



Information Collection, Storage and Dissemination Policy

Nationwide House Energy Rating Scheme®

July 2025

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Background

About NatHERS

The Nationwide House Energy Rating Scheme (**NatHERS**) measures a home's energy performance and provides the home with an energy rating and information to improve its energy performance. NatHERS was first introduced in 1993.

The higher the rating, the less energy needed by the home.

NatHERS Assessors currently use house plans (for assessments of a new home) or evidence collected on-site (for assessments of an existing home) and building specifications of a home to enter data into a NatHERS software tool.

The NatHERS tool then generates a certificate. For assessments of a new home this will be a NatHERS Certificate. For assessments of an existing home, a Home Energy Rating Certificate will be generated. The certificate includes:

- a star rating (for new homes) or a Thermal performance star rating (for existing homes), ranging from 0 to 10, reflecting the amount of heating and cooling energy needed by a home to stay in a comfortable temperature range, based on its structure, design and materials
- a Home Energy Rating (for existing homes) or Whole of Home rating (for new homes), ranging from 0 to 150 — reflecting the expected energy use, costs and emissions of the entire home, including major fixed appliances, on-site solar generation and batteries.

NatHERS for new homes is the most popular pathway to demonstrate compliance with the National Construction Code (**NCC**) energy efficiency requirements. NatHERS was used for around 9 out of 10 new homes in 2023-24. A star rating of 7 or above is required in most parts of Australia for new detached homes.

NatHERS is administered by the Australian Government Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (**the Department**) or any subsequent Australian Government entity with responsibility for administering NatHERS, on behalf of all states and territory governments.

Under these arrangements, the Australian Government, acting as the NatHERS Administrator (**we, our, us**), is responsible for:

- accreditation of NatHERS software tool/s;
- approval and oversight of NatHERS Assessor Accrediting Organisations (AAOs) who support the delivery of NatHERS for new homes;
- oversight and delivery of assessor accreditation services for NatHERS for existing homes;
- development and maintenance of NatHERS policies, procedures and agreements;
- working with CSIRO on the development of the Chenath calculation engine (which currently underpins all NatHERS software tools);
- communication with industry, government and consumer stakeholders; and
- NatHERS program oversight and management.

About this Policy

This Policy outlines how the Department collects, uses, stores and discloses personal (including sensitive) information for the purpose of the Department's activities as NatHERS Administrator. This policy should be read with the Department's Privacy Policy: <https://www.dcceew.gov.au/about/commitment/privacy>. The department's Privacy Policy prevails over any inconsistencies with this Policy.

The Department is bound by the Australian Privacy Principles (**APPs**) in the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth) (**Privacy Act**), which regulates the collection, use, disclosure and storage of personal (including sensitive) information and how individuals may access and correct records containing their personal information.

Application to business information

Business information does not generally fall within the definition of 'personal information' under the Privacy Act, but it may do so where the information relates to sole traders and partnerships. Where business information contains personal information, this Privacy Policy will apply to the personal information component.

Interaction with other NatHERS documents

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents, which apply to the Department's activities as NatHERS Administrator:

- the Software Accreditation Protocol (**SAP**) under which we accredit software that can be used to generate ratings and NatHERS Certificates for NatHERS for new homes, and any associated terms and conditions of accreditation;
- the User Interface Protocol (UIP) under which we accredit software that can be used to generate ratings and Home Energy Rating Certificates for NatHERS for existing homes, and any associated terms and conditions of accreditation;
- the Protocol for Assessor Accrediting Organisations (**AAO Protocol**) which sets out the rights and obligations of organisations who accredit NatHERS for new homes assessors;
- the NatHERS for Existing Homes Assessor Code of Practice;
- the NatHERS for existing homes assessor application pack; and
- the NatHERS Technical Note for both existing homes and new homes.

Collection of information

What personal information we collect

The Department collects personal (including sensitive) information that is reasonably necessary for, or directly related to, our functions and activities in administering NatHERS. We collect this information directly from you, or via third parties such as NatHERS accredited assessors, accredited NatHERS software providers, NatHERS AAOs or NatHERS for existing homes assessor accreditation service providers (AASPs).

This Policy adopts the meanings of personal information and sensitive information from the Privacy Act. In general terms, personal information is any information that can be used to

identify you, whether or not the information is true, and whether or not it is recorded in material form. Sensitive information is a subset of personal information.

The Department will only use and disclose your personal (including sensitive) information for the purposes it was collected, or otherwise in accordance with the Privacy Act.

