Housing Quality Standards

HQS

Quick Check Guide

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AND ASSOCIATES, INC.

Your handy reference to levels of deficiency for all eight inspectable areas and lead-based paint

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This Quick Check Guide should be used in conjunction with HQS inspection form HUD-52580-A or HUD-52580, the HUD Housing Choice Voucher Program Guidebook, your housing authority's administrative plan and appropriate Code of Federal Regulations.

1. LIVING ROOM: Space and Security

The dwelling unit must provide adequate space and security for the family

Acceptability Criteria

- The dwelling unit must have a living room.
- The dwelling unit must have a least one bedroom or living/sleeping room for every two persons. Other than very young children, children of opposite sex may not be required to occupy the same bedroom or living/ sleeping room.
- There must be at least one window in both the living room and each sleeping room.
- Dwelling unit windows that are accessible from the outside must be lockable.
- Exterior doors to the unit must be lockable.

A living room may be used as sleeping (bedroom) space, but no more than two persons may occupy the space.

Note: If the unit is an efficiency apartment, consider the living room present.

PASS 1

PASS 2

FAIL 3

FAIL 4

Condition and Security Tips

Check deterioration around windows for air and water entry.

Look/check if windows lock and are secure.

Photo Contents

1. Living room window
2. Window below 6 feet from the ground with lock
3. Inoperative latch
4. Window below 6 feet, no lock

Unit windows located on the first floor, at the basement level, on a fire escape, porch, or other outside space that can be reached from the ground and that are designed to be opened, must have a locking device. (Windows with sills less than six feet off the ground are considered accessible.) Traditional window locks, those provided by storm/screen combination windows, window pins, and nails are acceptable. Windows leading to a fire escape or required to meet ventilation requirements may not be permanently nailed shut.

Doors leading to the outside and common hallways, fire escapes, and porches (or otherwise accessible) from the ground must have locks. No specific type of lock is required (but no double key dead bolts).

Tenant Preference

The family may determine the adequacy of room sizes and room locations. The family is also responsible for deciding the acceptability of the type of door and window locks.

1. LIVING ROOM: Space and Security

The dwelling unit must provide adequate space and security for the family

Acceptability Criteria

- Each room must have adequate natural or artificial illumination to permit normal indoor activities and to support the health and safety of occupants.
- The dwelling unit must have sufficient electrical sources so occupants can use essential electrical appliances.
- The living room and each sleeping space must have at least two electrical outlets in proper operating condition. Permanent overhead or wall-mounted light fixtures may count as one of the required electrical outlets.

The PHA must be satisfied that the electrical system is free of hazardous conditions, including: exposed, uninsulated, or frayed wires, improper connections, improper insulation or grounding of any component of the system, overloading of capacity, or wires lying in or located near standing water or other unsafe places.

FAIL 1

PASS 2

FAIL 3

FAIL 4

Outlets must be properly installed in the baseboard, wall, or floor. Hanging light fixtures or outlets from electric wiring, missing cover plates on switches and outlets, badly cracked outlets or cover plates, exposed fuse box connections, and overloaded circuits are unacceptable.

Electricity

Do not count any of the following items or fixtures as outlets/fixtures: Table or floor lamps (these are **not** permanent light fixtures); ceiling lamps plugged into socket; extension cords.

If the electric service to the unit has been temporarily turned off check “Inconclusive.” Contact owner or manager after inspection to verify that electricity functions properly when service is turned on. Record this information on the checklist.

Tenant Preference

The family may determine whether the location and the number of outlets and fixtures (over and above those required for acceptability standards) are acceptable or if the amount of electrical service is adequate for the use of appliances, computers, or stereo equipment.

Photo Contents

1. Missing knockout/breaker
2. Panel looks good
3. Improperly installed outlet/exposed wires
4. Exposed wires and no support for light

1. LIVING ROOM: Space and Security

The dwelling unit must provide adequate space and security for the family

Window Condition

Rate the windows in the room (including windows in doors).

"Severe deterioration" means that the window no longer has the capacity to keep out the wind and the rain or is a cutting hazard. Examples are: missing or broken-out panes; dangerously loose cracked panes; windows that will not close; windows that, when closed, do not form a reasonably tight seal.

If there is only "moderate deterioration" of the windows, the item should "Pass." "Moderate deterioration" means windows which are reasonably weather-tight but show evidence of some aging, abuse, or lack of repair. Signs of deterioration are: minor crack in window pane; splintered sill; signs of some minor rotting in the window frame or the window itself; window panes loose because of missing window putty.

PASS 1

PASS 2

FAIL 3

FAIL 4

Security

"Accessible to outside" means: doors open to the outside or to a common public hall; windows accessible from the outside (e.g., basement and first floor); windows or doors leading onto a fire escape, porch, or other outside place that can be reached from the ground.

"Lockable" means: the window or door has a properly working lock, or is nailed shut, or the window is not designed to be opened. A storm window lock that is working properly is acceptable. Windows that are nailed shut are acceptable only if these windows are not needed for ventilation or as an alternate exit in case of fire.

Photo Contents

1. Properly operating window
2. Reinstall screen
3. Deteriorated window, will not close
4. Missing pane

2. KITCHEN: Food Preparation and Refuse Disposal

The dwelling unit must have suitable space and equipment to store, prepare and serve food in a sanitary manner

Acceptability Criteria

The dwelling unit must have an oven and a stove or range. A microwave oven may be substituted for a tenant-supplied oven and stove or range. A microwave oven may be substituted for an owner-supplied oven and stove or range if the tenant agrees and microwave ovens are furnished to both subsidized and unsubsidized tenants in the same building or on the premises. Hot plates are not acceptable substitutes for stoves or ranges. The oven must heat and all burners on the stove or range must work. All stove or range knobs must be present. The stove or range must be free of hazardous gas hook-ups, gas leaks, or electrical hazards.

Window Condition

Note: The absence of a window does not fail this item in the kitchen. If there is no window, check "Pass."

