



# PEARL CERTIFICATION

Information Guide For Home Inspectors

Make Energy Visible



Monroe County  
Richmond County  
Tompkins County



**NYSERDA**



# INTRODUCTION | Pearl Certification Pilot



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## How to join the Pearl Certification Pilot:



### LEARN

about the Pearl Certification Pilots



### APPLY

to be considered in the competitive selection process.

[Apply here.](#)



### TRAIN

with Pearl Certification

If your application is selected, Pearl will contact you to schedule training.

# INTRODUCTION | The Pilots



## Pearl Certification for **HOME BUYERS**

NYSERDA's pilot supports licensed home inspectors, who will provide ratings during the pre-purchase inspection to help home buyers learn more about their new home's energy features.

## Pearl Certification for **HOMEOWNERS**

NYSERDA is helping home energy contractors use home energy ratings as a sales tool to encourage current homeowners to invest in energy efficient upgrades.

# PEARL HOME CERTIFICATION | About Pearl

Pearl's building science-based certification system helps homebuyers understand how a home performs, and gives them guidance via the Home Investment Plan on how to make it perform better.

The Pearl system gives points for each high-performing asset in a home. High-performing assets make a home more healthy, comfortable, and energy efficient. **Assets are split into four categories:**



**Building Shell**  
300 possible points



**Heating and Cooling**  
360 possible points



**Baseload**  
240 possible points



**Home Management**  
300 possible points

## A home's certification level depends on the number of points it earns:

**Pearl Asset Certification** A home with Pearl Certified Assets has one or many energy efficient characteristics.



**Pearl Silver**  
700 points

A home with good building shell (e.g., insulation), or heating and cooling features, will typically qualify for Pearl Silver.



**Pearl Gold**  
825 points

Similar to a home built to modern energy code, a home that has both a good building shell and heating and cooling systems will usually qualify for Pearl Gold.\*



**Platinum**  
975 points

In addition to a good building shell and heating and cooling systems, a typical Platinum home will have efficient appliances, lighting, and energy monitoring devices like a smart thermostat.\*

*\* A blower door test confirming air-sealing is required (NYSERDA can supply this service for inspectors).*



# PEARL HOME CERTIFICATION | Home Investment Plan

Each Pearl Certification Report includes a personalized Home Investment Plan, which identifies different upgrades a homeowner could undertake and the possible impact of those upgrades on the home's certification level.



## In This Report

### PACKAGE RECOMMENDATIONS

Upgrades Include	Existing	Limited Shell Package	Comprehensive Shell and HVAC Package
 <b>Attic / Roof Insulation</b>	R-19 Fiberglass - Batt	R-49 Cellulose - Loose Fill	R-49 Cellulose - Loose Fill
 <b>Wall Insulation</b>	R-7 Fiberglass - Batt		R-14 Cellulose - Dense Pack
 <b>Floor and Foundation Insulation</b>		R-15 Fiberglass - Batt	R-15 Fiberglass - Batt
 <b>Air Sealing</b>	✓	✓	✓
 <b>Heating Systems</b>	Gas central furnace AFUE : 80.0		Gas central furnace AFUE : 96.0
 <b>Cooling Systems</b>	Central air conditioner Efficiency (SEER) : 10.00		Central air conditioner Efficiency (SEER) : 16.00
 <b>Lighting</b>	✓	✓	✓
 <b>Energy Management</b>	✓		✓
<b>Potential Pearl Points*</b>	625	710	837
<b>Potential Pearl Tier</b>	Certified Assets	Silver	Gold



Pearl Certification Home Investment Plan - Page 2

Sample page from the Home Investment Plan

# PILOT OVERVIEW | Benefits to Home Inspector

## Pearl Home Certification provides benefits to your business

- Add value for your customers by offering a snapshot of the home with a path to increased comfort and improved energy efficiency.
- Inform customers using Pearl's personalized, targeted recommendations.
- Access sales and marketing materials exclusively for Pearl Advantage Network Providers to help you stand out from the competition.
- Create lifetime engagement opportunities with your customers.
- Be a member of the best-in-class Pearl Advantage Network.

## Joining the pilot can help you:

- Capture new customers who learn about ratings via NYSERDA-sponsored marketing and promotional efforts.
- Position yourself as a market leader.
- Leverage Pearl's 3<sup>rd</sup>-party quality control to increase credibility with your customers.



### COLLECT

information about the home's envelope, heating, cooling, and more.



### REPORT

the information to the homeowner via a Pearl Home Investment Plan and Pearl Certification.



### REPEAT (Optional)

complete an updated certification after the new homeowner makes energy efficiency upgrades. NYSERDA will offset the cost for this.

