



# National Green Building Certification

## Land Development Certification to the Standard

The National Green Building Standard (ICC 700-2008), which is an ANSI-approved, consensus-based standard, provides a menu of green building land practices for developers to plan green communities. These practices, when employed in land design and development, will reduce the potential environmental impacts of a residential or mixed-use community. The Standard offers four levels of certification for residential developments: One-Star through Four-Stars. With each successive level, the community has to employ a greater number of green practices, and therefore the development will have a smaller environmental footprint.

### Green Certified to the Standard

The NAHB Research Center serves as the certification agent for the National Green Building Standard. As an independent research and testing organization, the Research Center has the capacity, expertise, and credentials to ensure consistency, rigor, and credibility for the certification process.

Chapter Four of the Standard contains green practices that developers can select to incorporate in the design and construction of their green communities. For a land development to be certified to the Standard, the developer must incorporate a sufficient number of green development practices to obtain the desired level of certification. For example, a One-Star Development must earn 79 points, while a Four-Star Development needs a minimum of 175 points.

### Market Your Green Community to Builders and Home Buyers

Developers may have a new or existing development certified as a whole or in phases. Developers may also get a Letter of Approval after a Design Review but before development work is started. The Letter of Approval will indicate that the development is eligible to be green certified if constructed in accordance with the plans; it allows the developer to market the community as such and use the "National Green Building Certification In-Progress" logo immediately.

### Help Builders Construct Green Certified Homes

Land development certification is completely independent of the home or building certification that is discussed in Chapters Five through Ten of the Standard. A developer who selects to have the land development certified does not have to have any of the homes within the development certified, but he certainly can choose to do so. Further, the land development practices in Chapter Four are generally independent of the Chapter Five green practices for lot

design that are required for green certification of a building. However, a number of green land practices for which developers can obtain points in Chapter Four can help builders obtain the points necessary to ultimately get the home certified. For example, if a developer uses a natural resources inventory to create the master site plan for the development, often that inventory is appropriate for achieving points for the lot design if the builder selects to have a home certified green. As a result, developers that achieve certification for the development may make it easier for the homes ultimately built within that development to be certified. Some developers even use the development certification to market their lots to builders as being “green-ready.”

## Streamlined Five-Step Certification Process

It is not necessary to use The Green Scoring Tool to score green land development projects. Instead, download the [Land Development Excel Spreadsheet](#) and follow the directions provided to score a green land development project.

**Step 1**—Download the [Land Development Excel Spreadsheet](#). Use the “Scoring & Verification” worksheet to score the development according to the Standard. You should refer to the Standard for more detail on each of the practices. Record the points for each practice to be used in the “Points Claimed” column of the worksheet. Add any explanatory notes in the “Developer’s Notes” area at the end of each major section.

**Step 2**—Note the required/expected documentation as listed in the “Documentation Required” column and be sure to have that available for the verifier.

**Step 3**—Hire a local NAHB Research Center Accredited Verifier to complete the Design Review verification. You can find an Accredited Verifier online: [www.nahbgreen.org/WholsGreen/findverifier.aspx](http://www.nahbgreen.org/WholsGreen/findverifier.aspx).

**Step 4**—If a Letter of Approval is required, the Verifier will submit the report to the NAHB Research Center and the Developer will be invoiced for the required fee.

**Step 5**—After each phase is completed, the NAHB Research Center Accredited Verifier can complete the Field Inspection to obtain the green certification.

For more information, please contact us at [www.nahbgreen.org/ContactUs](http://www.nahbgreen.org/ContactUs).