PASS 1

PASS 2

FAIL 3

FAIL 4

Tips on Condition

If both an oven and a stove or range are present, but the gas or electricity are turned off, check "Inconclusive." Contact owner or manager to get verification that facility works when gas is turned on. If both an oven and a stove or range are present and working, but defects exist, check "Pass" and note these to the right of the form. Possible defects are marked, dented, or scratched surfaces; cracked burner ring, limited size relative to family needs.

Photo Contents

1. Kitchen stove in good order
2. Oven clean with racks
3. Stove dirty with missing burner
4. Burners missing supports

All required equipment must be in proper operating condition. According to the lease, equipment may be supplied by either the owner or the family.

Tenant Preference

The family selects a unit with a size and type of equipment it finds acceptable and may choose to accept a microwave oven in place of a conventional oven, stove, or range if the oven/stove/range are tenant-supplied or if microwaves are furnished in both subsidized and unsubsidized units in the building or premises. The amount and type of storage space, the cosmetic conditions of all equipment, and the size and location of the kitchen are all determined by the family.

2. KITCHEN: Food Preparation and Refuse Disposal

The dwelling unit must have suitable space and equipment to store, prepare and serve food in a sanitary manner

Electrical Receptacles

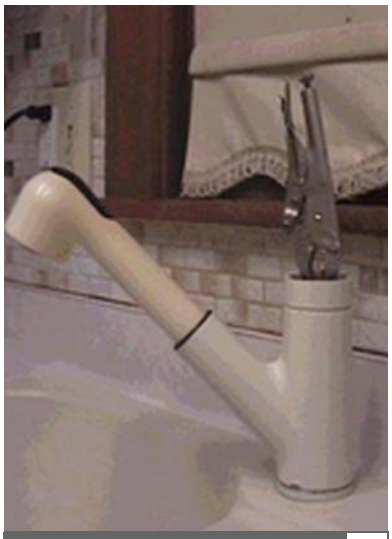
The HCV program regulations at 24 CFR 982.401(f) set forth the HQS requirements and acceptability criteria with respect to illumination and electricity for the housing unit. The regulations state that a unit must include the following acceptability criteria for electricity.

- The kitchen and bathroom must have one permanent ceiling or wall light fixture in proper operating condition
- The kitchen must have at least one electrical outlet in proper operating condition

Electricity

Note: The requirement is that at least one outlet and one permanent light fixture must be working

PASS 1



FAIL 2

PASS 3

FAIL 4

Photo Contents

1. Sink in good condition
2. Faucet missing parts, improper repair
3. Kitchen with food prep area (efficiency apartment)
4. Damaged cabinet

The inspector is responsible for determining whether the outlets are in "proper operating condition." While the regulation does not define what the Department considers "proper operating condition," HUD-Form 52580A; as well as Notice PIH 2010-10 (HA), March 31, 2010; cites examples of electrical hazards including:

- Broken wiring, non-insulated wiring or frayed wiring
- Improper types of wiring, connections or insulation
- Wires lying in or located near standing water or other unsafe places
- Light fixture hanging from electric wiring without other firm support or fixture
- Missing cover plates on switches or outlets
- Badly cracked outlets
- Exposed fuse box connections (missing: knockouts, fuses, breakers)
- Overloaded circuits evidenced by frequently "blown" fuses or tripped breakers (which the inspector determines by asking the tenant) or overfusing

3. BATHROOM: Sanitary Facilities

Most units have easily identifiable bathrooms

Acceptability Criteria

- The bathroom must be located in a separate room and have a flush toilet in proper operating condition.
- The unit must have a fixed basin (lavatory) with a sink trap and hot and cold running water in proper operating condition.
- The unit must have a shower or tub with hot and cold running water in proper operating condition.
- The facilities must utilize an approved public or private disposal system or a locally approved septic system.

The bathroom must be contained within the dwelling unit, afford privacy (usually meaning a door, although no lock is required), and be for the exclusive use of the occupants.

The tub/shower, toilet, and basin must have a proper sewer trap, drain, and vents to prevent the escape of sewer gases or severe leakage of water. Drains must not be clogged and the toilet must flush. Hot and cold water must be available at the tub, shower, and lavatory taps. The definition of hot water (temperature) required at the lavatory, tub, or shower should be determined from local health standards or applicable local code.

PASS 1

FAIL 2

PASS 3

FAIL 4

Flush Toilet in Enclosed Room in Unit

The toilet must be contained within the unit, be in proper operating condition, and be available for the exclusive use of the occupants of the unit (i.e., outhouses or facilities shared by occupants of other units are not acceptable). It must allow for privacy.

Not working means: the toilet is not connected to a water supply; it is not connected to a sewer drain; it is clogged; the connections, vents or traps are faulty to the extent that severe leakage of water or escape of gases occurs; the flushing mechanism does not function properly. If the water to the unit has been turned off, check "Inconclusive." Obtain verification from owner or manager that facility works properly when water is turned on.

Comment to the right of the form if the toilet is "present, exclusive, and working," but has the following types of defects: constant running; chipped or broken porcelain; slow draining.

If drain blockage is more serious and occurs further in the sewer line, causing backup, check item 7.6, "Fail," under the plumbing and heating part of the checklist. A sign of serious sewer blockage is the presence of numerous backed-up drains.

Tenant Preference

The tenant may determine acceptability of the cosmetic condition and quality of the sanitary facilities, including the size of the lavatory, tub, or shower, condition of faucets, minor leaks, scratches, or worn enamel on fixtures, and the location of the sanitary facilities within the dwelling unit.

Photo Contents

1. Water closet in working order
2. Missing hold down bolt (Johnny bolts or floor lag screws)
3. Adequate bathroom facilities
4. Missing bulb (exposed socket)

3. BATHROOM: Sanitary Facilities

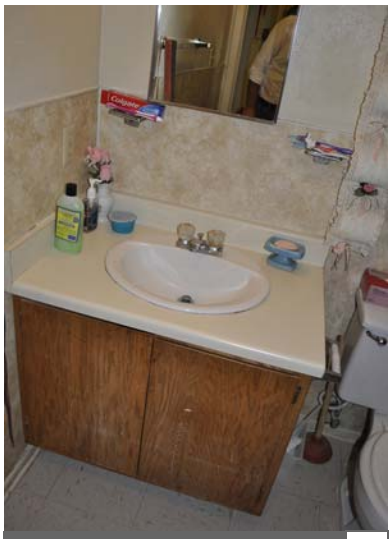
Most units have easily identifiable bathrooms

Note: Scattered bathroom facilities are acceptable (i.e., toilet, washbasin and tub or shower located in separate parts of the unit).

