

**Florida Green Home Designation Standard  
Of the Florida Green Building Coalition**

**VERSION 5.0**  
July 2007

**1. GENERAL PROVISIONS**

- a. **Purpose.** The provisions of this document are intended to establish a voluntary, state-wide standard for Green Home Designation. This enhances the goal of achieving uniform and meaningful green building designations for residential buildings in Florida.
- b. **Scope.** These standards apply to Green Home Designations for all Florida homes.

**2. OPERATING PRINCIPLES**

- a. Qualification shall be achieved by attaining at least 100 Credit Points. Gained through additional improvements that benefit the ecology, the environment and sustainability in Florida.
- b. A list of qualifying improvement features and their respective Credit Points (Schedule A) shall be maintained by the Florida Green Building Coalition such that the Credit Point list is open to new features through a regular, technical and public review and acceptance process that is defined by this Standard.
- c. The Credit Point features list (Schedule A) shall be organized into general categories, such as energy efficiency, water efficiency, site, health, material, disaster mitigation, etc., such that each feature category has both a minimum Credit Point requirement and a maximum number of allowable Credit Points. To increase diversity, qualification shall require that the minimum credit point requirement be achieved in each of the feature categories with the following exception: A user may elect to increase their total qualification score above 100 by the amount of minimum credit points that are not achieved in any individual category, so long as no category maximums are exceeded. For example, assume a category minimum is 15 but the user elects to achieve only 10 points in that category. In this example, the user may still qualify for the Florida Green Home Designation if their total credit points equal or exceed  $100 + (15-10) = 105$ .

- d. For each home that qualifies for the Green Home Designation, written certification, fully disclosing all the features that qualify the home, shall be provided to home owners and purchasers.
- e. Wherever possible, this Standard will promote the market value of improvements through economic analysis (e.g. there is economic benefit to be gained through improvements which reduce energy use beyond minimum code requirements).

### **3. DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS**

***Credit Points*** – Qualification points assigned to features that improve the environmental, ecological and sustainability impacts of a building.

***Florida Green Building Coalition*** – A non-profit corporation with open membership whose primary mission is to develop and maintain Green Designation Standards for Florida, promote cost-effective, sustainable improvements in the built environment.

***Green Home*** – An energy-efficient home that incorporates multiple environmental, ecological and sustainability features that materially enhance the built environment. (Features such as disaster resistance, excellent indoor air quality, universal design, resource efficient materials, low water use, native landscaping, etc. are considered.)

***Certifying Agent*** – An individual accredited by the Florida Green Building Coalition to evaluate a home with respect to the criteria contained in this Standard for the purposes of certifying that the qualifications for a Florida Green Home Designation have been achieved.

### **4. CERTIFICATION**

- a. Certification of a Florida Green Home Designation shall be accomplished by a Certifying Agent(s) who has been accredited by the Florida Green Building Coalition to evaluate a home with respect to the criteria contained in this Standard.
- b. Certification of a Florida Green Home Designation shall be provided in writing and accomplished in accordance with the provisions of this Standard.
- c. Each Florida Green Home Designation certificate shall include the following:
  - i. The seal of the Florida Green Building Coalition;
  - ii. The signature and typed or printed name of the Certifying Agent providing the certification;
  - iii. The date the certification was completed; and
  - iv. The statement: “This certification is provided by an individual who has been accredited by the Florida Green Building Coalition to perform Green Home evaluations. Any questions, comments, or complaints regarding the individual performing this service may be directed to the Florida Green Building Coalition, Inc.”

- d. Each Florida Green Home Designation certification shall include a disclosure stating the financial interest of the Certifying Agent in the results of the certification.

