



Department for
Communities and
Local Government

Making Better use of Energy Performance of Buildings Data

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Introduction

A copy of the Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) issued for buildings is lodged on a national register as a requirement of the Energy Performance of Buildings (England and Wales) Regulations 2012 (SI 2012/3118, as amended) (the Regulations).

The Department for Communities and Local Government (the Department) appreciates the value of information about the energy performance of buildings and believes it is in the public interest to make the data from the EPC and some of the information collected as part of the energy assessment publicly available. Information which is held on the registers may also be shared with specified bodies for specified purposes. Further information about the ways in which EPCs and other data held on the registers are made available to others is set out below.

The Department recognises that some holders of EPCs for domestic and non-domestic buildings may have concerns about information relating to their buildings being made public. The Regulations permit holders of EPCs to 'opt-out' of having the data from their certificates disclosed publicly. Further details about the opt-out, including how to opt out, are set out below.

Public access to the EPC

The online search function allows anyone to input the address or postcode of the building and retrieve the EPC for that building if there is one, unless the owner or occupier has opted out. Where the owner or occupier of the building has exercised the opt-out, the EPC can only be retrieved via the online search function if the person inputs the report reference number provided to them by the energy assessor or through someone already in possession of the EPC (for example, the seller, the landlord or estate agent). EPCs have been available online since 2012.

Public access to energy performance of buildings data in bulk format

As well as allowing access to individual EPCs, the regulations allow access to what is referred to as bulk access data. The term bulk access data includes both the data which can be found on the face of an EPC and the underlying data used to produce the EPC which is also held on the register. The term bulk access data is also used to refer to data records for multiple buildings in one electronic file. Except where an EPC holder opts out, certain bulk data for domestic buildings is being made available online to the public from June 2016 at: <http://opendatacommunities.org/>. Further information, including a list of the data items which are being made available and a privacy impact assessment, are available at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/510273/EPB_data_privacy_impact_assessment.pdf

Because the data contains address data in which the Royal Mail Group Limited has intellectual property rights, users are required to comply with the terms of a Royal Mail copyright notice which limits the purposes for which the data can be used to purposes relating to the energy efficiency of buildings.

The department has previously published bulk data for non-domestic buildings on the Open Data website: <http://opendatacommunities.org/>

Opting out of having your EPC and the underlying data made publicly available

The owner or occupier of the building to which the data relates may opt-out of having the EPC and the underlying data made publicly available by notifying the keeper of the register that the data is not to be disclosed. The owner or occupier may withdraw the 'opt-out' in the same way. Both may be done here, <https://www.epcregister.com/opt-out/>. In order to validate your 'opt-out' or 'opt-in' request you will need to provide additional personal details. This information is collected for legal purposes and will be held in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and not be disclosed to any third party.

Sharing of bulk access data with other bodies

The regulations also allow the person who operates the register to share data which is held on the registers with bodies listed in the regulations for certain purposes as follows.

- With local authorities and other enforcement bodies for enforcement purposes and the prevention and detection of crime;
- With energy assessor accreditation schemes and Government for quality assurance purposes;
- With Government to enable it to carry out its duties under the regulations;
- With Government and the Office for National Statistics for statistical and research purposes. Any research or statistics derived from data shared cannot be published at address level;
- With Government and the Green Deal ombudsman for purposes related to the Government's Green Deal Scheme;
- With Government departments and OFGEM for purposes related to the Government's renewable heat incentive scheme.

It is not possible to opt out of having the EPC or the underlying data for your building shared with the bodies listed above for the purposes listed above (other than where data is shared for purposes related to the Renewable Heat Incentive scheme). This is because it is important that all of the data held on the register can be shared with these bodies for these specific purposes.