Fixed Wash Basin or Lavatory in Unit

The wash basin must be permanently installed (i.e., a portable washbasin does not satisfy the requirement). Also, a kitchen sink used to pass the requirements under Part 2 of the checklist (kitchen facilities) cannot also serve as the bathroom wash basin. The wash basin maybe located separate from the other bathroom facilities (e.g., in a hallway).

"Not working" means: the wash basin is not connected to a system that will deliver hot and cold running water; it is not connected to a properly operating drain; the connectors (or vents or traps) are faulty to the extent that leakage of water or escape of sewer gases occurs. If the water to the unit or the water heater unit has been turned off, check "Inconclusive." Obtain verification from owner or manager that the system is in working condition. Comment to the right of the form if the wash basin is "present and working," but has the following types of minor defects: insufficient water pressure; dripping faucets; minor leaks; cracked or chipped porcelain; slow drain.



PASS 1

PASS 2

PASS 3

PASS 4

Tub or Shower in Unit

"Not present" means that neither a tub nor shower is present in the unit. Again, these facilities need not be in the same room with the rest of the bathroom facilities. They must, however, be private.

"Not working" covers the same requirements detailed above for wash basin.

Comment to the right of the form if the tub or shower is present and working, but has the following types of defects: dripping faucet; minor leaks; cracked porcelain; slow drain; absent or broken support rod for shower curtain.

Photo Contents

1. Secure wash basin on vanity
2. Wall mounted lavatory secure
3. Adequate facilities present
4. Missing stopper (pass with comment)

What to Look For

Bathroom hazards that may endanger occupants include:

- Broken ceramic, metal, or glass fixtures that may pose a hazard. This includes towel racks, soap dishes, medicine cabinets, and mirrors as well.
- A leaking hot water faucet may pose a scalding threat.

Single Room Occupancy (SRO)

- SRO's can share bathroom

3. BATHROOM: Sanitary Facilities

Most units have easily identifiable bathrooms

Ventilation

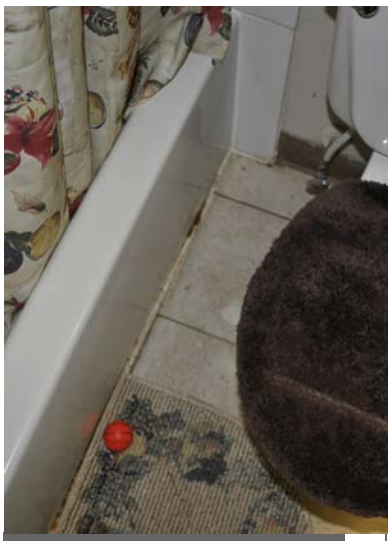
Bathroom areas must have one openable window or other adequate exhaust ventilation.

Working vent systems include: ventilation shafts (non-mechanical vents) and electric fans. Electric vent fans must function when switch is turned on and must operate as intended. (Make sure that any malfunctions are not due to the fan not being plugged in.) If electric current to the unit has not been turned on (and there is no openable window), check “Inconclusive.”Obtain verification from owner or manager that system works.

Note: Exhaust vents must be vented to the outside, attic, or crawlspace.

PASS 1

FAIL 2



FAIL 3

PASS 4

Photo Contents

1. Ventilation, working window
2. Missing lens shade/light cover
3. Unsanitary condition
4. Meet HQS Electrical Requirements (Light fixture)

The PHA must determine if the bathroom facilities are free of hazards which may endanger the occupants such as damaged or broken fixtures and plumbing leaks. Conditions which do not affect the acceptability of the bathroom include tenant preference items and minor faucets drips.

Only one bathroom is required to meet HQS. Additional bathrooms do not have to contain all plumbing fixtures (tub/shower, toilet or lavatory), but if present, they must be properly plumbed, be free of sewer gases, and not create any unsanitary conditions.

Other room standards that apply to bathroom facilities, such as illumination and electricity, are discussed under those performance requirements.

The requirement for electricity is that at least one permanent light fixture is present and working.

The absence of a window does not fail this item. If there is no window, but a working vent system is present and working it, then this item would pass.

4. OTHER ROOMS: Used for Living and Halls

Ceiling, walls, and floor condition

Acceptability Criteria

- Ceilings, walls, and floors must not have any serious defects such as severe bulging or leaning, large holes, loose surface materials, severe buckling, missing parts, or other serious damage.
- The foundation and exterior wall structure and surface must not have any serious defects such as serious leaning, buckling, sagging, large holes, or defects that may result in air infiltration or vermin infestation.

Ceiling Condition

"Unsound or hazardous" means the presence of such serious defects that either a potential exists for structural collapse or that large cracks or holes allow significant drafts to enter the unit. The condition includes: severe bulging or buckling; large holes; missing parts; falling or in danger of falling loose surface materials (other than paper or paint).Pass ceilings that are basically sound but have some nonhazardous defects, including: small holes or cracks; missing or broken ceiling tiles; water stains; soiled surfaces; unpainted surfaces; peeling paint.

PASS 1

FAIL 2

FAIL 3

FAIL 4

Wall Condition

"Unsound or hazardous" includes: serious defects such that the structural safety of the building is threatened, such as severe buckling, bulging or leaning; damaged or loose structural members; large holes; air infiltration.Pass walls that are basically sound but have some nonhazardous defects, including: small or shallow holes; cracks; loose or missing parts; unpainted surfaces; peeling paint.

