

Ordinance 26-09-01

Introduced: Sept. 14, 2026

Adopted:

AN ACT TO AMEND CHAPTER 44, ENERGY CODE, IN THE TOWN OF MIDDLETOWN CODE OF ORDINANCES TO ADOPT AND ENFORCE THE 2024 INTERNATIONAL ENERGY CONSERVATION CODE (IECC)

BE IT ENACTED BY THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF MIDDLETOWN (a majority of the members elected thereto concurring therein):

Section 1. That the Town of Middletown, Delaware, Code of Ordinances Chapter 44. Energy Code is amended by adopting and enforcing the 2024 International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) and amend § 44-1. **Adoption of Standards by Reference as follows:**

“§ 44-1. Adoption of Standards by Reference.

The International Energy Conservation Code, as published by the International Code Council, Inc., and as adopted by the State of Delaware, a copy of which shall be maintained in the office of the Town Clerk of the Town of Middletown, is hereby adopted as the Energy Code of the Town of Middletown, Delaware, pursuant to Title 16, Chapter 76, § 7602 of the Delaware Code. The Town shall enforce the applicable regulations, provisions, conditions, and requirements of the State-adopted energy code for buildings and structures within the Town.”

Section 2. This ordinance shall become effective on April 1, 2027.

ADOPTED THIS _____ DAY OF _____, 2026.

(SEAL)

Kenneth L. Branner, Jr., MAYOR

ATTESTED TO BY:

WITNESS, TOWN OF MIDDLETOWN

2024 ENERGY CODE

What Council Needs to Know

Residential Energy Code Overview

The State's move from the 2018 to the 2024 energy code changes how new homes demonstrate energy efficiency. For Middletown, the biggest effects will be stronger wall requirements, clearer energy-efficiency choices, more documentation and testing, and EV-ready electrical infrastructure for qualifying new homes.

The Short Version

- Walls are the biggest construction change. A typical 2×6 wall with only R-20 insulation will no longer meet the new prescriptive wall table by itself. Builders still have other approved ways to comply.
- Windows get a modest efficiency upgrade. The required U-factor changes from U-0.32 to U-0.30 under the prescriptive table.
- Attic insulation is not the big change. The Climate Zone 4 prescriptive requirement remains R-49.
- Homes still need air-leakage testing. Under the applicable prescriptive path, the limit for our climate zone is 3 air changes per hour.
- Builders must choose additional energy-saving features. The 2024 prescriptive path requires at least 10 efficiency credits from at least two qualifying measures.
- Qualifying new homes will need EV-ready infrastructure under Delaware's adopted provisions. This prepares the electrical system for a future charger; it does not require the homeowner to own an electric vehicle.

2018 vs. 2024 — In Everyday Terms

Area	What Changes	What It Means
Exterior walls	Higher wall efficiency is required under the standard prescriptive table.	Builders may need more insulation, exterior continuous insulation, or another approved compliance method.
Windows	U-factor improves from 0.32 to 0.30.	New windows must perform slightly better at keeping heat in or out.
Attics	R-49 remains the prescriptive requirement.	No major prescriptive attic-insulation increase for Climate Zone 4.
Air leakage	Testing remains required; 3 ACH applies under the applicable prescriptive path.	The completed home must meet the required air-tightness test.
Efficiency choices	At least 10 credits from at least two measures.	Builders can choose from qualifying upgrades rather than every home using the exact same package.
EV readiness	Qualifying homes need required electrical infrastructure.	The home is prepared for easier future EV-charger installation; a charger or EV purchase is not automatically required.

What Are “Efficiency Credits”?

Think of the credit system as a menu of energy-saving choices. Instead of requiring every builder to use the exact same upgrades, the code allows qualifying measures to be combined until the required number of credits is reached.

Examples identified in the detailed code summary include:

- Better-performing walls or windows
- Lower air leakage
- Higher-efficiency heating and cooling equipment
- More efficient water heating
- Improved duct-system strategies
- Renewable energy
- Whole-home lighting controls or higher-efficiency lighting

Why this matters to the Town: the builder’s chosen measures need to be shown clearly on the plans so plan reviewers and inspectors know what is being used to meet the code.

What Does This Mean for Builders?

Builders will have flexibility, but they will need to make their energy-compliance strategy clear earlier in the process. Plans may need updated wall details, window information, selected efficiency measures, testing information and EV-ready details. Some standard model-home plans may therefore need to be updated for permits that fall under the new code.

What Does This Mean for Homeowners?

The intent is a more energy-efficient home with better control of heat loss, air leakage and overall energy use. Some construction methods or equipment choices may change. EV-ready infrastructure is intended to make a future charger easier to install, not to require the homeowner to purchase an electric vehicle.

What Does This Mean for Middletown?

- Update permit-submission requirements and residential energy checklists.
- Make sure plans clearly state how the home will meet the 2024 energy code.
- Track the energy-efficiency measures the builder selects.
- Verify required insulation, windows, air sealing, equipment and EV-ready work during inspections.
- Collect required blower-door, duct-leakage and other applicable testing documentation.
- Give builders a clear transition date and expectations before implementation.

What About Additions and Existing Homes?

The 2024 code also applies to certain work on existing homes. New portions of an addition generally must meet the energy requirements that apply to that new work. Some additions can also trigger additional

efficiency-credit requirements, although the code contains exceptions, including an exception related to additions that increase the building's total conditioned floor area by less than 25 percent. Replacement windows and other alterations also have applicable energy requirements.

Previously Approved Plans

The detailed adoption material contains provisions protecting certain work that was lawfully permitted or authorized before the new code and then pursued in good faith. Because Middletown also uses master/model-home approvals, the Department should establish a clear written transition policy for builders rather than assume that every existing model approval is treated the same way.

Bottom Line

The biggest physical change is the wall requirement. The biggest operational change for the Town is making sure the builder clearly identifies how each home will comply and then verifying those choices during construction. The 2024 code gives builders options, but it requires better documentation and coordination between the plans, the work in the field and the final testing.

Simple Terms

R-value: How well insulation resists heat flow. A higher number generally means more insulating value.

U-factor: How easily heat passes through a building component such as a window. A lower number generally means better thermal performance.

ACH: Air changes per hour. It is used to describe how much air leaks through the building envelope during testing.

Continuous insulation: Insulation installed across framing members, often on the exterior side of the wall, to reduce heat loss through the framing.

EV-ready: Electrical infrastructure prepared for future electric-vehicle charging.

Prescriptive path: A compliance method that follows specific code-listed construction values and requirements.

AMENDMENT TO CHAPTER 44 – ENERGY CODE

State-Mandated Adoption of the 2024 International Energy Conservation Code

In accordance with Title 16, Chapter 76, § 7602 of the Delaware Code, the Town of Middletown is required to adopt and enforce the energy conservation code adopted by the State of Delaware. To comply with this State requirement, the Town hereby adopts the 2024 International Energy Conservation Code (IECC), as adopted by the State of Delaware.

The 2024 International Energy Conservation Code shall become effective within the Town of Middletown on April 1, 2027. Any permit application submitted on or after April 1, 2027, shall be designed, submitted, reviewed, and constructed in accordance with the applicable requirements of the 2024 IECC.

Permit applications submitted prior to April 1, 2027, shall be reviewed under the energy code in effect at the time the application is submitted.

Chapter 44. Energy Code

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