

Source :

BANGKOK POST

61047145

Date : - 9 FEB 2018 Page :

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No :

New energy code for large buildings

Some structures must meet standard in 2018

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Buildings with an area greater than 10,000 square metres must adhere to a new building energy code (BEC) when it goes into force by mid-2018.

Nine kinds of newly built large buildings — hotels, offices, hospitals, department stores, theatres, gas stations, meeting convention halls, campus buildings and condominiums — will have to comply with the new BEC regulations, which were approved yesterday by the Energy Policy Administration Committee.

Twarath Sutabutr, director-general of the Energy Policy and Planning Office (Eppo), said property developers will be compelled to design and manage the new buildings

under the new regulations, which will be posted on the website of the Department of Alternative Energy Development and Efficiency (DEDE) at www.dede.go.th.

Elements of new buildings to be regulated include building materials, air-conditioning systems, lighting, hot water, renewable energy and the building's structure, with the expectation of cutting electricity consumption by 10%.

"We believe that the new BEC will not impact property developers, because building operators will enjoy reduced power bills when the buildings are completed and the operators themselves can create more value-added buildings using green or eco-friendly designs to attract buyers and tenants," Mr Twarath said.

He said enforcement of the BEC will be done in three steps. New buildings with an area greater than 10,000 sq m will be subject to the code in 2018. New buildings with an area between 5,000 and 10,000 sq m will have to comply with the code in 2019. New

buildings of 2,000-5,000 sq m will come under the code in 2020.

The new BEC regulations are an effort of DEDE, the Architect Council of Thailand and the Engineering Institute of Thailand to form a standard.

A large building of greater than 10,000 sq m is about equal to the size of a standard Tesco Lotus hypermarket.

An area of 5,000-10,000 sq m is similar to the size of a Tops Supermarket, and an area of 2,000-5,000 sq m resembles a five-storey office building.

Mr Twarath said the BEC regulations are aimed at cutting power consumption over the next 20 years by 13.7 billion kilowatt-hours, representing a power bill of roughly 48 billion baht.

The administration committee yesterday also updated Thailand's development of renewable power. As of December last year, total installed capacity amounted to 10,800 megawatts.

Of the total capacity, a power purchase



Workers build supports for a condominium in Bangkok. Large structures will be subject to the new energy code when it takes effect this year. PANUMAS SANGUANWONG

agreement was signed for capacity of 8,471MW, with 1,616MW under construction and 716MW being prepared before the PPA was signed.

Mr Twarath said renewable energy in December accounted for 7% of total power generation, lower than Eppo's previous estimate of 10%, because of lower capacity

utilisation of solar panels and wind farms, whose resources are inherently unstable because they generate power when the sun rises and the wind blows.