## **5. ACCREDITATION OF CERTIFYING AGENTS**

- a. Accreditation of Certifying Agents shall comprise full registration and disclosure on file with the Florida Green Building Coalition.
- b. At a minimum, the following information shall be required of, and kept on file for, each applicant for accreditation as a Certifying Agent:
  - i. Full name of applicant
  - ii. Social security number of applicant
  - iii. Permanent mailing address, phone number and, if applicable, e-mail and web page address(es) of applicant
  - iv. Occupation (primary source of income) of applicant
  - v. Employer and length of employment of applicant
  - vi. Statement of applicant's qualifications
  - vii. Agreement to report each certified Green Home to the Florida Green Building Coalition and to uphold the provisions of this Standard.
- c. Accreditation of a Certifying Agent shall also comprise that the Agent complete a course that familiarizes them with the Standard and the role of a Certifying Agent.
  - i. In order to certify points in a particular category of Schedule A, the Certifying Agent must successfully challenge an exam designed to test their knowledge of the category. In lieu of successfully challenging all exams, another agent qualified in that category may be used to certify points.

## **6. BASIS FOR QUALIFICATION**

- a. Each new home qualifying for the Florida Green Home Designation shall meet or exceed the prevailing minimum standards of the Florida Energy Code.
- b. Each existing home qualifying for the standard shall achieve a confirmed Home Energy Rating System index of at least 100.
- c. Each home qualifying for the Florida Green Home Designation shall achieve at least 100 Credit Points in accordance with Schedule A of this Standard.
- d. Each home qualifying for the Florida Green Home Designation shall be certified by a Certifying Agent accredited by the Florida Green Building Coalition.

**7. CREDIT POINT SCHEDULE**

- a. Credit Points shall be assigned in accordance with Schedule A of this Standard.
  - i. Schedule A shall be kept on a public web site.
  - ii. Schedule A shall be available as downloadable files from a public web site.
- b. Revision Procedures for Schedule A**
  - i. Submit application to Florida Green Building Coalition
    - (1) Name, address, contact information and affiliation of proponent
    - (2) Full description of feature seeking placement
    - (3) Technical basis for placing feature on credit point schedule
    - (4) Recommended number of credit points
    - (5) Justification for recommended number of credit points
  - ii. Applications shall be posted for a 30-day public comment period with notification to the general membership and posting of consensus recommendations on a public web site.
  - iii. Following the public comment period, each application and its public comments shall be reviewed by the Florida Green Building Coalition Green Homes Committee, which will make written consensus recommendations to the Board of Directors for each application.
  - iv. The Board of Directors of the Florida Green Building Coalition shall adopt, adopt with modification, or reject each application by consensus, whereby all minority and dissenting opinions are publicly documented.
- c. Revision Cycle for Schedule A**
  - i. The Board of Directors of the Florida Green Building Coalition may revise Schedule A at any time using the above process.
  - ii. All applications for revision shall be disposed of on an annual cycle such that applications received prior to the last working day of December are included in the application review cycle that concludes no later than the last working day of May.

**8. SUSPENSION OR REVOCATION OF CERTIFYING AGENT ACCREDITATION**

- a. **For Failure to Correct Deficiencies.**

If the Florida Green Building Coalition determines at any time that a Certifying Agent has failed to adhere to the accreditation requirements, the accreditation body shall notify the Certifying Agent of the specified deficiencies and shall require that specific corrective action, set forth in the notification, be taken not later than 30 calendar days after the date set forth in such notification.

  - i. In the event that the deficiencies have not been remedied, the Florida Green Building Coalition shall have the authority to immediately begin the process of suspension by issuance of a Notice of Suspension Proceedings. Such Suspension Proceedings shall follow the due process

procedures contained in Section 8.c below. The notice may be appealed in accordance with procedures set forth in Section 9.

- ii. In the event that the specified deficiencies are not corrected within the application period set forth in the Notice of Suspension, a Notice of Revocation Proceeding shall be issued by the Florida Green Building Coalition. Such Revocation Proceeding shall follow the due process procedures contained in Section 8.c below. The Notice of Revocation may be appealed in accordance with the procedures set forth in Section 9.

