



# NEWS RELEASE

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**QUALITY ASSURED ENERGY RATINGS ARE A SOLID FIRST STEP  
Now we need some real incentives to encourage households  
to cut their carbon emissions, says the NHER**

The National Home Energy Rating (NHER) scheme for energy assessors is calling for even stronger financial incentives to back up the introduction of Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs) next June.

Responding to the announcement yesterday from Housing Minister Yvette Cooper, Austin Baggett, Head of the NHER scheme, says:

“Energy labels alone can’t achieve market transformation. We need to make it simpler and cheaper for households to take action and cut their carbon emissions. While the green mortgages that the Minister talked about are to be welcomed, we actually need the Government to be resolute and bring forward stronger fiscal incentives to encourage home owners to improve their energy rating.

“For starters, giving new home owners a rebate on the stamp duty they have paid if they take up the low cost measures recommended on the EPC would encourage action. Climate change requires tough decisions and we need the Treasury to stop dragging their feet and respond to the challenge.

“The energy efficiency of our housing stock is dreadful and take up of improvement measures has been painfully slow to date. For instance cavity wall insulation is one of the most cost-effective actions you can take. It can reduce heat loss through the wall by 60% and it can pay for itself in less than two years. And yet, of the 15 million homes with cavity walls, a staggering 10 million or so still don’t have any insulation in them.

“For a typical 1930s three bedroom semi-detached home, installing low cost measures such as loft insulation, a good fitting hot water cylinder and cavity wall insulation will save the householder £360 a year in fuel costs and will cut nearly 3 tonnes of carbon dioxide a year. Taking this action would be reflected in their home’s energy rating too – the home would move from an ‘F’ rating to a ‘D’ rating.”

Austin Baggett welcomed the Minister's confirmation that only professionals who are fully qualified and audited by a certification scheme will be allowed to prepare Energy Performance Certificates – including home inspectors and others who have trained as specialist energy assessors.

The Government says that it will need between 2,500 and 4,500 such people in place by June 2007. NHER estimates that there are many thousands of professionals who have been trained in energy rating, many of whom have been delivering home energy ratings since the early 1990s.

Commenting on the Government's announcement that the new national qualification for energy assessors will be ready by next February, Austin Baggett says:

“That qualification must be of the very highest standard if the energy assessors are to provide high quality advice to householders on the carbon and fuel cost savings that can be achieved. It is also right that energy assessors should be put under the same rigorous certification scheme requirements as home inspectors.”

## **ENDS**

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## **Notes to Editors**

1. National Energy Services (NES) owns and operates both the NHER scheme and SAVA. Since the company was launched in 1994, the NES team has grown to over 60 people, including software developers, environmental scientists, building services engineers, building physicists, business management specialists, statisticians and residential surveyors. NES is a trading subsidiary of the National Energy Foundation, an independent charity set up in 1988 to promote energy conservation and provide help to improve energy efficiency in residential buildings.
2. The National Home Energy Rating (NHER) scheme provides technical and business support for individuals and organisations involved in domestic energy efficiency. [www.nher.co.uk](http://www.nher.co.uk)
3. SAVA is a leading provider of training and software to Home Inspectors. As confirmed by the Housing Minister on 21 September 2006, SAVA will be the first certification scheme for home inspectors. [www.sava.org.uk](http://www.sava.org.uk)