



Press release

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Immediate Release

SANEDI reminds building owners to have their buildings rated for energy efficiency

Building owners have two years to comply with new building energy performance regulations, which require a formal assessment of their building energy consumption. On 8 December 2020, the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy (DMRE) gazetted *'Regulations for the Mandatory Display and Submission of Energy Performance Certificates for Buildings'*. As an agency of the Department, the South African National Energy Development Institute (SANEDI) has been tasked with developing, hosting and maintaining a national Building Energy Performance Certificate Register in terms of these regulations.

“SANEDI wants to help ensure compliance with the new regulations, so that building owners are not unnecessarily penalised. Many people may not have heard about the new regulations, so we are determined to inform the public of what they entail,” explains SANEDI’s Barry Bredenkamp, General Manager Energy Efficiency & Corporate Communications. “Ultimately, it must be highlighted that the responsibility lies with building owners to ensure that they are compliant with the regulations.”

What do the new regulations mean?

Certain classes of buildings need to have their energy performance assessed by a South African National Accreditation System (SANAS) accredited inspection body, who will then issue an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC), rating the building from A – G for energy efficiency. “To be compliant, the EPC must be displayed at the building entrance, and a D-rating would typically indicate basic compliance with the Energy Efficiency component of the national building regulations. This first assessment will form the benchmark for the building and give the owner an idea of what needs to be done to improve the rating in the future. Everyone should aim for an A-rating in the longer term,” says Bredenkamp. EPCs need to be renewed every five years, giving building owners the opportunity to improve their energy performance.

Which buildings need to comply, by when?

The current regulations apply to four different classes of buildings defined in the national Building Standard namely; entertainment and public assembly facilities, theatrical and indoor sports facilities, places of instruction and offices with a net floor area of at least 2000 m² in the private sector, and 1000 m² for buildings owned, operated or occupied by an organ of the state. These building must be compliant by 8 December 2022.

Who issues the EPCs?

Building energy assessments must be done by SANAS accredited inspection bodies. However, there are not many of these currently in existence. “Eligible companies need to undergo the application process to be reviewed by SANAS. If application is successful, an on-site assessment team will be sent to assess the company’s compliance with ISO/IEC 17020 and SANS 1544, the two standards that contain the compliance criteria for accreditation. The compliance criteria include, but are not limited to qualifications, experience, training, skills, equipment, and understanding of the EPC standard (SANS 1544) and the accreditation standard (ISO/IEC 17020),” explains Bredenkamp. If the assessment is successful, SANAS will accredit such bodies to issue EPCs to building owners.

Benefits of SANAS accreditation

“While the accreditation process is not simple, it is vital. Having accredited bodies means that building owners can hire reliable, competent companies to perform their assessments and can rest assured that their EPC rating is valid and accurate,” says Bredenkamp. “A stringent quality control system is important, if the regulations are going to be successful in minimising South Africa’s energy use.”

While any company can become SANAS accredited, SANEDI is particularly excited about the potential for SMME development and job creation. “If emerging enterprises can get accredited soon, they will be able to take advantage of being early adopters with a very large potential customer base. We especially hope to see women- and youth-owned businesses take up this opportunity and get involved in the EPC market,” concludes Bredenkamp.

Ends 616 words

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About SANEDI

The South African National Energy Development Institute (SANEDI), established by the Government, directs, monitors and conducts applied energy research to develop innovative,

integrated solutions to catalyse growth and prosperity in the green economy. It drives scientific evidence-driven ventures that contribute to youth empowerment, gender equity, environmental sustainability and the 4th Industrial Revolution, within the National Development Plan (NDP), through consultative, sustainable energy projects. For more information, go to www.sanedi.org.za.