

HOUSE RESEARCH

Bill Summary

FILE NUMBER: S. F. 3259 (H. F. 2570) **DATE:** April 11, 2000
Version: As amended by Conference Committee
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Subject: Energy Code
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Overview

This bill would keep the portion of the current energy code rules of the State Building Code allowing category 1 buildings, so that starting April 15, 2000, new detached single-family or two-family homes may comply with either (1) category 1 standards of the current energy code rules or (2) the new residential energy code rules, which are scheduled to go into effect April 15, 2000. Category 2 buildings would no longer be allowed starting April 15, 2000. The bill also provides additional specifications for ventilation and fuel-burning equipment in category 1 homes, and requires the department of administration to perform a cost-benefit analysis of the current and new energy code rules.

Current energy code rules allow both category 1 and category 2 residential buildings, with category 1 buildings having stricter requirements for sealing against air leakage. Every category 1 residential building must have a residential mechanical ventilation system, while a category 2 residential building may rely upon infiltration and passive ventilation.

Section

- 1 **Energy code rules remain in effect.** (a) Starting April 15, 2000, only the category 1 standards under Minnesota Rules, chapter 7670, will be in effect. All new, detached single one- and two-family homes must meet category 1 standards, and must have a mechanical ventilation system. In addition, all equipment burning non-solid fuels for space heating or water heating must be direct vent, power vent, or sealed combustion equipment. If any single exhaust device over 300 cubic feet per minute is installed, the home must use sealed combustion space heating equipment or an alternative make-up air source.
 - (b) Allows a contractor or owner to comply with new energy code rules in chapters 7672 and 7674, as an option to complying with section 1.
 - (c) Directs the building codes and standards division of the department of administration to issue a cost-benefit analysis to the legislature by December 1, 2001, on the energy code rules in chapters 7670, 7672, and 7674. The cost-benefit analysis must include a feasibility study of

establishing new category 2 standards that will maintain good air quality, building durability, and adequate release of moisture without using mechanical ventilation.

2 **Effective date.** Effective the day following final enactment.