



## Frequently Asked Questions Regarding HBA Partner Agreement

### How does an HBA become a partner with the NAHB Research Center?

Partnership is streamlined and simple. HBAs seeking to partner with the NAHB Research Center may do so by sending a signed copy of the agreement to the NAHB Research Center. The Partner Agreement must be signed by the HBA Executive Officer and the HBA Local President. Notification will occur within a week of receipt of the signed agreement.

### What are the requirements for program partners?

There are five simple requirements for our partners:

1. Endorse the NAHB Research Center as the sole certification agent for the National Green Building Standard to HBA members.
2. Promote the benefits of certification to the Standard prominently, including on your website, in written materials, or by any other means or venue that makes sense.
3. Hold at least one educational session per year for local builders, remodelers, and developers on National Green Building Certification and the Standard.
4. Advocate for the National Green Building Standard as the preferred green rating system in local or state legislative or regulatory arenas where green building mandates or incentives have been adopted or are under consideration.
5. Follow the *NAHB Research Center Brand & Marketing Style Guide* for program logo and materials.

### Why should an HBA partner with the NAHB Research Center?

The demand for green building, whether market driven by consumers or mandated by state and local government initiatives, has been increasing steadily. In the past, local green building programs were able to meet builders' needs for a green building program. Over time, many local HBAs realized that administration of a local green building program was expensive and subjected the HBA to excess liability. In addition, some regulatory and legislative bodies began to question the objectivity and rigor of local programs. As a result, there has been a growing demand for a credible and affordable national program. The ANSI-approved National Green Building Standard provides a credible and flexible green rating system for all residential projects. The NAHB Research Center is an internationally-recognized independent lab and third-party certification agency and has been selected by NAHB to be the sole source for certification to the National Green Building Standard being offered to its members. State and local HBAs can bring tremendous benefit to their local members by promoting National Green Building Certification, powered by the NAHB Research Center. A nationwide network of HBA partners promoting National Green Building Certification can ensure that the Standard remains a viable option for green certification for all builders.

Partnering with the NAHB Research Center can provide the HBA with a stream of non-dues revenue and adds credibility and visibility to local green building initiatives. In addition, HBAs will have access to technical expertise and marketing materials to promote the certification program and the Standard. Partner HBAs will:

- Share in a portion of the certification fee (HBA rebate) for every home the Research Center certifies within the HBA's chartered territory

- Receive program materials and technical support to promote the Standard and National Green Building Certification
- Be offered an HBA-branded version of the Green Scoring Tool at NAHBGreen.org
- Have permission to use the program logo (shown above), presentations, promotional materials, and other related resources

**Does the Partner Agreement prohibit support of Energy Star?**

No. HBAs may concurrently endorse EnergyStar certifications. Energy efficiency is a cornerstone for high-performance homes and many builders who have certified homes through National Green Building Certification started with Energy Star. Further, although the technology and techniques used are equivalent, Energy Star certification is not a requirement for certification through the NAHB Research Center.

**Does the Partner Agreement prohibit the HBA from providing information about other green building programs?**

No. Members rely on their local and state HBAs to be their comprehensive source of information about green building. The Research Center recognizes that there are other national and local green building programs available. We do, however, expect partner HBAs to be unwavering and committed in their endorsement of National Green Building Certification as the sole program that they recommend and support for their members.

**What is the purpose behind the exclusivity/endorsement requirement?**

All green building programs are not equal. NAHB specifically set out to develop an ANSI-approved standard to be rigorous enough to withstand consumer, legislative, and regulatory scrutiny. The NAHB Research Center, an internationally-recognized independent lab and third-party certification agency, was selected by NAHB to be the sole source for certification to the National Green Building Standard being offered to its members.

**Are there any exceptions to the exclusivity provision of the Partner Agreement prohibiting HBAs from supporting other green building programs?**

The Research Center understands that for a few HBAs the exclusivity requirement may pose a challenge because laws or regulations that were enacted at the state or local level, prior to ANSI approval of the National Green Building Standard, confer significant and tangible benefits (e.g., tax credits, streamlined permitting, etc.) to their builder members that use a previously-existing green rating system. The Research Center acknowledges that these circumstances deserve consideration. In these instances the HBA will be eligible to become a program partner provided the HBA is willing to aggressively advocate for the Standard and National Green Building Certification in any future legislative and regulatory discussions. An Amended HBA Partner Agreement may be negotiated between the NAHB Research Center and the HBA.

