

The Renewable Energy Centre Concerned about Delay of Energy Performance Certificates

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the renewable energy centre

saving money, saving energy and saving the planet

Following the announcement that the launch of Home Information Packs, including the key Energy Performance Certificates, will be delayed until 1st August, The Renewable Energy Centre voices its concerns about the resulting impact on the UK's fight against climate change.

It was announced by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government Ruth Kelly last month that the controversial Home Information Packs (HIPs) due to launch on June 1st have been delayed until August 1st due to a legal challenge from the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS).

The HIPs contain essential information on a property and were originally devised as a way of tackling the problem of transactions that collapse close to completion, causing stress and financial loss to potential buyers. Documents including title deeds and drainage searches are included in the packs in addition to the Energy Performance Certificates, summarising the energy efficiency of the property based on an assessment by a qualified inspector.

The RICS's contention was that the Energy Certificates should be allowed to be up to 10 years old as permitted by the EU Directive, rather than up to 3 months old as required in HIP's regulations.

The resulting court order prevented the introduction of EPC's on 1st June and in response Kelly stated that "the Government believes that introducing the Home Information Packs without Energy Performance certificates would be neither practical nor acceptable"

Therefore it was agreed that HIPs and EPCs would be jointly launched on August 1st, and initially only for 4 bed-roomed properties. These properties are thought to account for under a fifth of UK homes and were selected for the first phase of the initiative as they are believed to be the most energy inefficient.

Richard Simmons from The Renewable Energy Centre stated "Households are responsible for over a quarter of UK carbon dioxide emissions which is why it is so important that the Energy Performance Certificates are introduced as soon as possible for homes of all sizes. The certificates will play a vital part in encouraging homeowners to make their house more energy efficient as well as giving practical suggestions that will lead to savings on fuel bills.

He continued “We are greatly disappointed that the huge potential benefits of the Energy Performance Certificates have been significantly diluted by the ruling only to impose it on properties with 4 bedrooms. This classification can be easily avoided by sellers advertising the 4th room as a study or similar and we can only begin to wonder after August 1st just how many sellers will choose to include a full Home Information Pack with their property”.

The government also made further alterations to the HIPs regulations in response to the RICs challenge. As a temporary measure, the government has permitted Energy Performance Certificates to be up to twelve months old when the property is put up for sale and plan to consult further on the long-term arrangements. Sellers are also only required to have commissioned a pack before they put a property on the market, as opposed to waiting until they have a HIP in place.

The government stated that the packs will be going ahead on August 1st, phasing in smaller and rented properties as soon as resources allow, and have planned to assess what further steps and alterations may be needed reduce carbon emissions at the end of this year.

Notes for Editors:

www.therenewableenergycentre.co.uk

The Renewable Energy Centre: Saving Money, Saving Energy and Saving the Planet

The Renewable Energy Centre is committed to informing all online users about energy saving and renewable energy in order to:

- increase public awareness through accurate and informative resources
- create business opportunities throughout the UK through its' local and national directories.

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