Photo Contents

1. Other room used for living
2. Ceiling falling danger
3. Ceiling damage
4. Old floor, but no tripping hazard
   (Duct tape used as repair)

Floor Condition

"Unsound or hazardous" means the presence of such serious defects that a potential exists for structural collapse or other threats to safety (e.g., tripping) or large cracks or holes allow substantial drafts from below the floor. The condition includes: severe buckling or major movements under walking stress; damaged or missing parts.Pass floors that are basically sound but have some nonhazardous defects, including: heavily worn or damaged floor surface (for example, scratches or gouges in surface, missing portions of tile or vinyl sheet goods, previous water damage). If there is a floor covering, including paint or sealant, also note the condition, especially if badly worn, soiled, or peeling.

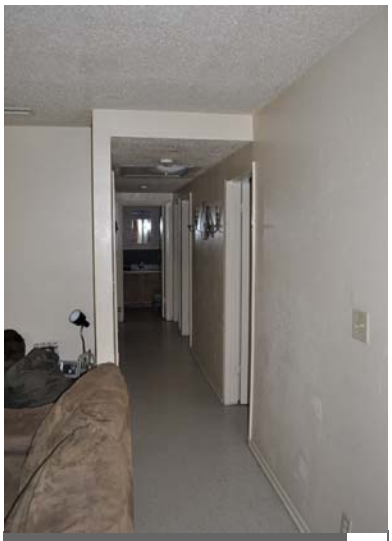
4. OTHER ROOMS: Used for Living and Halls

Ceiling, walls, and floor condition

Complete an “Other Room” checklist for as many “other rooms used for living” as are present in the unit and not already noted in Parts l, 2, and 3 of the checklist on the long form. See the discussion below for definition of “used for living.” Also complete an “Other Room” checklist for all entrance halls, corridors, and staircases that are located within the unit and are part of the area used for living. If a hall, entry and/or stairway are contiguous, rate them as a whole(i.e., as part of one space).

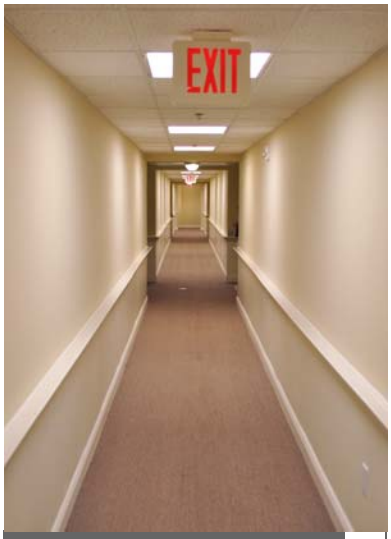
Additional forms for rating “Other Rooms” are provided in the checklist.

Rooms “used for living” are areas of the unit that are walked through or lived in on a regular basis. Include any of these areas if they are frequently used (e.g., a finished basement/play-room, a closed-in porch that is used as a bedroom during summer months). Occasional use of a washer or dryer in an otherwise unused room does not constitute regular use.



PASS 1

PASS 2



PASS 3

PASS 4

If the unit is vacant and you do not know the eventual use of a particular room, complete an “Other Room” checklist if there is any chance that the room will be used on a regular basis. If there is no chance that the room will be used on a regular basis, do not include it (e.g., an unfinished basement) since it will be checked under Part 5, All Secondary Rooms (rooms not used for living).

Photo Contents

1. Hallway with light
2. Lighting from window illuminates bedroom
3. Hallway in good condition
4. Hallway with exposed electrical wire (low voltage)

The dwelling unit must have sufficient electrical sources so occupants can use essential electrical appliances.

The windows must adequately protect the unit’s interior from the weather. Windows designed to open must not be painted or nailed shut.

There must be at least one window in both the living room and each sleeping room.

The living room and each sleeping space must have at least two electrical outlets in proper operating condition. Permanent overhead or wall-mounted light fixtures may count as one of the required electrical outlets.

Each room must have adequate natural or artificial illumination to permit normal indoor activities and to support the health and safety of occupants.

5. SECONDARY ROOMS: Rooms Not Used for Living

If any room in the unit did not meet the requirements for "other room used for living" in Part 4, it is to be considered a "secondary room (not used for living)." Rate all of these rooms together (i.e., a single Part 5 checklist for all secondary rooms in the unit).Inspection is required of the following two items since hazardous defects under these items could jeopardize the rest of the unit, even if present in rooms not used for living: 5.2 Security, 5.3 Electrical Hazards. Also, be observant of any other potentially hazardous features in these rooms and record under 5.4.

None

If there are no "Secondary Rooms (rooms not used for living)," check "None" and go on to Part 6.

FAIL 1

FAIL 2

PASS 3

FAIL 4

Explanations of these items is the same as those provided for "Living Room"

Additional Note

In recording "other potentially hazardous features," note (in the space provided) the means of access to the room with the hazard and check the box under "Inconclusive." Discuss the hazard with the HA inspection supervisor to determine "Pass" or "Fail." Include defects like: large holes in floor, walls or ceilings; evidence of structural collapse; windows in condition of severe deterioration; and deteriorated paint surfaces.

Photo Contents

1. Accessible walk-in attic with exposed electrical wire used as play area
2. Stair to basement, tripping hazard and NMC wire, electrical hazard
3. Basement (No plumbing heating, or electrical hazards)
4. Fire damaged roof in storage area

6. BUILDING EXTERIOR: Structure and Materials

The dwelling unit must be structurally sound

Acceptability Criteria

- Ceilings, walls, and floors must not have any serious defects such as severe bulging or leaning, large holes, loose surface materials, severe buckling, missing parts, or other serious damage.
- The roof must be structurally sound and weather-proof.
- The foundation and exterior wall structure and surface must not be unsound or hazardous and must not have any serious defects such as serious leaning, buckling, sagging, large holes, or defects that may result in air infiltration or vermin infestation.
- The condition and equipment of interior and exterior stairs, halls, porches, and walkways must not present the danger of tripping and falling.