# PILOT OVERVIEW | Benefits to Customers

## Pearl Certification's home asset inventory provides benefits to your customers

- Visual, easy to understand home efficiency score and home asset report
- Trustworthy certification backed by 3rd-party quality control
- Personalized Home Investment Plan with a clear path to a healthier, more comfortable home
- Empowering recommendations, so that as the homebuyer becomes the homeowner, the report supports home improvement decisions that include improving the energy efficiency of the home

## Recommended energy efficiency improvements can help your customers achieve:

- More comfortable homes that are warmer in the winter and cooler in the summer
- Lower utility bills throughout the year
- Less pollen, dust, mold and other irritants in the home
- Less humidity indoors
- A healthier planet for everyone



### SCHEDULE

A home energy rating with a Pearl Pilot Provider



### REVIEW

The home's Pearl Certification report and Home Investment Plan



### UPGRADE

the home based to be more energy efficient based on Pearl's report



# PILOT OVERVIEW | Roles and Responsibilities



- Provide administrative and financial support
- Coordinate and educate pilot participants and community members
- Reimburse home inspectors for training & ratings
- Report on pilot learnings and outcomes



- Train home inspectors
- Mentor new inspectors
- Provide quality assurance
- Deliver technical support



**Pearl Certification  
Pilot Provider**

- Integrate Pearl Home Certification into inspection process
- Refer customers to the pilot
- Use Pearl's Home Investment Plan to detail improvement options
- Document ratings
- Share feedback and experience with NYSERDA



# PILOT OVERVIEW | Reimbursement Overview

## Training

Training incentives are provided to home inspectors selected during the competitive application process.

## Delivering Pearl Home Certifications

Funds are available to partially or completely cover the cost of delivering certifications.

NYSERDA's reimbursements and incentives will decrease over the course of the pilot. As the ratings become in-demand in the pilot markets, inspectors will determine customer pricing.



[Click here](#) to view the current funding opportunities page on NYSERDA's website for more details about training and incentives.

# RESOURCES | Learn More About Pearl Certification Pilots

To increase demand for Pearl Certification, NYSERDA has created materials to advertise Pearl Certification in your area. NYSERDA has also created educational materials for your customers that are interested in learning more about the program. NYSERDA marketing support includes:

**[DIGITAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN](#)**

**[TAILORED HOMEOWNER FAQ](#)**

**[INFORMATION GUIDE FOR HOMEOWNERS](#)**

**[INFORMATION ABOUT INCENTIVES AND FINANCING](#)**

The Pearl Certification Pilot for homebuyers will begin this Fall. An informational webinar will be hosted for each round of applications. If you're interested in learning more, click on the links below to check out these resources, or feel free to contact NYSERDA or Pearl with any questions or comments.

**[VIEW CURRENT FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES PAGE FOR APPLICATION AND WEBINAR INFORMATION](#)**

**[VISIT THE RATING PILOT WEBPAGE](#)**

**[VISIT PEARL'S WEBSITE](#)**

**[EXPLORE EXAMPLE CERTIFICATIONS](#)**

Still have questions?

**Email us at [HomeScore@nyserda.ny.gov](mailto:HomeScore@nyserda.ny.gov)**

# ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

## Types of Homes

At this time, only single-family homes, duplexes, and townhomes can be scored. Multifamily units, condominiums, and manufactured homes cannot be scored.

## Occupant Behavior

A defining feature of Pearl Certification is that it allows different homes to be compared to each other. If the score included information about users, like home temperature or the number of people living in the home, the score would not be comparable between homes. Instead, the score only considers a home's characteristics.

## Pearl Home Asset Inventory

The Pearl asset inventory includes features like:

- Air sealing
- Insulation levels and installation quality
- Heating and cooling equipment efficiency and installation quality
- Water heater efficiency
- Duct location and leakiness
- Window, door, and roofing characteristics
- Appliance efficiency
- Lighting types
- Thermostat and energy management
- Renewable energy production

## Pearl Advantage Network Providers

Pearl Advantage Network Providers have received special training on performing the Home Performance Asset Inventory and are the only inspectors approved to deliver Pearl Certifications as part of the NYSERDA program.

They abide by rigorous standards like those set by the American Society of Home Inspectors or the International Association of Certified Home Inspectors— independent, not-for-profit organizations and developers of professional standards for home inspection. NYSERDA requires inspectors to submit information on their license, insurance, and required training & certifications.

## Pearl Advantage Network

If you join the pilot, you will be a Pearl-Approved Provider and have access to the Pearl Advantage Network, which can include Real Estate Agents and/or Contractors, depending on your area.

## Pearl Registry

The Pearl Registry is an online map of completed Pearl Certifications. It is available on Pearl's website for the public to view.

Homeowners can decide whether Pearl can publish their home to their Registry by granting or denying permission.

## Using the Information

The Pearl Certification and Home Investment Plan are for the homebuyer's reference to know what energy efficient assets the home has today and where upgrade opportunities are that may align with future remodeling

## Feedback

NYSERDA is looking to inspectors for feedback on:

- How easy is Home Energy Score to produce for your customers
- How your customers respond to Pearl Certification
- Follow-up business created for re-scoring the home after the buyer owns the home and makes improvements.

## Loans and Financing

NYSERDA, public, and private lenders offer homebuyers energy efficiency mortgages and loans. Information about financing and incentives can be found on NYSERDA's website at [nyserdera.ny.gov/HEPP](http://nyserdera.ny.gov/HEPP).



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