

A SIMPLE GUIDE TO BUILDING ENERGY RATINGS FOR RESIDENTIAL DWELLINGS

With effect from 1st January 2009 any residential dwelling which is offered for sale or rental must have a valid BER certificate available.

What is a Building Energy Rating (BER)?

A BER is a standard calculation of the energy performance of a building, produced by a qualified assessor using procedures including calculation method and software approved by Sustainable Energy Ireland and including a survey of the building. It is rather like the “miles per gallon” or “litre per km” rating for a motorcar or the A to G rating used for everyday household electrical appliances.

Why is there a need for Building Energy Rating (BER)?

The building owner is required to provide the BER to prospective buyers and tenants. BER will, therefore, make the energy performance characteristics of the building transparent to prospective buyers and tenants. As a result, buyers and tenants will be able, for the first time, to take energy performance into consideration in their decision to purchase or rent a building

What happens if I do not get a BER as required by law?

If you do not comply with a BER requirement as per the European Communities (Energy Performance of Buildings) Regulations 2006, you will be liable, on conviction in the District Court, to a maximum fine of €5,000. **Failure to secure a BER certificate at the proper time could hinder or delay the legal completion of a sale or letting or a future disposal of the relevant dwelling.**

What are the consequences of a low rating?

None. The law states you simply have to have a BER certificate if the property is for sale or rent. It does not say that the property must be of a specific minimum rating.

What is involved in carrying out a BER assessment?

Depending on the size and layout of your property the inspection could take up to 3 hours or even more. The rating consists of a visual inspection of the property, taking measurements and photographs and collecting any relevant information supplied by the client. Where possible, access to the boiler and hot water cylinder is required. Assessors are not required to enter your attic or loft space unless it is easily accessible by a staircase.

How long will a BER remain valid for?

A BER for a building will be valid for 10 years from the date of issue, unless there is a material change in the building in the meantime which could affect its energy performance – for example an extension to the building, a significant change to the building fabric or a change in the heating system or fuel used. Therefore if a property which has received a BER is placed on the market within 10 years of that BER being issued, and the property has experienced no relevant alteration in the meantime, then that same BER may be used by the building owner for the purposes of meeting their obligations under the Regulations

Who can carry out the BER assessment?

Assessments can only be carried out by BER Assessors registered by Sustainable Energy Ireland (SEI). BER assessors must have successfully completed a validated training programme that meets the requirement of the Training Specification as set out by SEI. BER assessors must also meet any other requirements set by SEI, including the signing of the Code of Conduct. It is an offence for persons not registered with SEI as BER assessors to carry out a BER assessment service.