PASS 1

FAIL 2

PASS 3

FAIL 4

The PHA must examine each of the elements listed in the acceptability criteria to determine that each is structurally sound, will not collapse, and does not present a danger to residents through falling or missing parts, or tripping hazards. The PHA must determine that the unit is free from water, excessive air, and vermin infiltration.

Photo Contents

1. Building exterior in good condition
2. Sidewalk, tripping hazard
3. Building exterior in good condition
4. Rotten deck, loose boards

Handrails are required when four or more consecutive steps (risers) are present, and protective railings are required when porches, balconies, and stoops are thirty inches or more off the ground.

Manufactured homes must have proper tie-down devices capable of surviving wind loads common to the area (state and local codes should be applied).

Tenant Preference

Families may determine whether minor defects, such as lack of paint or worn flooring or carpeting will affect the livability of the unit. (Excluding defective paint on pre-1978 units with a child under 6 that resides or is intended to reside in the unit.)

6. BUILDING EXTERIOR: Structure and Materials

The dwelling unit must be structurally sound

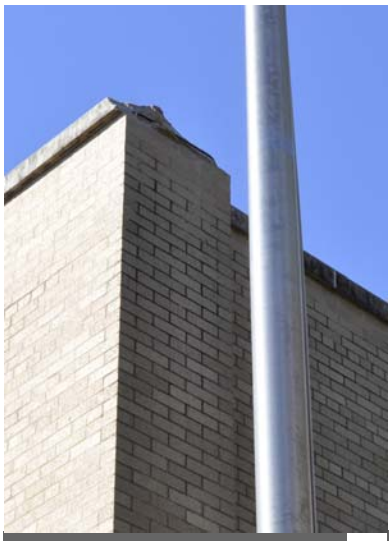
The structure must not be unsound or hazardous, meaning it should not present any threat to the health and safety of the occupants and must protect the occupants from the environment.

Condition of Chimney

The chimney should not be seriously leaning or showing evidence of significant disintegration (i.e., many missing bricks).

Manufactured Homes: Tiedowns

Manufactured homes must be placed on a site in a stable manner and be free from hazards such as sliding and wind damage. Manufactured homes must be securely anchored by a tiedown device which distributes and transfers the loads imposed by the unit to appropriate ground anchors so as to resist wind overturning and sliding, unless a variation has been approved by the HUD field office.



FAIL 1

FAIL 2

PASS 3

FAIL 4

Condition of Roof and Gutters

"Unsound and hazardous" means: The roof has serious defects such as serious buckling or sagging, indicating the potential of structural collapse; large holes or other defects that would result in significant air or water infiltration (in most cases severe exterior defects will be reflected in equally serious surface defects within the unit (e.g., buckling, water damage). The gutters, downspouts, and soffits (area under the eaves) show serious decay and have allowed the entry of significant air or water into the interior of the structure. Gutters and downspouts are not, however, required to pass. If the roof is not observable and there is no sign of interior water damage, check "Pass."

Photo Contents

1. Cap bricks missing on parapet wall or chimney
2. Roof, falling gutters and downspouts
3. Building exterior, no missing siding components
4. Building roof in bad condition

Note: If a chimney and or roof is not visable it is recommended to note "unobservable" on the report.

7. HEATING AND PLUMBING

Thermal environment/Water supply must be free of contamination

Heating Acceptability Criteria

- There must be a safe system for heating the dwelling unit, such as electric baseboard, radiator, or forced air systems. In order to ensure a healthy living environment appropriate for the climate, the system must be able to provide adequate heat either directly or indirectly to all rooms used for living.
- If present, the air conditioning system or evaporative cooler must safely provide adequate cooling to each room.
- The heating and/or air conditioning system must be working and be in proper operating condition.
- The dwelling unit must not contain unvented room heaters that burn gas, oil, or kerosene. Electric heaters are acceptable.

PASS 1

PASS 2

PASS 3

PASS 4

Adequacy of Heating Equipment

"Adequate heat" means that the heating system is capable of delivering enough heat to assure a healthy environment in the unit (appropriate to the climate). The PHA is responsible for defining what constitutes a healthy living environment in the area of the country in which it operates.

Portable electric room heaters or kitchen stoves or ranges with a built-in heat unit are not acceptable as a primary source of heat for units located in areas where climate conditions require regular heating.

Photo Contents

1. Direct heat source, radiator
2. Central heat and air
3. Typical wall furnace in good condition
4. Roof top AC unit in working condition

"Directly or indirectly to all rooms used for living" means:

- "Directly" means that each room used for living has a heat source (e.g., working radiator; working hot air register; baseboard heat).
- "Indirectly" means that, if there is no heat source present in the room, heat can enter the room easily from a heated adjacent room (e.g., a dining room may not have a radiator, but would receive heat from the heated living room through a large open archway).

7. HEATING AND PLUMBING

Thermal environment/Water supply must be free of contamination

Safety of Heating Equipment

Examples of “unvented fuel burning space heaters” are: portable kerosene units; unvented open flame portable units.

“Other unsafe conditions” include: breakage or damage to heating system such that there is a potential for fire or other threats to safety; improper connection of flues allowing exhaust gases to enter the living area; improper installation of equipment (e.g., proximity of fuel tank to heat source, absence of safety devices); indications of improper use of equipment (e.g., evidence of heavy build-up of soot, creosote, or other substance in the chimney); disintegrating equipment; combustible materials near heat source or flue.

PASS 1

PASS 2

PASS 3

FAIL 4

If you are unable to gain access to the primary heating system in the unit check “Inconclusive.” Contact the owner or manager for verification system safety. If the system has passed a recent local inspection, check “Pass.” This applies especially to units in which heat is provided by a large scale, complex central heating system that serves multiple units (e.g., a boiler in the basement of a large apartment building). In most cases, a large scale heating system for a multi-unit building will be subject to periodic safety inspections by a local public agency. Check with the owner or manager to determine the date and outcome of the last such inspection, or look for an inspection certificate posted on the heating system.

Ventilation and Adequacy of Cooling

“Working cooling equipment” includes: central (fan) ventilation system; evaporative cooling system; room or central air conditioning.

