

NatHERS accredited software tools — dwelling feature exemption application

Purpose | background

The processes for accrediting/reaccrediting software under the Nationwide House Energy Rating Scheme (NatHERS) are outlined in the NatHERS Software Accreditation Protocol (SAP) - Thermal. The SAP is underpinned by benchmark documentation including rating files and dwelling designs, as well as a range of technical documents specifying standardised calculations, data parameters and processes.

This document outlines how software providers may apply for an exemption from modelling a particular feature in the NatHERS SAP and how the NatHERS Administrator (Administrator) will process this application. The intention of this process is to avoid software accreditation hold-ups.

Each application will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Based on the assessment the Administrator may stipulate restrictions in the accreditation notice. Restrictions may include the prevention of generating a certificate if a dwelling contains a particular feature and disclosing the restrictions on certificates, the software provider's website, and in the training and supporting material.

Procedure

The procedures for applying, testing and due diligence are as follows:

Step	Party	Activity
1.	Software provider	Raise the issue with the Administrator (unless the Administrator initiated this process). This will allow the Administrator to determine if an exemption process is required and specify what documentation should be provided to support the application for an exemption.
2.	Administrator	Review the proposed exemption and specify the required documentation.
3.	Software provider	Complete exemption application form (Attachment 1) and provide supporting documentation.
4.	Administrator	Review the submission guided by the due diligence checklist (Attachment 2). The Administrator will: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• determine if further information is required• review proposed option/s and, if applicable, identify additional/alternative option/s• consult on, and analyse impacts of option/s (e.g. relevant stakeholders, effectiveness, interim vs longer term solutions, timeframes, costs) and undertake risk assessment.
5.	Administrator	Make recommendation/provide solution and share this with all software providers. Notify the Steering Committee where necessary.
6.	Administrator	Implement.



NatHERS Software Accreditation Protocol

Feature exemption application

This form should be used by software providers to apply for exemptions from modelling a particular feature (e.g. double height voids, roof windows, edge batts) under the NatHERS Software Accreditation Protocol - Thermal. If there are multiple issues, each specific one needs to be clearly detailed, particularly the impact of each issue and the cumulative impact of the issues.

Software provider	
Software title + version	
Contact information <i>Name, phone, email</i>	
Date of submission	
Title of issue <i>A unique title to identify the issue</i>	
Benchmark versions	
AccuRate version	
AccuBatch version	
Test results spreadsheet version	
Chenath version	
Description of issue	
Dwelling feature(s)	
SAP dwelling design(s) affected	
Climate zone(s)	
Other	
Degree of variation from the benchmark	
Evidence	
Cause of issue <i>e.g. software capabilities</i>	
Impact – type and scale <i>Who, what, where (jurisdiction) when and to what extent (ratings)</i>	
Suggested treatment <i>Briefly identify feasible options to address the issue including option limitations or constraints</i>	
Supporting documentation <i>Detail any supporting documentation, including a list of any attachments; software versions</i>	

NatHERS Administrator due diligence checklist

The Administrator will review the application, taking into account items identified in this checklist as well as others which may arise.

1. **The issue**

What is the specific exemption being sought, is it a new or pre-existing issue?

2. **Cause of issue**

E.g. software capabilities, etc.

3. **Testing requirements**

Review/verify the submitted material and detail additional testing/investigations undertaken by the Administrator (including results) to identify all potential impacts and the scale of these.

4. **Impact of issue(s)**

Who, when, what, to what extent.

5. **Risk assessment and management**

Identify the risks (who, what, when, to what extent) and mitigation strategies to address these – use risk assessment template:

- Are there alternative/additional options to address the issue?
- What are the consequences of **not** taking any action?
- Relationship to regulation or NatHERS rules: is a particular jurisdiction impacted? Is a particular regulatory requirement or Australian Standard impacted?
- Effectiveness of addressing the problem and objectives.
- Will the problem self-correct within a reasonable timeframe?

6. **Accreditation conditions**

Justification for proceeding with the recommended option and rejecting other options. What and how will the conditions be communicated.