**b. For Cause.**

Any Certifying Agent accredited by the Florida Green Building Coalition may have their accreditation revoked in any of the following circumstances:

- i. Upon determination by the Florida Green Building Coalition that a Certifying Agent has acted in such a manner as to impair the objectivity or integrity of the accrediting program or harm the reputation of the Florida Green Building Coalition including, but not limited to submission of false information to the Florida Green Building Coalition, or failure to submit to the Florida Green Building Coalition any material information required to be submitted by the Certifying Agent, in connection with obtaining or maintaining accreditation; knowingly or negligently issuing certifications that fail to meet all of the certification criteria; or misrepresentation by the Certifying Agent in advertising or promotional materials of its accreditation status in general or with respect to any service provided by the Certifying Agent.
- ii. Pursuant to any of the express provisions of Section 5 or any of the express provisions of the accreditation application, including but not limited to the following:
  - (1) Certifying Agent does not re-apply at the end of existing accreditation period;
  - (2) Failure to satisfy accreditation requirements on renewal;
  - (3) Investigated and validated consumer complaints;
  - (4) Willful misconduct;
  - (5) Failure to disclose a self-serving interest.
  - (6) Upon expiration of a Certifying Agent's right to appeal, a suspension of accreditation pursuant to Section 8.c.

**c. Suspension/Revocation Due Process**

The Florida Green Building Coalition shall comply with the following due process procedures in considering any suspension or revocation actions against an accredited Certifying Agent.

**i. Notice**

The Florida Green Building Coalition may, at its discretion, initiate a proposed suspension or revocation action against an accredited Certifying Agent by providing the Certifying Agent and the Florida Green Building Coalition written notice of the proposed action sent by certified mail,

return receipt requested, to the last known address of the Certifying Agent. Such notice shall inform the Certifying Agent of the entire basis and justification for the proposed action.

**ii. Contest of Proposed Suspension/Revocation**

A respondent may contest a proposed suspension/revocation by filing a response with the Florida Green Building Coalition within 30 days of receipt of the notice. The response shall contain all pertinent and substantive information and argument that is in contradiction to the proposed suspension/revocation, including identification of all disputed materials and facts. If the respondent fails to file said response within the allotted time, the Florida Green Building Coalition may, at its discretion, suspend/revoke the accreditation of the respondent effective immediately upon written notification to the respondent.

**iii. Hearing**

If the respondent files a timely response contesting the proposed suspension/revocation and requests a hearing, the Florida Green Building Coalition will appoint an independent, unbiased, and qualified hearing officer and issue a decision on the proposed suspension/revocation. The hearing officer will review the notice of suspension/revocation and the respondent's contest. If the hearing officer finds that the respondent's contest has raised substantiated and valid factual argument to the contrary of the proposed suspension/revocation, the respondent shall be afforded an opportunity to participate in an open and public hearing, and to submit additional documentary evidence, and rebuttal argument to any material contained in the original notice of suspension/revocation or developed during the course of the hearing officer's investigation. The notice shall be provided to the respondent by written notice by certified mail, return receipt requested, to the last known address of the respondent at a minimum of 120 days before the scheduled hearing.

**iv. Hearing Officer's Decision**

The hearing officer shall issue a written decision on the proposed suspension/revocation that is based on all the information contained in the hearing record including statements of the factual and legal basis of the decision. If the hearing officer decides to impose suspension or revocation, the decision must include findings regarding all disputed materials, and justification for all findings. A suspension/revocation decision by the hearing officer shall take effect upon the issuance of the hearing officer's decision and the written notification of such decision to the respondent.

**v. No Ex Parte Communication**

No ex parte communication between the parties and the hearing officer shall be allowed.

**9. APPEALS PROCEDURES FOR SUSPENSION OR REVOCATION**

**a. Notification**

The Florida Green Building Coalition shall notify the Certifying Agent and the Florida Green Building Coalition of any and all disciplinary actions.

Additionally, the Florida Green Building Coalition shall clearly notify the Certifying Agent of all procedures and rights to remedy.