**Can a builder participate in National Green Building Certification if s/he uses some other certification system (e.g., Earthcraft, Austin Energy, LEED for Homes, etc.)?**

Yes. The National Green Building Standard was developed to provide builders with an affordable, credible, and voluntary choice for green certification in the market. Partner HBAs need not exclude builder members who use other systems of certification from any aspect of their membership outreach. However, partner HBAs are expected to be unwavering and committed in their endorsement of National Green Building Certification as the sole program that they recommend and support for their members.

### **Does program partnership prohibit support of DOE's Builders Challenge?**

No. The NAHB Research Center is a program partner with the Department of Energy for Builders Challenge and has worked with DOE to embed the Builders Challenge program criteria into The Green Scoring Tool so that builders can easily get a Dual Certification with both the National Green Building Standard and Builders Challenge, at no additional cost!

### **How much is the rebate to HBAs?**

At this time, the NAHB Research Center will share with partner HBAs \$50 from every building certified. Partner HBAs will be notified of any changes to this amount in the future, but there are currently no changes planned.

### **Can an HBA choose to relinquish their rebate in an effort to reduce the cost of certification?**

Yes. HBAs may select to surrender or reduce their per-home rebate should they wish builders in their chartered territory to benefit from a lower certification price.

### **How will rebates be allocated between local and state HBAs?**

Rebates will be split as follows: If the home is built in the territory of a local HBA program partner, that HBA will be allocated the rebate. If the home is built in the territory of a local HBA that has not partnered with the Research Center, but the State HBA is a program partner, the state HBA will be allocated the rebate. Zip codes will be used as the basis for identifying the NAHB jurisdictions where certified homes are located and allocating the payment of rebates.

### **Does an HBA partner have to create a local green building program?**

No. National Green Building Certification, powered by the NAHB Research Center, was created to help local HBAs avoid the cost and liability of having to operate its own system. With the ANSI Standard as its base, National Green Building Certification will be a strong, comprehensive, third-party certification system equal in quality and rigor to any other available system. The Standard is flexible enough to accommodate any climate zone – the flexibility of the program is one of its strongest points. Creating an equivalent program is an unnecessary expense and presents additional liability for local HBAs.

### **What are the certification costs?**

As of March 1, 2010, National Green Building Certification fees are as follows:

#### **Single-Family Certification Fee:**

\$200 per home, NAHB members

\$500, NAHB non-members

#### **Multi-Unit Certification Fee:**

\$200 per building + \$20/unit, NAHB members

\$500 per building + \$20/unit, NAHB non-members

#### **Remodeling, Renovation, and Addition Certification Fees:**

Follow single-family certification fee or multi-unit certification fee, as relevant

**Land Development Certification Fees:** No member discount. Price is for Letter of Approval or Final Certification. Developers who desire both must pay the fee for each certification review.

\$1,000 for 10 lots or less

\$2,000 for 11-24 lots

\$2,500 for 25 or more lots

### **Will the NAHB Model Green Home Building Guidelines sunset in the near future?**

Yes. The NAHB Research Center will not accept any rough inspections to the NAHB Model Green Home Building Guidelines that are conducted after **June 1, 2010**. Final inspections to the Guidelines must be completed and submitted to the NAHB Research Center by **September 1, 2010**.

### **Are there Exemptions to the Guidelines sunset date?**

Builders who have started building a development with multiple houses and have committed to getting all homes in the development certified, may continue to certify to the Guidelines until that phase of the development is completed or until December 31, 2011, whichever comes first. Builders seeking to be grandfathered for certification to the Guidelines must have certified at least one home in the current phase of the development by June 1, 2010. Builders seeking to be grandfathered in must contact the NAHB Research Center prior to May 1, 2010, so the specifics of the development and the exception to the Guidelines sunset can be confirmed in writing prior to June 1, 2010.

Builders who have completed a rough inspection by June 1, 2010 but, due to unique circumstances (e.g., complex finishes that require more than 3 months to complete, extreme weather delays), will not be able to have the final inspection submitted by September 1, 2010, may appeal for an extension (via the "Contact Us" form at [www.nahbgreen.org](http://www.nahbgreen.org)). Requests for extension must be made by August 1, 2010.

An announcement of the Guidelines sunset date has been placed on the NAHBGreen.org website. A notice of the sunset date has also been placed on the Green Scoring Tool landing page, and a warning of the deadlines connected to Guidelines-based certification appears when someone attempts to create a new project under the Guidelines. The scoring tool will no longer accept new projects scored to the Guidelines after April 1, 2010. The scoring tool will allow existing Guidelines projects to be edited until June 1, 2010. Guidelines projects will remain available on the scoring tool for until January 1, 2011.