Check “Inconclusive” if there are no openable windows and it is impossible, or inappropriate, to test whether a cooling system works. Check with other tenants in the building (in a multi-unit structure) and with the owner or manager for verification of the adequacy of ventilation and cooling.

Photo Contents

1. Cooling equipment (AC compressor)
2. Boiler inspection certificate
3. Multifamily boiler system in good condition
4. Unvented kerosene heating appliance, not allowed

7. HEATING AND PLUMBING

Thermal environment/Water supply must be free of contamination

Tenant Preference

The PHA has no control over energy conservation measures, such as dwelling insulation or installation of storm windows and doors. The family must assess whether a dwelling without these items is acceptable; the family must take into account the cost of utilities billed to the family and personal feelings about adequate heat. Dwellings that are poorly insulated or lack storm windows are generally drafty and more difficult to heat and cool.

PASS 1

FAIL 2

PASS 3

PASS 4

Photo Contents

1. No storm window, not required
2. Worn or missing weatherstripping at entry door
3. No insulation in non living space
   (This would fail on electrical)
4. Weatherstripping at entry door

7. HEATING AND PLUMBING

Thermal environment/Water supply must be free of contamination

Plumbing Acceptability Criteria

- The dwelling unit must be served by an approved public or private water supply that is sanitary and free from contamination.
- The PHA should be satisfied that the water supply is approved by the State or local jurisdiction.
- Clean water must be distributed to all unit fixtures and waste water must leave the unit to an approved area without presence of sewer gas and backups.
- Plumbing fixtures and pipes must be free of major leaks and threats to health and safety.
- Water-heating equipment must be installed safely and must not have any present safety hazards to families. All water heaters must be free of leaks, have temperature/pressure relief valves, and a discharge line. Unless safety dividers or shields are installed, the location of water heaters must not present hazards by being in bedrooms, living areas, or other areas where safety hazards may exist. Fuel-burning equipment must have proper clearance from combustible materials and be properly vented.

FAIL 1

FAIL 2

PASS 3

FAIL 4

Water Heater

"Location presents hazard" means that the gas or oil water heater is located in living areas or closets where safety hazards may exist (e.g., water heater located in very cluttered closet with cloth and paper items stacked against it). Gas water heaters in bedrooms or other living areas must have safety dividers or shields.

To pass, gas or oil-fired water heaters must be vented into a properly installed chimney or flue leading outside. Electric water heaters do not require venting.

If it is impossible to view the water heater, check "Inconclusive." Obtain verification of safety of system from owner or manager.

Check "Pass" if the water heater has passed a local inspection. This applies primarily to hot water that is supplied by a large scale complex water heating system serving multiple units (e.g., water heating system in large apartment building).

Photo Contents

1. Typical water heater properly installed (TPR valve discharge line inappropriate)
2. Water heater leaking
3. Properly installed electric water heater
4. Improperly installed flue (runs downhill)

7. HEATING AND PLUMBING

Thermal environment/Water supply must be free of contamination

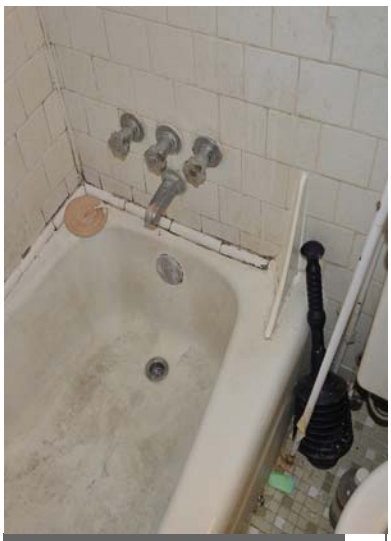
Sewer Connection

If the structure is connected to the city or town sewer system, check “Pass.” If the structure has its own private disposal system (e.g.,septic field), inquire into the nature of the system and determine whether this type of system can meet appropriate health and safety regulations. The following conditions constitute “evidence of sewer back up:” strong sewer gas smell in the basement or outside of unit; numerous clogged or very slow drains; marshy areas outside of unit above septic field.

PASS 1

FAIL 2

PASS 3



FAIL 4

Plumbing

“Corrosion” (causing serious and persistent levels of rust or contamination in the drinking water) can be determined by observing the color of the drinking water at several taps. Badly corroded pipes will produce noticeably brownish water. If the tenant is currently occupying the unit, he or she should be able to provide information about the persistence of this condition. (Make sure that the “rust colored water” is not a temporary condition caused by city or town maintenance of main water lines.)

Photo Contents

1. Proper drain with “P” trap
2. Lavatory not draining
3. Sewer cleanout in yard
4. Tub not draining, marginal housekeeping (Health and safety)

8. GENERAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Acceptability Criteria

- The unit must have private access.
- In case of fire, the building must contain an alternate means of exit such as fire stairs or windows including use of a ladder for windows above the second floor.

The PHA must insure that the location of smoke detectors conforms with local and/or state Fire marshall's requirements.

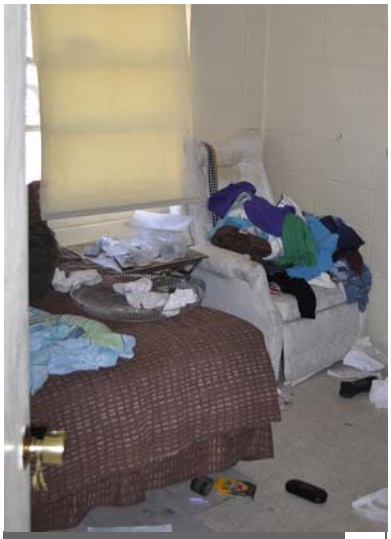
The PHA must determine that smoke detectors are located and installed in accordance with National Fire Protection Association Standards. All smoke detectors must be in operating condition.

Consultation with the local fire officials is recommended regarding acceptable types and location of smoke detectors.

FAIL 1

FAIL 2

FAIL 3



FAIL 4

Smoke Detectors

At least one battery-operated or hard-wired smoke detector must be present and working on each level of the unit, including the basement, but not the crawl spaces and unfinished attic.