**b. Appeal**

- i. In the event that an accreditation application was not approved or the accreditation has been suspended, the Certifying Agent shall have the right, for a period of 30 calendar days after the date of notice, to appeal to the Florida Green Building Coalition.
- ii. In the event that a Certifying Agent's accreditation is suspended following the expiration of the period to appeal a suspension, in the absence of an appeal having been taken, the Certifying Agent shall have the right, at its election, for a period of 30 calendar days after the date of issue of a Notice of Suspension, to appeal to the Florida Green Building Coalition.
- iii. An appeal shall be in writing and sent by certified mail or other method which provides evidence of delivery to the Chairperson of the Florida Green Building Coalition and shall specify the basis for the appeal.
- iv. The appellant Certifying Agent may, at the time of noticing its appeal, request in writing, a hearing. In such an event, the Florida Green Building Coalition shall, not later than 7 calendar days after the filing of the notice of appeal, appoint a hearing officer and notify the appellant Certifying Agent of the date of the hearing, which shall be held as expeditiously as possible, but not later than 30 calendar days after the receipt of the notice of appeal.

**10. REVISION OF FLORIDA GREEN HOME DESIGNATION STANDARDS**

**a. Periodic review.** At least triennially, the provisions set forth in these Green Home Designation Standards shall be reviewed by the Standards Committee of the Florida Green Building Coalition in collaboration with other stakeholders. At a minimum, this review shall include consideration and evaluation of changes in the law, technological innovations, and comments and requests received from interested parties.

**b. Submission of revision and change requests.**

- i. Proposals to change these Green Home Designation Standards may be submitted in writing, at any time, to the Florida Green Building Coalition.
- ii. All proposals to change these Green Home Designation Standards that

meet the criteria set forth in this section of these Standards shall be accepted for consideration and evaluation.

iii. Proposals to change shall include the following:

- (1) Identification of the proponent(s) of the change, including the following minimum information:
  - (a) Proponent(s) full name(s),
  - (b) Organizational affiliation(s) or representation(s),
  - (c) Full mailing address(es),
  - (d) Daytime phone number(s),
  - (e) Signature of primary proponent, and
  - (f) Date
- (2) Specific revisions to the Green Home Designation Standards in a format that clearly identifies the manner in which the Green Home Designation Standards are to be altered (i.e. underline/strikeout format or equivalent). Any proposal to change these Green Home Designation Standards that does not include proposed alteration(s) shall be rejected and returned to the proponent.
- (3) Substantive reason(s) or justification for each proposed change. The lack of substantive justification for a proposed change may result in the return of the proposals to change to the proponent(s).
- (4) Supporting documentation that may be needed for the reasoned evaluation of the proposal.

iv. Proposals to change these Green Home Designation Standards shall be considered and evaluated at least annually.

- (1) The effective date of any annual revisions to these Green Home Designation Standards shall be July 1.
- (2) Only those proposals to change these Green Home Designation Standards that are received on or prior to the last working day of December shall be considered for the revisions to these Green Home Designation Standards that may become effective on July 1 of the following year.

**c. Public Review Process**

i. Revisions to these Green Home Designation Standards shall occur only after the relevant proposals to change these Green Home Designation Standards have been subjected to public scrutiny and comment using the following review process:

- (1) The Florida Green Building Coalition shall appoint a Green Home Designation Standards Revision Committee. This Committee shall be responsible for conducting the periodic evaluation and the annual evaluation of proposals to change these Green Home Designation Standards through a consensus process, whereby both consenting and the non-consenting opinions are documented and



- incorporated as comments into each report or proposal to change.
- (2) Following initial evaluation by the Green Home Designation Standards Revision Committee, proposals to change shall be posted on appropriate Internet web pages for a period of not less than 30 days during which public comment shall be accepted.
  - (3) Following the public comment period, the Green Home Designation Standards Revision Committee shall meet to reconcile public comments with the initial comments of the Committee and, if changes are determined necessary, a final set of recommended changes with consensus comments that considers public comments shall be prepared on each proposal for change.
  - (4) Proposals for change receiving two-thirds majority support from the Green Home Designation Standards Revision Committee after public comment shall be incorporated into a set of revised Green Home Designation Standards.
- ii. The revised Green Home Designation Standards shall be submitted for Board approval no later than 1 week before the March Board meeting for consideration of approval during the meeting. Once approved, the revised standards are to be published on the appropriate internet web pages no later than the end of May each year.