

2013 Compliance Software Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is the name of the Compliance Software made available by the California Energy Commission?

A: The commonly referred name is CBECC-Com. This is the shortened name for California Building Energy Code Compliance for Nonresidential (or Commercial) Buildings.

Q: Can this software be used for 2008 Title-24 Standards Compliance purpose?

A: No this software is only certified for showing compliance with *2013 Title-24 Building Energy Efficiency Standards* (2013 Standards). Please visit the following Web link for currently available Compliance Software (http://www.energy.ca.gov/title24/2008standards/2008_computer_prog_list.html) certified for showing compliance with 2008 Standards.

Q: Where do I find the list of Energy Commission certified compliance software for 2013 Standards?

A: Most up-to-date information about List of Approved Computer Programs for complying with the 2013 Standards is found at:

http://www.energy.ca.gov/title24/2013standards/2013_computer_prog_list.html

Q: What version of the CBECC-Com is certified for showing compliance with 2013 Standards?

A: Please visit the software download page for the most recent information at (<http://bees.archenergy.com/software.html>). This information is available at the top below the section 1(Download/Install CBECC-Com). The current version number may change as we develop more features into the software. Please visit this web link and verify your software is certified (or not decertified) for used with 2013 standards.

Q: Is CBECC-Com available free?

A: Yes. The non-residential Compliance Software was developed as an Open Source Public Domain software and made available free for showing compliance with 2013 Standards. This can be downloaded from the following web link (<http://bees.archenergy.com/software.html>)

Q: What operating systems or platform this software will work on: Windows, Apple or Linux based?

A: This is a windows based software currently verified to work on both 32-bit (X-32 architecture) and 64-bit (X-64 architecture) machines running windows XP, Windows & and Windows 8 operating systems.

Q: Is there any technical support or training available for learning this software (CBECC-Com)

A: The Energy Commission has secured additional technical support resources for additional training and dedicated user support for CBECC-Com. We are in the process of developing *on-demand videos* for providing support for those interested in learning this software. Please visit the software download link and click on the Training/FAQ tab for updated information.

Q: Are there any other training provided by resources outside the Energy Commission?

A: The Energy Commission is working with the utility statewide training programs to provide additional training and user support for CBECC-Com. Once the plan is finalized there will be an announcement on utility-provided training. Please also contact your local utility for future training opportunities.

Q: Is there any telephone support available for this software (CBECC-Com)?

A: We do not have resources to provide telephone support for each question. However, we have developed a quickstart guide and a user manual for those who would like to learn this software. Once you have interactively worked on this software you can [submit a ticket](#) through our issue reporting system if you find any bugs or problems with the software.

The quick start guide is available at http://bees.archenergy.com/Documents/Software/CBECC-Com_QuickStartGuide.pdf. Both user manual and quickstart guide are installed in your computer when the CBECC-Com is installed. These can be accessed via a pull-down menu option: Help → Quickstart Guide or Help → user manual. Most recent versions of the compliance forms are also available under the Help menu option.

Q: How can I be notified when a newer version of the Compliance Software is available?

A: Please sign up for our e-mail listing using the listserver categories: Efficiency, Building Standards or Blueprint. We send out any change or updates to the list of certified software, training availability, and other useful information relating to 2013 Compliance Software through these email distributions.

Q: Where do I find the list-server sign-up area for getting future announcements?

A: Please visit the link (<http://www.energy.ca.gov/efficiency/listservers.html>) to select and register the e-mail distribution categories.

Q: Where do I find the past issues of the blueprint newsletter to help me learn about the 2013 Standards and previous announcements?

A: Please visit at the web link (<http://www.energy.ca.gov/efficiency/blueprint/>) for all available blueprint newsletters.

Q: Where do I find the information relating to 2013 Standards and support materials?

A: Please visit the California Energy Commission home page for information related to 2013 Building Energy Efficiency Standards at <http://www.energy.ca.gov/title24/2013standards/index.html>

Q: Is this a stand-alone software or it uses a different simulation Engine? If so what is that? How do I download that?

A: California Building Energy Code compliance is a complex process with primarily two paths: A Prescriptive Compliance or Performance Compliance. There is no software needed for showing with 2013 Standards by prescriptive compliance. All the necessary information is provided in the document

2013 Building Energy Efficiency Standards for residential and nonresidential buildings. The software (CBECC-Com) provides the necessary Alternate Calculation Methods set-forth in the *2013 Nonresidential Alternate Calculation Method Reference manual* (ACMRM) through a simple Graphics User Interface (GUI). However, the necessary energy calculations are performed using the Energyplus calculation engine. Energyplus has been developed and distributed by the US Department of Energy. The necessary link for downloading the suitable version of the Energyplus that will work with CBECC-Com is also found at the software download link (<http://bees.archenergy.com/software.html>).

Q: How do I find a sample file that I can use to learn this software?

A: Several sample files are also distributed with the current release of CBECC-Com. When you install the CBECC-Com a sub-directory in *user area* under *My Documents/CBECC-Com_Projects*.

