



## **MEDIA RELEASE – 23 April 2020**

### **WA government must not delay on home energy improvements**

Consumer, community and industry groups have today called on the Western Australian government to reconsider its decision to delay the enforcement of key changes to construction provisions on energy efficiency.

The 2019 changes to the National Construction Code were designed to close a loophole that is leading to homes built well below the national 6-star minimum standard.

The government has announced that it will delay the implementation of the provisions by a further 12 months.

“Western Australia is lagging behind every other state and territory on home energy performance – and it is WA residents who will end up paying the price,” said Rob McLeod of Renew.

“Whatever marginal savings will be made by big industry through this decision will be paid for many times over by residents through higher energy bills.

“What’s more, worse energy performance will mean worse health, less comfortable homes, and higher greenhouse gas emissions.

“This will further undermine confidence in a housing sector which has taken a hit due to the COVID-19 pandemic.”

A recent Commonwealth pilot study found that Western Australia had the worst building shell rating in the country. WA homes rated little over 1 star out of a possible 5 on the residential scorecard.<sup>1</sup>

The building industry has had over 12 months to prepare for these changes.

Unfortunately, any delay will mean that homes built now will perform poorly for decades.

Responsible builders around the country are improving their energy efficiency practices and building the climate resilient homes that we need. The community and many sectors of the construction industry strongly support building standards that reduce bills and make homes safe and healthy.

“If WA government and industry are dragging their feet on modest energy efficiency changes now, it just makes it all the more clear that we need a serious improvement in energy standards to at least 7 stars when the code is revised in 2022,” said McLeod.

“Industry shouldn’t be dragging its heels – especially at this time. Energy standards need to rise, and with the downturn in the construction industry this is a good time for them to deliver good outcomes not only for industry but for the community,” said Michelle Mackenzie, CEO of Shelter WA.

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<https://www.energy.gov.au/sites/default/files/Residential%20Efficiency%20Scorecard%20Research%20Pilot%20Evaluation%20Report%202019.pdf>, p16

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