The type of information we collect includes:

- names;
- contact information, such as mailing and/or street addresses, email address, and telephone and fax numbers;
- details of professions, occupations and/or job titles;
- photographic images and/or pictorial representations;
- information regarding assessor accreditation, conduct and performance history (whether NatHERS-accredited or otherwise);
- information required to become an accredited NatHERS assessor and maintain accreditation;
- information regarding assessments conducted or purporting to be conducted in compliance with NatHERS rules including (but not limited to) the Technical note and Assessor handbook;
- business and other information of organisations we deal with (including accredited software providers and assessor accrediting organisations);
- information which is required to be collected to generate or provide evidentiary support for a NatHERS rating and certificate (for example house plans, scans of an existing home, photographs or documents such as receipts demonstrating the accuracy of inputs, etc.);
- cookie and clickstream data (only limited personal information may be collected via cookies and clickstream data and individuals who do not wish to receive cookies may disable this function on their web browser);
- any additional information relating to you that you provide to us directly through our websites or indirectly through use of our websites, through our representatives or otherwise;
- information which is reasonably necessary for us to fulfil our role as NatHERS Administrator; and
- information you provide to us through our service centre, customer surveys or visits by our representatives from time to time.

We understand that you may not wish to provide personal information to us. This may mean that we are not able to provide you with the NatHERS products and services that you require, or a high level of service. In circumstances where it will be impracticable for us to deal with you anonymously, or through the use of a pseudonym, we will ordinarily request you to identify yourself to enable us to appropriately action your request and carry out our functions and activities.

How we collect personal and business information

The Department collects personal (including sensitive) information and business information directly from individuals and from third parties.

We will collect your personal information directly from you, including:

- through applications to be accredited as a NatHERS for existing homes assessor;
- through your access and use of our website and web-based channels;

- your responses to, or participation in, NatHERS consultations or surveys;
- during conversations with you via telephone and in person; and
- through written correspondence with you, including email.

We will collect information (including personal information) from third parties including:

- persons who are authorised to act on your behalf;
- other government agencies;
- NatHERS accredited assessors;
- other thermal performance assessors;
- NatHERS accredited software providers;
- NatHERS AAOs;
- NatHERS AASPs;
- law enforcement agencies;
- credit reporting agencies;
- service providers to the Department; and
- other third parties which have interactions or deal with NatHERS (including building practitioners, other regulatory authorities and members of the public).

Collection of your personal information from a third party may occur if:

- you consent, including in the consent you provide to receive a NatHERS assessment;
- collection from the third party is required or authorised under an Australian law, or a court/tribunal order; or
- direct collection is unreasonable or impracticable (such as where required for us to conduct an investigation into assessor related conduct).

We may receive personal information about third parties from individuals who contact us or supply us with personal information belonging to others in the documents they provide. This is referred to as 'unsolicited personal information'. In these circumstances we will consider whether we could have collected the information had we solicited the information and will handle it in accordance with the Privacy Act.

Information collection through our website

The Department collects information (including personal information) through our website in a number of ways.

Analytics

We use Google Analytics to collect anonymised data about your interaction with our website, which is hosted by a third party provider. This data is collected for the purpose of improving our website.

Google Analytics uses first party cookies and JavaScript code to help analyse how users use the site. It anonymously tracks how our visitors interact with this website, including how they have accessed the site (for example from a search engine, a link, an advertisement etc) and what they did on the site. The types of data collected include your device's IP address, geographic location (country only), search terms and pages visited, and date and time of webpage access.

This data is transmitted to and stored by Google on servers in the United States of America (USA). Google will use this information for the purposes of compiling reports on website activity and providing other services relating to website activity and internet usage.

You can read more about how Google Analytics collects and processes data in its privacy policy on the Google website. You can opt out of Google Analytics if you disable or refuse the cookie, disable JavaScript, or use the opt out service provided by Google.

Cookies

A cookie is a piece of information in a small data file that a website sends to your browser when you access our website. Our website uses session based cookies to gather anonymised website usage data, for the purpose of improving our website.

If you do not wish to have cookies placed on your device, you can change your web browser settings to reject cookies.

We will only use this information to:

- understand how people use our websites;
- compile reports on website activity for website operators; and
- provide other services relating to website activity and internet usage.

Information collection through our newsletter

The Department publishes a NatHERS newsletter via email and manages the distribution (including contact details) through Intuit MailChimp. MailChimp is a third party service provider, which provides online tools that can be used to create, send, and manage emails.

MailChimp may collect personal information, such as distribution lists, which contain email addresses and other information relating to those email addresses. For further information about the type of personal information MailChimp collects, refer to the MailChimp Privacy Policy available at: <https://www.intuit.com/privacy/statement/>.

We will only use this information to:

- create, send and manage emails relating to the work of the Department;
- measure email campaign performance;
- evaluate the rate of hyperlink click through to our website; and
- improve the features for specific segments of customers.

MailChimp may transfer this information to third parties where required to do so by law, or where such third parties process the information on MailChimp's behalf.

MailChimp is based in the USA and the information collected about your use of the website (including your IP address) will be transmitted to and stored by MailChimp on servers located outside Australia.

By subscribing to our eNewsletter, you will be taken to have consented to your personal information being used as described above. This means:

- you consent to your personal information being collected, used, disclosed and stored as set out in Mail Chimp's Privacy Policy and agree to abide by MailChimp's Terms of Use;
- you understand and acknowledge this service utilises a MailChimp platform, which is located in the USA and relevant legislation of the USA will apply;

- as you have consented to the disclosure of your personal information to MailChimp, Australian Privacy Principle 8.1 contained in Schedule 1 of the Privacy Act will not apply;
- you understand and acknowledge that MailChimp is not subject to the Privacy Act and you will not be able to seek redress under the Privacy Act, but will need to seek redress under the laws of the USA; and
- you can opt out of our mailing list if you choose the 'unsubscribe' service provided by MailChimp in every email, or by contacting us.

