

ORGANISING ADVERTISING FOR COMMERCIAL OFFICE SPACE OF 2,000M² OR MORE?

If so, you need to know about the *Building Energy Efficiency Disclosure Act 2010* (the Act), which imposes mandatory energy disclosure obligations on commercial buildings and is implemented through the Commercial Building Disclosure (CBD) program. The Act forms part of a broad package of measures to encourage building energy efficiency developed by the Australian, state and territory governments.

Under the Act, most sellers or lessors of office space with a net lettable area (NLA) of 2,000 square metres or more will be required to obtain and disclose an up-to-date energy efficiency rating.

The start date for disclosure is 1 November 2010, with a 12 month transition period to 31 October 2011.

During the transition period, building owners and lessors will need to disclose a valid NABERS Energy* star rating when offering for sale, lease or sublease, commercial office space with an NLA of 2,000 square metres or more. The NABERS Energy rating must be a base or whole** building rating (excluding GreenPower), registered on the CBD program's publicly accessible website and included in any advertising.

* National Australian Built Environment Rating System for energy efficiency.

** A whole building rating also covers the tenanted space and is disclosed when there is inadequate metering to obtain a base building rating.

What does this means for advertising?

During and after the transition period, all advertising*** for affected office space must include a NABERS Energy rating. Advertising includes banners on buildings, foyers and perimeter fences, and advertising in newspapers, brochures, magazines and Internet sites.

The NABERS Energy rating must be expressed by:

- using the rating from 0 to 5 worked out for the building under the NABERS Energy rating rules, disregarding the effect of the purchase of electricity under the GreenPower program
- adding the words '-star NABERS Energy rating' after the number. For example:
 - 4.5-star NABERS Energy rating
 - 3-star NABERS Energy rating
 - 0-star NABERS Energy rating.

Every advertisement must include the energy rating as outlined above and ensure that the rating is displayed prominently so that:

- it is clearly visible
- it is not obscured
- the number and the text are at least as large as the majority of the text contained in the advertisement.

An additional NABERS Energy rating, inclusive of GreenPower, may be included as long as it is not more prominent than the required NABERS Energy rating.

A NABERS Energy Commitment Agreement rating cannot be disclosed in advertising **instead of** an officially certified NABERS Energy rating. A building owner may choose to include a Commitment Agreement rating **in addition to** the certified rating on advertising, but this is not a legal requirement.

^{***} Refer to section 15 of the Act and section 5 of the Building Energy Efficiency Disclosure Determination 2010, accessible via the CBD website.



What if a NABERS Energy rating is not included in an advertisement?

Civil penalties of up to \$110,000 for the first day and \$11,000 for each subsequent day may be imposed by a Court for each breach of a disclosure obligation. Alternatively, the Australian Government Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency can issue an infringement notice of up to \$11,000 for the first day and \$1,100 for each subsequent day of non-compliance.

Can an exemption be obtained?

It is possible to apply for an exemption^{****} from the requirement to display a NABERS Energy rating in limited circumstances. If an exemption is granted under the Act, there is no requirement for advertising to indicate a building is exempt.

Details of disclosure affected offices that have been granted an exemption from a disclosure obligation on the grounds that a rating cannot be assigned will be listed on the exemptions page of the CBD website. Further information about exemptions is available on the CBD website.

See section 17 of the Act.

Examples

The following examples[^] of commercial property advertising demonstrate how the NABERS Energy ratings must be disclosed. The Department may include additional examples in the future.

^ Disclaimer:

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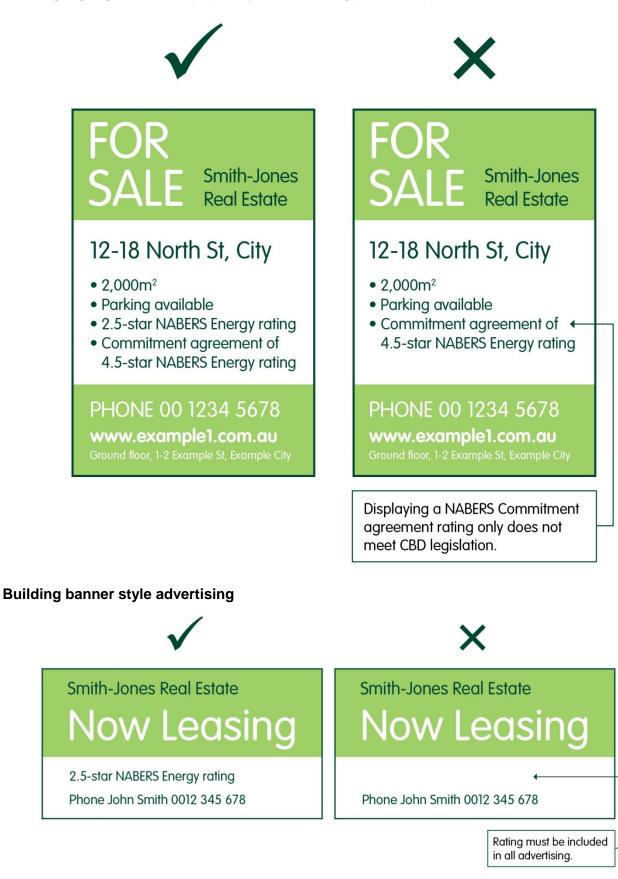


Building signage and newspaper style advertising





Building signage and newspaper style advertising (continued)





Internet style advertising



Owners and lessors who proceed without disclosure risk fine or prosecution.

The Commercial Building Disclosure program has been developed by the Australian, state and territory governments, as part of a broad package of measures to encourage building energy efficiency.

The program was established by the *Building Energy Efficiency Disclosure Act 2010* and is managed by the Australian Government Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency.

For more information visit www.cbd.gov.au