

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5900

AS OF JANUARY 17, 1994

Brief Description: Providing standards for glazing and doors.

SPONSORS: Senator Sutherland

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY & UTILITIES

Staff: Phil Moeller (786-7445)

Hearing Dates: March 2, 1993; March 3, 1993; January 18, 1994

BACKGROUND:

The 1990 Legislature enacted a new residential energy code. The code requires minimum levels of efficiency for building components, including furnaces, wall and ceiling insulation, doors and windows. The maximum amount of window space is also specified based on a percentage of finished floor space. Using the code details adopted by the State Building Code Council, a residence can be constructed with some energy code modifications (such as greater window space) as long as the overall energy efficiency of the residence is not compromised.

Within the 1990 legislation, testing procedures and standards relating to windows were specified. Window testing procedures and standards have evolved as better methods of testing have been developed. Insulation efficiency is typically measured on a scale referred to as an "R-value," window efficiency is usually measured as a "U-value," which is the inverse of an R-value.

Window manufacturers submit their products to one of several testing laboratories for efficiency certification. Obtaining a rating from a testing laboratory usually takes between six and eight months. There is regulatory uncertainty in the window manufacturing industry and the building code community over a 1993 action by the Federal Trade Commission which challenged the test results from one major testing laboratory in this state.

SUMMARY:

Testing standards and procedures for windows and doors are modified. U-values for windows and doors shall be determined, certified, and labeled by a certified independent agency licensed by the National Fenestration Rating Council (NFRC) in accordance with the latest NFRC standards. Code requirements and U-values reported for skylights shall be based on a slope representative of typical installation.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: available