Q: What other software tools are needed for using this software?

A: If you are planning to create and run performance compliance in CBECC-Com you will need to download two additional plug-in tools: Sketchup and Openstudio. Please visit the software download area at (<http://bees.archenergy.com/software.html>) section 3 for the necessary links and associated information.

Q: Are there any additional training or support provided for learning to use these tools (Sketchup/Openstudio)?

A: Many on-demand videos are already available on the web for learning sketchup. National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) has also a forum where support using these software tools are provided (<https://openstudio.nrel.gov/sketchup-plugin-tutorials>) and at <https://openstudio.nrel.gov/forums/openstudio-application/general-discussion/where-start> The second link is a forum area where support and tutorials on Openstudio are provided.

This is a preliminary list. Please visit the software download link and click the pull-down menu Training/FAQ for further information.

Q: I am working on a building design that several advanced features that are not yet available in CBECC-Com software. How do I use this to show compliance and create credit towards my building?

A: The 2013 Standards has effective date of July 1, 2014. We have been developing CBECC-com software, adding more features and performing any necessary fixes at this point. Please revisit before July 1st, 2014 to download and use the most-up-to-date version of the software for showing compliance with 2013 standards. If you are planning to submit the building for permit before this date (July 1, 2014) please use the link (http://www.energy.ca.gov/title24/2008standards/2008_computer_prog_list.html) for obtaining a tool (compliance software) for 2008 Standards.

Q: I have used other compliance software (Energy Pro, Equest, or Perform 2008) for showing compliance in the past. What should I do now that there is only one Compliance Software listed as certified for showing compliance with 2013 standards?

A: Please visit the list of certified software for showing compliance with 2008 standards. This page lists contact information of the respective vendor tools. Please contact them directly for an updated version that will comply with the 2013 standards.

Q: Are there any other software certified for use with 2013 standards?

A: In the advent of public domain software the marketplace is fast changing. We do not have information on the prospective additional tools available for complying with 2013 standards. Please visit http://www.energy.ca.gov/title24/2013standards/2013_computer_prog_list.html for more information. This list is updated as more and more software are certified for use with 2013 standards. Please visit before July 1, 2014 (effective date for 2013 standards) to see availability of additional tools.

Q: Who should I contact if I have an error while using the CBECC-Com tool?

A: Currently we do not have dedicated staff for providing one-on-one support for such project specific issues. At this time we expect user to report the necessary information: specific error (providing a screen capture of the error), project input file, version of CBECC-Com through our issue reporting link at <http://bees.archenergy.com/issue.html>.

Please help us recreate the issue by providing enough information. We will contact back at the given email and/or user information to provide a feedback on your error report once we resolve your issue.

Q: I am working on a building with features that are not properly modeled by CBECC-Com or Energyplus now. How do I show compliance for my building?

A: There is a provision under the California Building Code for submitting a building that cannot be analyzed using certified compliance software. This process is called Exceptional Methods and found in the Part 1 as well as in Part 6 under section 10-109 (e). The submittal requirements are given in section 10-110. We will work with the industry to support compliance for such projects. Please contact us through the Energy Standards hotline at (Toll-Free in California: 800-772-3300 and Outside California: 916-654-5106)

Q: I don't like the requirements to import 3-D geometry into CBECC-Com. What alternatives do I have for this purpose?

A: The 2013 Standards have new requirements for mandatory and prescriptive daylight areas and daylighting controls. The only way to correctly calculate the specific building requirements for daylighting is to use 3D geometry.

The Energy Commission does not have the extensive resources that it would require to build a comprehensive user interface to describe 3D building geometry. Instead, we are leveraging other open source software solutions to translate 3D geometry into CBECC-Com. We have demonstrated that this

approach works during the first training session on November 19, 2013. Relevant training materials will be made available through our Training/FAQ section at the software download site.

Q: Are there any plans for adding features to CBECC-Com beyond what is presented in the current version of CBECC-Com?

A: The Energy Commission has made a commitment to continue adding features to CBECC-Com – now, in 2014, and beyond. While we'd like to be able to meet everyone's needs starting July 1, 2014 – we know that this will not be possible. If there are projects that need permitting in July 2014, there may be a subset of these projects that cannot use the performance approach to document compliance with the Standards. For these projects, the prescriptive compliance approach will be required. The Energy Commission is planning additional CBECC-Com releases in March 2014 and June 2014, and each will have additional functionality to cover more types of performance compliance projects. Please revisit before July 1, 2014 to download the most recent CBECC-Com for using to show compliance with 2013 standards.

Q: What if a material being used in my design is not listed in the CEC/CBECC-Com material library?

A: You will need to select a material from the library with similar thermal properties to the material being used. You can find the material library in spreadsheet form as part of the CBECC-Com installation in the *C:\Users\{your username}\Documents\CBECC-Com 2013 Data\Documents\RulesetSource\CEC 2013 Nonres\Rules\Tables* folder of your computer