater is not an inspector. Energy Rater and AHFC are not enforcement bodies.
- Document testing results and notify/educate the homeowner on the present condition. If the test result indicates an unsafe condition in the home, it is highly recommended that the energy rater have the homeowner *sign a document* verifying the Energy Rater informed them of potentially unsafe conditions.

- BPI Technical standards indicate action items based on combustion efficiency test results. These action items are written with the assumption that you as the Building Analyst or a crew you are associated with will also be doing retro-fit work on the home. If during the testing process an unsafe condition develops in the home, you must turn off the system and bring the home back into a safe condition. Once the home is back in a safe condition, you would restart the system and suggest to the homeowner to turn it off. The homeowner has control of their home. You cannot force a homeowner to turn off a heating system or any other system in their home if they choose not to. Document your test results and get a signature from the homeowner that they received your safety recommendations.
- AHFC policy is to not withhold rating certificate or rebate money from a customer who fails combustion safety test.

Errors on Ratings

AHFC position is that if, during a post rating, the rater identifies errors on an as-is rating they prepared, the rater should take responsibility for that and notify the customer. Make changes and document in the “notes to AHFC” section of the AkWarm© file. Notify AHFC if customer is affected and submit edited rating to James Diemer at AHFC. Have homeowner send in edited ‘as is’ rating with post rating packet.

If the as-is rating was prepared by another rater, note the discrepancies in the “notes to AHFC” section of the AkWarm© file. Input the customer’s improvements into ‘flawed’ rating so the homeowner receives the improvement points they were expecting. Notify James Diemer at AHFC of rater errors and send copy of AkWarm© file for review.

The Alaska Energy Rater Manual, Rev. 1, Section 7001, “Modifying an Energy Rating” contains guidance on editing ratings in AkWarm©.

Ventilation

- Questions about whether or not passive air inlets are required to give credit for exhaust only ventilation system. See ASHRAE 62.2-2010 and the AK amendments.

BEES

- Effective March 9th 2011, the 3 documents that make up BEES are:
 - 1. *Alaska Specific Amendments to the IECC 2009*
 - 2. *International Energy Conservation Code 2009*
 - 3. *ASHRAE Standard 62.2-2010*
- Construction starts beginning after March 9, 2011 must meet the new standards. Beginning of construction is defined as the start of footings, not excavation, not permits, etc...

TEAC Committees

- Raters want to know who the committee consists of and what the outcomes of those meetings are.

- The TEAC is organized and funded by AHFC, at AHFC's discretion, for internal guidance on policies, procedures, etc. The TEAC recommendations are considered by AHFC but AHFC does not guarantee that it will implement TEAC guidance.
- AHFC explained that the TEAC committee members change based upon the topic. For example, the members to review AkWarm© issues will be different than the members necessary to review the rater manual. The results of the TEAC meetings are used to guide updates to the Alaska Energy Rater Manual, AkWarm©, or otherwise address the specific issue that warranted a TEAC meeting. For example, input from the TEAC meeting on the Alaska Energy Rater Manual was considered for Rev. 1 of the Alaska Energy Rater Manual. The AkWarm© TEAC meeting input will be used to prioritize updates and improvements to the software.
- AHFC does not publish TEAC meeting minutes.

Accuracy of Rating Information:

All information contained in the energy rating certificate, cost and features report, and IOR is verified for accuracy. This means rating type, rating date, rater name etc. must be correct. The money used for this program is State Funds. State Funds are subject to AUDITS! on a regular basis. If the information contained in the ratings is not accurate, it is an audit finding. Audit findings must be corrected or justified. ***When an error is discovered on a rating you completed you will be asked to correct it.***

DATA input to AkWarm©:

AO Smith Vertex water heaters are becoming more common in homes. The Energy Factor for the GDHE 50 is .75, the Energy Factor for the GDHE 50-100 is .73.

Navien on demand water heaters are also becoming common in homes. These water heaters do not carry the AFUE sticker, nor listed in AHRI website. They have obtained 3rd party testing verification and the Energy Factors are: NR-240 = .95 EF, NR-210= .95 EF, NR-180= .98 EF

It is AHFC's intention to update AkWarm© Residential to include these data as time allows; all AkWarm© updates are addressed by priority.

AHFC Notes to Raters are archived on the Energy Rater Web Site

(http://www.ahfc.state.ak.us/energy/energy_rater_info.cfm). Scroll to the bottom of the web page to "Notes to Raters."

Rater Meeting Minutes and Agenda that meeting organizers share with AHFC are posted on the Energy Rater Web Page, News & Opportunities," under the "Rater Meeting" tab

(http://www.ahfc.state.ak.us/energy/tech_news.cfm).