

**Summary**

The Nationwide House Energy Rating Scheme (NatHERS) provides a framework for rating the potential energy efficiency of Australian homes. NatHERS defines the minimum set of information that must be used by all software tools. NatHERS approved tools provide one method of demonstrating compliance with the minimum energy efficiency standards for new residential buildings outlined under the Building Code of Australia (BCA).

**Certifying body:** NatHERS

Applicable sectors					Award types				
General civil	Transport only	Buildings	Public realm	Community / precinct	Design	As built	Operation	Planning	Other

<b>Country</b>	Australia	<b>Sustainability criteria</b>	A dwelling can be rated before or after it is built. The rating depends on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- building layout</li> <li>- construction of roof, walls, windows and floor</li> <li>- orientation of windows and shading</li> <li>- local climate considerations</li> </ul>	
<b>Deployment &amp; developments</b>	<p>NatHERS was initiated in 1993 by the Australian and New Zealand Minerals and Energy Council (later the Ministerial Council on Energy) to provide a standardised approach to rating the thermal performance of Australian homes.</p> <p>Originally used by industry to market energy efficient homes, NatHERS was gradually adopted to support regulation of new building standards by some state and territory governments, beginning with the introduction of a minimum four star requirement for new home designs in the ACT in 1995.</p> <p>The first minimum energy efficiency standards for residential dwellings were incorporated into the BCA in 2003. Subsequent updates increased the stringency of residential energy efficiency measures to a NatHERS five star rating using the BCA's thermal calculation verification method (in 2006) and then to six stars (in 2010).</p> <p>The key difference between this software tool and other assessment tools is that it is a regulatory, rather than a voluntary tool.</p>		<b>performance levels, evidence collection</b>	Ratings range on half-star increments up to 10 stars, which depends on allowable energy loads. A five star rating represents good but not outstanding performance. Houses rated at 10 stars are considered thermally comfortable without the need for artificial heating and cooling.
	<b>Applicants</b>		NatHERS is different in nature to other rating and assessment schemes. This system sets national standards for professionals offering assessment services.	
	<b>Support to applicants</b>		General information on the NatHERS system and software accreditation is provided on the NatHERS website.	
<b>Government endorsement</b>	<p>NatHERS is an initiative of Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments through the Ministerial Council on Energy.</p> <p>On 11 November 2011, the Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency (DCCEE)*, as the NatHERS National Administrator, and the Australian Building Codes Board (ABCB), signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) that sets out how both bodies will work together to ensure NatHERS accredited software is suitable for BCA compliance. This MOU will result in the recognition of NatHERS accredited software in the 2012 version of the BCA and remove the current reference to the Protocol for House Energy Rating Software, Version 2006.1, reducing confusion for industry and regulators.</p> <p>The new arrangement will ensure that only software accredited under NatHERS is used for compliance with the energy efficiency provisions for residential buildings in the BCA – thereby maintaining the intended regulatory rigour of the provisions.</p> <p>For regulatory purposes under the BCA, it is not essential for ratings software to be approved under NatHERS, but the ratings software must meet the standards described in the ABCB protocol.</p> <p>*Now the Department of Industry</p>			