If the dwelling unit is occupied by any hearing-impaired person, smoke detectors must have an alarm system designed for hearing-impaired persons as specified in NFPA 74 (or successor standards).

What to Look For:

- Use and maintenance of the unit must be possible without unauthorized use of other private properties.
- The building must provide an alternate means of exit in case of fire.

Photo Contents

1. Mold like substance growing on ceiling
2. Smoke detector improperly installed too close to wall
3. Hazardous debris
4. Garbage, heavy accumulation of debris

8. GENERAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Access to Unit

"Through another unit" means that access to the unit Is only possible by means of passage through another dwelling unit.

Exits

"Acceptable fire exit" means that the building must have an alternative means of exit that meets local or state regulations in case of fire which could include:

- An openable window if the unit is on the first floor or second floor or easily accessible to the ground.
- A back door opening on to a porch with a stairway leading to the ground.
- Fire escape, fire ladder, or fire stairs.

"Blocked" means that the exit is not useable due to conditions such as debris, storage, door or window nailed shut, broken lock.

PASS 1

FAIL 2

PASS 3

FAIL 4

Note: The HA has the final responsibility for deciding whether the type of emergency exit Is acceptable, although the tenant should assist in making the decision.

Photo Contents

1. Interior stair in good condition
2. Exterior stair damaged, access blocked
3. Smoke detector
4. Fire escape stair structurally unsound

Tenant Preference

The tenant should assist the PHA in determining if the type of emergency exit is acceptable.

The family is not permitted to exercise any tenant preference regarding smoke detector requirements.

8. GENERAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Acceptability Criteria

- The dwelling unit must be free from dangerous air pollution levels from carbon monoxide, sewer gas, fuel gas, dust, and other harmful pollutants.
- There must be adequate air circulation in the dwelling unit.

The PHA must be satisfied that air pollutants such as gas leaks, industrial outputs, and heavy traffic would not present a health hazard.

Air circulation should be checked to determine adequate ventilation. Air conditioning (A/C) provides adequate circulation as do ceiling and vent fans.

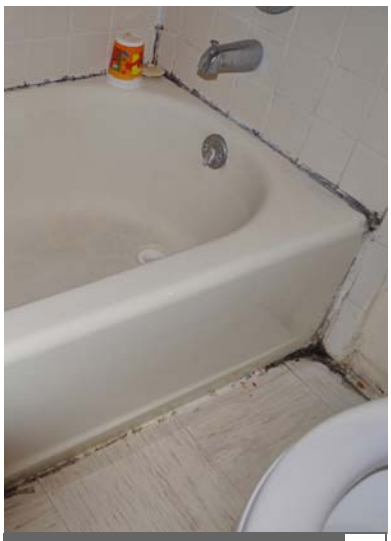
The windows must adequately protect the unit's interior from the weather. Windows designed to open must not be painted or nailed shut unless there is one other openable window in the room. The ventilating bathroom fan in the bathroom must operate as intended.

- The dwelling unit and its equipment must be in sanitary condition.

PASS 1

FAIL 2

PASS 3



FAIL 4

The PHA must ensure that the unit is free of rodents and heavy accumulations of trash, garbage, or other debris that may harbor vermin. Infestation by mice, roaches, or other vermin particular to the climate must also be considered. The unit must have adequate barriers to prevent infestation.

Interior Air Quality

If the inspector has any questions about whether an existing poor air quality condition should be considered dangerous, he or she should check with the local health and safety department (city, town, or county).

Photo Contents

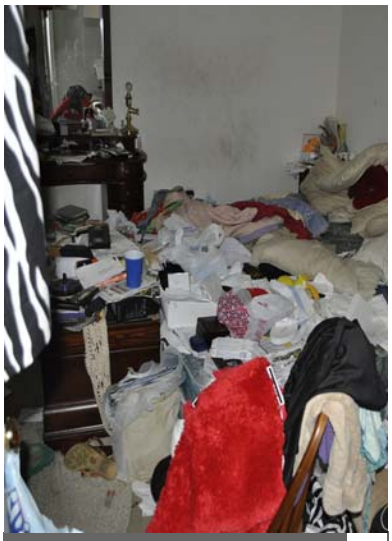
1. Window properly installed and maintained allowing for fresh air circulation
2. Poor air circulation
3. Building exterior and grounds in good condition
4. Mold like substance (Caused by poor housekeeping habits)

8. GENERAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Garbage and Debris

"Heavy accumulation" means large piles of trash and garbage, discarded furniture, and other debris (not temporarily stored awaiting removal) that might harbor rodents. This may occur inside the unit, in common areas, or outside. It usually means a level of accumulation beyond the capacity of an individual to pick up within an hour or two.

PASS 1



FAIL 2

PASS 3

FAIL 4

Refuse Disposal

"Adequate covered facilities" includes: trash cans with covers, garbage chutes, dumpsters (i.e., large scale refuse boxes with lids); trash bags (if approvable by local public agency). "Approvable by local public agency" means that the local health and sanitation department (city, town or county) approves the type of facility in use.

Note: Check with the local health and sanitation department to determine which types of facilities are acceptable and include this in the inspection requirements.

If the unit is vacant and there are no adequate covered facilities present, check "Inconclusive." Contact the owner or manager for verification of facilities provided when the unit is occupied.

Tenant Preference

Tenants may determine whether window and door screens, filters, fans, or other devices for proper ventilation are adequate to meet personal needs.

Provided the minimum standards required by the acceptability criteria have been met, the tenant must determine whether the unit is in an adequate sanitary condition. Occasional mice and roaches may be acceptable to the tenant.

