



Conditioning of Residential Garages Policy

Effective Date: June 1, 2025

Overview:

The Current Minnesota State Residential Energy Code would not prohibit the condition of a residential garage; however, it would treat the garage space no differently than the dwelling unit and would therefore make it impractical to comply from a cost/benefit standpoint. Normally the heating system for these applications: 1) are not intended to condition the space more than a few hours in any single day and 2) are not intended to condition the space at the minimum temperature required in the living areas (68 degrees Fahrenheit). The garage should therefore not be held to the same criteria as that of the adjoining living area.

Details:

For the purposes of applying the state energy code, the following applies to the conditioning of private garages in group IRC-1, IRC-2, IRC-3 and IRC-4 occupancies of the MN State Residential Code and private group U garages in Group R-3 and group R-4 occupancies of the MN State Building Code:

1. The private garage shall be limited to use by the occupants of the building.
2. The garage shall be limited to a maximum of 1000 square foot.
3. The garage construction shall be in compliance with the Building Envelope Requirements for Climate Zone 6A of ASHRAE 90.1-2016 for semiheated: R30 attics, fill wall cavity or R-13 minimum walls insulation, U-0.7 for swinging doors and U-1.45 for non-swinging doors (overhead garage door). There is no requirement for foundation insulation.
4. A Class I vapor barrier/retarder shall be installed on the warm side of walls and ceilings. (The common house/garage wall shall have this barrier on the house warm side).
5. A frost footing is required between the semiheated garage and the living area, as applicable.
6. Thermostatic controls shall be provided that turn on and off the system and can start and stop the system under two different time schedules per week (programmable thermostat).
7. The plans submitted under the Building Permit for review shall indicate the type, input rating and location of the appliance in the garage.

Please contact the Building Inspection Department if you have any questions regarding this policy.

Respectfully,

Ken Beck
Building Official

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BUILDING INSPECTIONS DIVISION

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