FAQ GUIDE

Enterprise Green Communities™
& WELL™

1. What is the 2020 Enterprise Green Communities Criteria and how does it relate to WELL?

Enterprise Green Communities is a platform for high quality affordable housing in the United States—and the only national green building framework developed explicitly with and for the affordable housing sector. The WELL Building Standard (WELL) is the premier framework for advancing health and well-being in buildings, communities and organizations around the world. With the 2020 Enterprise Green Communities Criteria, we've leveraged the best of both programs and created one path for affordable housing developments in the United States to create best-in-class healthy, efficient and environmentally responsible homes. Projects that achieve certification with the 2020 Criteria will be recognized as certified under both Enterprise Green Communities and WELL.

2. What was the process of integrating WELL features into the 2020 Criteria?

The 2020 Criteria was developed over the course of 18 months with the input and guidance of hundreds of affordable housing and green building stakeholders. We began with a research phase and community input, moved into a working group phase, held a public comment period and iterated on technical development throughout 2019. IWBI leadership and staff were involved from start to finish. Early on, IWBI staff conducted a comparative analysis of WELL v2 and the previous version of the Enterprise Green Communities Criteria to identify health-promoting strategies from WELL preconditions and optimizations that would be essential to include in the 2020 Criteria, if recognition were to be granted under both programs. These recommendations were then vetted throughout the 2020 Criteria development process - evaluating each of the strategies through the rubric of 2020 Criteria development and refining each of the priority WELL v2 strategies to explicitly respond to needs of the affordable housing sector in the United States. Certain priority WELL v2 strategies that show up in the 2020 Criteria were already incorporated within the previous version of Green Communities (mechanical ventilation, for instance), and others (Legionella control, water quality and noise control, for instance) were developed and added specifically during this process.

3. How many projects have pursued the 2020 Criteria so far?

The 2020 Criteria was released in January 2020 and previous versions of the program were retired from use on October 15, 2020. Since then, we've had an influx of 2020 Criteria project registrations. For up to date numbers on projects certified to the 2020 Criteria, visit our websites (Green Communities & WELL).

4. If I am an affordable housing project and I want to pursue WELL Certification - or, conversely, I want to pursue 2020 Criteria certification - which program should I register with?

If you're an affordable housing project, register for the 2020 Criteria with Enterprise Green Communities. That is your one and only one-stop shop for certification with both programs.

5. What is the cost of registration for Enterprise Green Communities?

There is no fee for registration. There is a fee to submit your project for certification review – learn more about eligibility and requirements.

6. How and where does a 2020 Criteria project scorecard get developed and tracked?

Use the 2020 Criteria site to get started with planning your project – take advantage of the editable versions of the 2020 Criteria Checklist there. When you're ready to begin preparing your application for certification review, create an account in the 2020 Criteria certification portal; the certification review team will help guide you through the Prebuild and Postbuild phases of certification.

7. Where do 2020 Criteria projects submit documentation and what is the process of documentation review?

There are two phases for certification review. First, the Prebuild stage which occurs before construction begins and second, Postbuild, which occurs once the project is complete. Documentation for each of these phases of review is tracked within the 2020 Criteria certification portal. Take a look at an overview video of the portal, templates to be used as part of your certification application and the 2020 Criteria site to review the requirements.

8. Is there any on-site performance verification necessary to achieve this dual certification? If so, how are they carried out?

Yes, many of the design and construction strategies required of the program are verified through on-site performance tests and inspections. The program has mandatory and optional requirements, and these differ slightly for projects based on construction typology (new construction, substantial rehab, moderate rehab) and whether or not the project is in a rural location. Visit the certification templates page for full details relevant to your project.

9. How is dual certification recognized across both programs? What does the plaque look like? What does brand fulfillment look like?

All projects that successfully meet the 2020 criteria will receive a PDF certificate recognizing both its Enterprise Green Communities 2020 and WELL Certification achievement. This PDF will include both the Enterprise and WELL logos. Projects can also request a dual certification plaque by submitting a plaque request form through Enterprise's certification portal. Additionally, IWBI will be offering dual-certified projects a full marketing and PR package that includes a template press release and sample social media posts.

10. Is there a recertification process for the Enterprise WELL dual certification?

Certification for the 2020 Criteria is granted to projects that have demonstrated they have met the Criteria in full. Enterprise has worked hard to ensure a strong management plan is enforced in order for projects to become certified, so there is no recertification requirement for the program.

11. Will my project be publicly listed in any project directory -- either on wellcertified.com or enterprisecommunity.org?

All Enterprise Green Communities 2020 Criteria projects will be listed on the IWBI Projects Directory under the Residential sector. The Enterprise website does not include a project directory.

12. If I am a single-family residential project using 2020 Criteria, do I still receive WELL Certification?

Yes, a single-family home can be WELL Certified if it is certified under the 2020 Criteria; read more about 2020 Criteria eligibility requirements.

13. What level of WELL certification (Bronze, Silver, Gold, Platinum) does my project achieve through certifying to the 2020 Criteria?

The 2020 Criteria is a unique certification for the affordable housing sector in which a project is Green Communities and WELL Certified at no specific level. All projects achieving certification under the 2020 Criteria will simply achieve Green Communities and Well certification without any designation of Bronze, Silver, Gold or Platinum.