Use and disclosure of information

The Department uses and discloses your information (including personal information) for NatHERS functions and activities to:

- identify you, and update our records and keep your contact details up to date;
- provide products and services to you and to send communications requested by you;
- administer NatHERS in accordance with our governance arrangements;
- accredit, oversee and manage the accreditation of NatHERS assessors, which may include maintaining a public list of NatHERS for existing homes assessors, and supplying NatHERS for existing homes accreditation cards;
- liaise with key organisations delivering aspects of NatHERS, including CSIRO, accredited software providers, AAOs, AASPs and state, territory and local governments;
- answer enquiries, and provide information or advice about NatHERS;
- provide you with access to protected areas of our website;
- assess the performance of the website and to improve the operation of the website;
- conduct business processing functions;
- process and respond to any complaint in relation to NatHERS;
- conduct planning, product or service development, program evaluation, quality control and research for the purposes of the Department, its contractors or service providers;
- provide information to our contractors or service providers to enable them to provide our products and services to you, including business, marketing, research and related purposes; and
- comply with any Australian law, orders of courts or tribunals, any rule, regulation, lawful and binding determination, decision or direction of a regulator, or in co-operation with any governmental authority of any country (or political sub-division of a country).

How we disclose your information to third parties

The Department will disclose your information (including personal information) to third parties in accordance with this Policy, including:

- our employees, contractors or service providers for the purposes of operation of our website or our functions, fulfilling requests by you, and to otherwise provide information, products and services to you. This includes, without limitation, web hosting providers, IT systems administrators, cloud computing services, mailing houses, couriers, payment processors, data entry service providers, electronic network administrators, debt collectors, and professional advisors such as accountants, solicitors, business advisors and consultants;

- suppliers and other third parties with whom we have commercial relationships for the purposes of administering NatHERS, and other business, marketing, research and related purposes;
- suppliers and other third parties delivering aspects of NatHERS, including CSIRO, accredited software providers, AAOs, AASPs, and state, territory and local governments;
- relevant state, territory or Commonwealth regulators including building regulators, consumer protection regulators, privacy regulators, integrity regulators, health and safety regulators, and education quality regulators; and
- any organisation for any authorised purpose with your express consent.

We may disclose information to third party suppliers and service providers located overseas for some of these purposes. We take reasonable steps to ensure that overseas recipients of your personal information do not breach the privacy obligations relating to your personal information. However, it may be subject to local legislation.

Your personal information will not be shared or disclosed other than as described in this Policy, or unless:

- you have consented;
- the disclosure is authorised or required by or under an Australian law or court/tribunal order; or
- it is otherwise permitted under the Privacy Act.

Information storage

Once the Department collects information from you, it is stored in a secure environment. Your personal information will not be released unless the law permits it or your permission is granted. We take reasonable steps to ensure your personal information is protected from misuse and loss, and from unauthorised access, modification or disclosure. We may hold your information in either electronic or hard copy form. Personal information is destroyed or de-identified when no longer needed in accordance with the requirements of the *Archives Act 1983* (Cth).

Cloud Computing

The Department complies with cloud computing obligations in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Attorney-General. For further information, please refer to the Australian Government Information Security Management Guidelines.

As our website is linked to the internet, we cannot provide assurance regarding the security of transmission of information you communicate to us via online channels. We also cannot guarantee that the information you supply will not be intercepted while being transmitted over the internet. Any personal information or other information which you send to us is transmitted at your own risk.

Our website may contain links to other websites operated by third parties. We make no representations or warranties in relation to the privacy practices of any third party website and we are not responsible for the privacy policies or the content of any third party website. Third party websites are responsible for informing you about their own privacy practices. We encourage you to examine each website's privacy policy.

Additional arrangements

We have additional arrangements in place with NatHERS AAOs, AASPs and NatHERS Accredited Software Tool Providers to protect your personal information. The AAO Protocol, the SAP and UIP set requirements that all personal information is managed in line with all relevant legislation.

Contact us

If you have questions about this Policy, any concerns, or a complaint about how your privacy has been handled or a possible breach, please contact the department using one of the following options:

Attention: Privacy Officer

Email: privacy@dcceew.gov.au

Postal address: GPO Box 3090, Canberra ACT 2601, Australia

Telephone: 1800 920 528

Or use the [Contact Us](#) link on our website at www.dcceew.gov.au/about/contact.

The Department's Privacy Policy can also be accessed here:

<https://www.dcceew.gov.au/about/commitment/privacy>.

Updates to this Policy

We may update this Policy from time to time. Any updated versions of this Policy will be posted on our website.

This Policy was last updated on 8 July 2025.