



GreenPoint Rated Backgrounder

These days, it seems like everyone's talking about green homes, and for good reason. Environmentally friendly homes not only save resources and money, they can last longer and hold their value better than similarly priced homes. But how can you tell if a home really is better for the environment and healthier to live in?

Enter GreenPoint Rated.

Q: What is GreenPoint Rated?

A: GreenPoint Rated is a program of Build It Green—a professional non-profit membership organization whose mission is to promote healthy, energy- and resource-efficient buildings in California.

Think of GreenPoint Rated as a report card for home construction. A GreenPoint Rated home is graded on five categories—Energy Efficiency, Resource Conservation, Indoor Air Quality, Water Conservation and Community. If the home meets minimum point requirements in each category and scores more than 50 total points, then it earns the right to bear the GreenPoint Rated label. Because GreenPoint Rated homes are evaluated by independent, certified raters, building professionals and homeowners can feel confident that the rating has integrity and value.

Q: Who is behind GreenPoint Rated?

A: The components of GreenPoint Rated have been developed and refined since 2000 by a diverse set of residential building stakeholders including production builders, contractors, architects and designers, multifamily home developers, state and local government leaders, utilities, regional and national building-science experts, suppliers, and green building advocates. The result is a credible and accessible program that has buy-in from a wide array of stakeholders (e.g. Homebuilders Association of Northern CA, California Energy Commission, all four investor owned utilities, etc.) and continues to evolve with an inclusive, transparent, stakeholder driven process.

Q: Why should homebuyers use GreenPoint Rated?

A: GreenPoint Rated removes the guesswork from evaluating a home's green features, allowing homebuyers to compare homes on a level playing field. The GreenPoint Rated label verifies that the home exceeds state building and energy code requirements for health and environmental performance, giving the homebuyer assurance that he or she is getting a healthier, more environmentally responsible home

Q: How does GreenPoint Rating help the building professional?

A: GreenPoint Rated rewards building professionals who design and build green homes by allowing them to brand their products with a recognizable, trustworthy seal of approval. GreenPoint Rated provides validation from a trusted, independent source to support marketing efforts as a green project. Participating in GreenPoint Rated helps builders meet growing consumer demand for green homes as well as outpace their competition.

Q: How does GreenPoint Rated help local governments?

A: Build It Green is working with over 180 local governments throughout California on program and policy development. Build It Green's GreenPoint Rated climate calculator and inspection tracking system provides local governments and policy makers a means of tracking the number and types of green homes built in a particular community. The climate calculator and tracking system quantifies the associated resource benefits (tons of CO₂, gallons of water, KWH of energy, tons of waste, etc.) and provides reports on the associated benefits for the community. The following is a list of Build It Green resources for local governments:

- Public Agency Implementation Toolkit (Model Policies, Staff Reports, Presentations)
- Training for local government staff in green building program implementation
- Policy workshops with Boards, Commissions, City Councils and agency staff
- Climate/Resource Calculator to track resource savings from green building programs
- Green Home Tours with local government sponsorships
- Green Product Directory (online supplier/service provider directories)

Q: Who else benefits from GreenPoint Rated?

A: Real estate agents, financing specialists, appraisers and others who work in fields related to home construction and sales can rely on GreenPoint Rated for assurance that a home is healthier and more environmentally friendly.

Q: What types of homes are eligible for GreenPoint Rated?

A: Newly constructed single family and multifamily homes (low, mid, & high rise) in California are currently eligible for participation. GreenPoint Rated for remodeling and existing homes will be the first green home ratings program with a consumer brand in the U.S and is scheduled to launch in July 2008.

Q: What does the rating process involve?

The GreenPoint rating process is a non-invasive physical examination of building systems, structures, materials and components to assess energy and water efficiency, indoor air quality, resource efficiency of materials and construction methods, and construction quality. The rating process is not intended to be technically exhaustive and should not be relied upon to identify potential construction defects.

Q: What are the points based on?

A: The points in GreenPoint Rated correspond to the recommended green building measures in Build It Green's New Home Construction and Multifamily Green Building Guidelines. Point values are assigned based on their benefits to the homeowner and the environment, and reflect construction practices that exceed California's building and energy code requirements. Any eligible project that achieves the minimum of 50 total points and meets the category-specific point thresholds earns the right to bear the GreenPoint Rated label. Builders that exceed this minimum are rewarded by a higher grade on their projects.

Q: Who does the actual rating?

A: Build It Green trains and certifies independent GreenPoint Raters who are prepared to team up with you to maximize home performance and green features and compile supporting documentation for the rating process. The rater submits verification results on your behalf to Build It Green. There are currently 180 Certified GreenPoint Raters throughout California and 6 out the 7 largest rating companies in the state have been trained and certified. This allows most builders the ability to use existing vendors without having to hire a new rating company.

Q: How does GreenPoint Rated compare to LEED for Homes?

A: GreenPoint Rated and LEED for Homes offer complementary opportunities to the California residential building industry. GreenPoint Rated provides a credible yet accessible point of entry for builders embarking on green building. LEED for Homes offers a national brand for environmental leadership targeted at the top 25% of green home builders, providing market differentiation for the greenest builders. All LEED for Homes projects in California will be able to receive an equivalent GreenPoint Rated score and take advantage of dual branding. Together, the two programs strengthen one

another by encouraging increasing levels of builder participation and greater adoption of green building practices. They provide a local support infrastructure, combined with national recognition.

Q: How can I find a GreenPoint Rater or get more information?

A: For a list of Certified GreenPoint Raters or more information, please visit GreenPointRated.org or call 510-845-0472 ext. 8.