

ALABAMA ENERGY AND RESIDENTIAL CODES Q & A

Below are questions as submitted to the Alabama Energy and Residential Codes (AERC) Board regarding the Alabama Energy and Residential Code (AERC), which went into effect October 1, 2012. The AERC is based on the 2009 International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) and the 2009 International Residential Code (IRC) with modifications adopted by the board. To view this code, go to <http://www.adeca.alabama.gov/Divisions/energy/Pages/EnergyCodes.aspx>

If you have questions regarding the AERC, please email your questions to Heather Goggin at heather.goggin@adeca.alabama.gov.

1. **Question:** Can a jurisdiction adopt the energy codes portion of the AERC and continue enforcing an older version of the residential building codes?

Answer: Although all jurisdictions must use the energy codes adopted by the AERC board, they are permitted to continue enforcing the residential building code previously enforced. Jurisdictions may amend the locally enforced residential building code but when the jurisdiction adopts a newer residential building code it must, at a minimum, accept the codes adopted by Alabama Energy and Residential Code Board. In jurisdictions where no residential building code had been previously adopted, the codes adopted by the AERC board are now required throughout the state.

2. **Question:** Can a jurisdiction adopt a more recent version of the ICC codes than what has been adopted by the AERC Board, or would that be considered an Above Code program? What is the intent of the AERC Board in regards to the utilization of the existing and recognized above code programs? Can the AERC Board provide clarification that would streamline the approval process for local code officials, as well as builders and the public?

Answer: The AERC Board has approved minimum energy and residential building codes as per administrative code chapter 305-2-4; however the board does recognize above code programs that exceed the minimum requirements of this code.

3. **Question:** Could you clarify the definitions of “Residential” and “Commercial” building relative to the *Alabama Energy and Residential Code*?

Answer: Correct definitions are to be consistent with the definitions in the 2009 International Residential Code (IRC) and the 2009 International Energy Conservation Code (IECC). Language will be amended in AERC at a future date.

4. **Question:** What certification(s) is required for Duct Testing and is third-party testing required?

Answer: Testing must be accomplished by a Building Performance Institute (BPI), Home Energy Rating System (HERS) or other certified tester approved by the Alabama Heating, Air Conditioning and Refrigeration Contractors (HARC) Board. Third-party testing is not required.

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5. **Question:** If only the HVAC equipment is replaced is testing of the ductwork required?

Answer: *Neither testing nor a Manual J load calculation are required by the AERC adopted Code if only equipment and necessary transition ducts/plenums are replaced.*