



We Partner to Build the New Clean Energy Economy

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### Media contact:

Kevin Emerson, Utah Clean Energy  
(801) 608-0850, [kevin@utahcleanenergy.org](mailto:kevin@utahcleanenergy.org)

## New Home Energy Standards an \$18 million Boon for Utah's Economy

SALT LAKE CITY -- The state House and Senate adopted the first meaningful update to Utah's home energy standards in seven years today, helping families save thousands of dollars on energy bills and putting Utah on a more equal footing with other states.

The 74 to 0 concurrence vote in the House mirrored the result in the Senate, where lawmakers backed the bill 24 to 0. The bill now goes to Governor Gary Herbert, who is expected to sign it.

Energy efficiency advocates cheered the Legislature's passage of [H.B. 202](#) and credited Rep. Brad Wilson (R-Kaysville), the bill's author, for getting it through the legislature.

"Homebuyers will benefit from new homes that come with energy saving technologies built in, helping them save on utility bills right away and avoid the need for costly upgrades," said Kevin Emerson, Senior Policy Associate for [Utah Clean Energy](#). "And because modern energy codes also reduce strain on Utah's utility grid, everyone benefits from a lesser need to fund new power plants. The bill doesn't include everything we will need to end energy waste in Utah homes, but it is a very positive step forward" Emerson said.

The higher standards are expected to pump about \$18 million into the state's economy over the next 10 years, as new tools to cut energy waste become common, and consumers spend more of their energy savings on other family priorities.

"Updating Utah's home energy conservation standards not only helps secure our energy future and keeps Utah competitive, but most importantly, it spares families thousands of dollars in unnecessary expenses," said state Rep. Brad Wilson. "Every dollar families save heating and cooling their homes is another dollar they can spend on other priorities, spurring growth in the economy and creating new job opportunities," Wilson said.

The near unanimity in the legislature this year marked a significant departure from recent years. For three years in a row, lobbyists for the state's powerful building industry derailed attempts to help families save money.

But this year, strong, visible advocacy by local Utah builders, building code officials and other building efficiency experts who supported the code update made a huge difference.

"Quite a few of us builders recognize that market demand for more efficient homes is growing with no end in sight. Better energy standards are good for consumers and the environment – but they are also good for the construction and real estate businesses too," said Rene Oehlerking, Marketing Director at Garbett Homes.

H.B. 202 adopts a modified version of the recommended 2012 International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) for new homes, which includes:

- Increased air tightness and air leakage verification to cut energy waste through leaky doors, windows, walls, recessed lighting, etc.
- Improved duct sealing and verification of duct tightness to cut energy waste through leaky air ducts
- Flexibility for builders in verifying air leakage and duct tightness
- Improved water pipe insulation requirements
- Improved wood frame wall insulation requirements for Southern Utah
- Preservation of a common energy code compliance method used by many builders

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