

## Passive House and the United States

The United States is a big country and consumes a vastly disproportionate amount of energy produced by non-renewable sources. Passive House is one concrete option with the power to change that fact and to make America less dependent on fossil fuels.

At the same time, the production of energy efficient products along with Passive House and EnerPHit design and construction creates much needed green sector employment. This is already taking place in Europe with Passive House driving the creation and stabilization of independent market contributors, many of which SMEs.

In short, Passive House can be a major contributor to economic wellbeing and environmental sustainability, especially for the US, to which the rest of the world looks and where there is so much to gain. This fact makes it all the more important that the concept be kept open to all who want to share in its development.

## Passive House qualification

### Certified Passive House Designer designation

Since the development of the Passive House Designer scheme in 2006, some 1500 professionals have earned the international designation of Certified Passive House Designer. This designation can be obtained in two ways:

- 1) by taking the International Passive House Designer exam with any of the growing number of accredited [training and examination bodies](#) worldwide, or, better yet,
- 2) through the submission of a report documenting a Passive House building, planned by the applicant and certified by a PHI accredited [Passive House Building Certifier](#). Please refer to iPHA's [education section](#) for more information.

The credential is valid for 5 years through either certification path.

### Certified Passive House Designer courses

Course providers worldwide may choose to use any materials they like in preparing their students for the international Passive House Designer exam and indeed, those wishing to take the exam may prepare themselves through self-study. For interested course providers, however, PHI offers its Passive House Designer course materials, available in a variety of languages. This material is based on the CEPH course materials, which resulted from an EU-funded project by the same name involving several partners. Upon completion

of a [two day "Train the Trainer" course](#), interested parties may sign a licensing agreement allowing use of the Passive House Designer course materials as a complete course for the purposes of preparing students to take the international Passive House Designer exam. Due to the material's roots as an EU Project, course providers must provide the complete course and the slides may not be adapted. Course providers are encouraged, however, to add their own slides to the course so as to cover regional specifics. Thus far, the Passive House Designer course materials have received outstanding feedback both from students and from the large number of course providers that use them.

### **It's all about building Passive Houses**

Designations and titles aside, however, what really counts is a person's knowledge as proven through completed Passive House buildings; it's the buildings, after all, that all this training is leading up to.

## **PHPP – the Passive House design tool**

The Passive House Planning Package (PHPP) is the key design tool used when planning a Passive House and as such, serves as the basis of verification for the Passive House Standard. While there are other design tools on the market, it is the PHPP's high level of accuracy that sets it apart: energy balances can be calculated with the PHPP to an accuracy of +/- 0.5kWh (roughly +/- 1700 BTU)!

### **IP vs. metric units**

PHI is aware of US Passive House designers' desire to work with the PHPP using IP units. Therefore, PHI is currently working with a local US developer to include a metric-imperial conversion tool in the updated PHPP which should be available early next year. With this newly updated software, no conversion of PHPP files will be required as both the metric and imperial units will be simultaneously visible. This new version will therefore allow the full transparency and facilitate better communication between the American and global Passive House communities.

### **PHPP resellers**

The PHPP is available for sale by multiple resellers worldwide. New contracts for qualified US resellers are currently being negotiated. Resellers must have an intimate knowledge of the PHPP and be able to support users. Organizations fulfilling these criteria that are interested in becoming distributors of the PHPP software may contract directly with the PHI to discuss becoming licensed resellers. PHI encourages multiple resellers and does not grant territorial rights.

## **Passive House Certification**

Passive House is a public good. You do not need any certificate to build one. Yet for those who would like to make use of the service, PHI, also

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*The international network for Passive House knowledge*

*Promoting the Passive House Standard worldwide*

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through its accredited [Building Certifiers worldwide](#), offers to check your plans to see whether they meet the Passive House Standard. This is not mandatory, but it may make for a more trusting relationship between you and your client. We stand with our reputation behind the “Certified Passive House” label.

### **Building Certifiers around the globe**

Certification knows no geographical jurisdictions: any of the currently 32 PHI accredited [Building Certifiers worldwide](#) may certify in PHI's name according to the Passive House Standard anywhere in the world. In order to increase its capacities for building certification worldwide, the Passive House Institute has encouraged and supported the training of multiple Passive House Building certifiers across the globe and is eager to train additional highly skilled professionals who wish to become independent Building Certifiers across the US. A training session for qualified candidates is scheduled for spring of 2012.

### **PHI's cooperation with Passive House stakeholders in the US**

The Passive House Institute (PHI) has chosen an approach to Passive House that opens the Standard to all. PHI encourages anybody interested in building Passive Houses to implement the Standard and is happy to support and work with the US building industry. The PHI has always encouraged an open market, having never trademarked “Passive House” nor granted regional monopolies or territories. PHI is interested in working with any and all Passive House organizations who embrace this concept.

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