Photo Contents

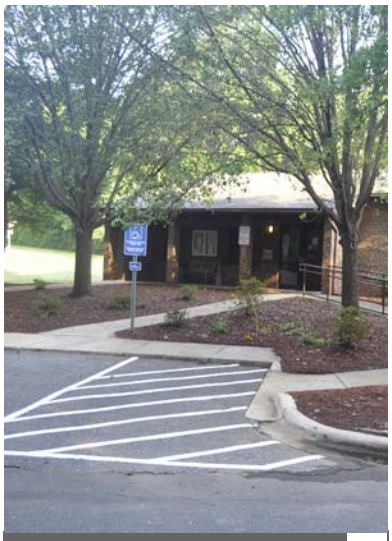
1. Building exterior and grounds free of garbage and debris
2. Interior accumulation of debris
3. Garbage cans with tight fitting lids
4. Accumulation of trash and debris at exterior of unit

8. GENERAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Acceptability Criteria

- The site and neighborhood may not be subject to serious adverse natural or manmade environmental conditions, such as dangerous walks or steps, instability, flooding, poor drainage, septic tank back-ups or sewer hazards, mudslides, abnormal air pollution, smoke or dust, excessive noise, vibration, or vehicular traffic, excessive accumulations of trash, vermin, or rodent infestation, or fire hazards.

The PHA determines whether any of the above conditions seriously and continually affect the health or safety of the residents. PHAs should be careful not to restrict housing choice in deciding acceptability. Failing a unit because the neighborhood is considered “bad” is not appropriate. Take into account whether private unassisted residents are living in the same neighborhood.



PASS 1

FAIL 2

PASS 3

FAIL 4

- The condition and equipment of interior and exterior stairs, halls, porches, and walkways must not present the danger of tripping and falling.
- Elevators must be working safely.

Photo Contents

1. Site and neighborhood clean and safe
2. Severe tripping hazard at top of steps
3. Common hallway clean and in good repair
4. Exterior sidewalk seriously heaved, tripping hazard (sidewalk belonging to property)

8. GENERAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Site and Neighborhood Conditions

Examples of conditions that would "seriously and continuously endanger the health or safety of the residents" are:

- Other buildings on or near the property that pose serious hazards (e.g., dilapidated shed or garage with potential for structural collapse)
- Evidence of flooding or major drainage problems
- Evidence of mud slides or large land settlement or collapse
- Proximity to open sewage
- Unprotected heights (cliffs, quarries, mines, sandpits)
- Fire hazards
- Abnormal air pollution or smoke which continues throughout the year and is determined to seriously endanger health
- Continuous or excessive vibration of vehicular traffic (if the unit is occupied, ask the tenant)

PASS 1

FAIL 2

FAIL 3

FAIL 4

Interior Stairs and Common Halls

"Loose, broken, or missing steps" should fail if they present a serious risk of tripping or falling.

A handrail is required on extended sections of stairs (generally four or more consecutive steps). A railing is required on unprotected heights such as around stairwells.

"Other hazards" include conditions such as bare electrical wires and tripping hazards.

Other Interior Hazards

Examples of other hazards might be: a broken bathroom fixture with a sharp edge in a location where it represents a hazard; a protruding nail in a doorway.

Elevators

Note: At the time the HA is setting up its inspection program, it will determine local licensing practices for elevators. Inspectors should then be aware of these practices in evaluating this item (e.g., check inspection date). If no elevator check "Not Applicable."

Tenant Preference

Taking into consideration the type of neighborhood, presence of drug activity, commercial enterprises, and convenience to shopping and other facilities, the family selects a unit.

Photo Contents

1. Exterior in good condition
2. Double keyed exit door (Fire egress concern)
3. Abandoned property, unsafe conditions
4. Stair lacking handrail, in poor condition, unacceptably steep and tripping hazard

LEAD-BASED PAINT

Acceptability Criteria

Lead-based paint requirements apply to dwelling units built prior to 1978 that are occupied or can be occupied by families with children under six years of age, excluding zero bedroom dwellings.

General

If the unit was built January 1, 1978, or after, no child under six will occupy or currently occupies it, is a 0-BR, elderly or handicapped unit with no children under six on the lease or expected, has been certified lead-based paint free by a certified lead-based paint inspector (no lead-based paint present or no lead-based paint present after removal of lead-based paint.), check NA and do not inspect painted surfaces.

FAIL 1

FAIL 2

PASS 3

FAIL 4

Interior Surfaces

This requirement applies to all painted surfaces (building components) within the unit. (Do not include tenant belongings). Surfaces to receive a visual assessment for deteriorated paint include walls, floors, ceilings, built in cabinets (sink bases), baseboards, doors, door frames, windows systems including mullions, sills, or frames and any other painted building component within the unit. Deteriorated paint includes any painted surface that is peeling, chipping, chalking, cracking, damaged or otherwise separated from the substrate.

Clearance test needed when *de minimis level* is exceeded.

All deteriorated paint surfaces **more than 2 sq. ft. in any one interior room or space, or more than 10% of the total surface area of an interior type of component with a small surface area (i.e., window sills, baseboards, and trim)** must be stabilized (corrected) in accordance with all safe work practice requirements and clearance is required. **If the deteriorated painted surface is less than 2 sq. ft. or less than 10% of the component, only stabilization is required. Clearance testing is not required.** Stabilization means removal of deteriorated paint, repair of the substrate, and application of a new protective coating or paint. Lead-based paint owner certification is required following stabilization activities, except for *de minimis level* repairs.

Photo Contents

1. More than 2 sq. ft. in interior room
2. More than 10% of window trim
3. Zero bedroom senior building
4. Interior wood window with peeling paint

LEAD-BASED PAINT

Exterior Surfaces

If the unit was built January 1, 1978 or after, no child under age six will occupy or currently occupies, is a 0-BR, elderly or handicapped unit with no children under age six on the lease or expected, has been certified lead-based paint free by a certified lead-based paint inspector (no lead-based paint present or no lead-based paint present after removal of lead), check NA and do not inspect painted surfaces. Visual assessment for deteriorated paint applies to all exterior painted surfaces (building components) associated with the assisted unit including windows, window sills, exterior walls, floors, porches, railings, doors, decks, stairs, play areas, garages, fences or other areas if frequented by children under age six. All deteriorated paint surfaces **more than 20 sq. ft. in total on exterior surfaces** must be stabilized (corrected) in accordance with all safe work practice requirements. **If the painted surface is less than 20 sq. ft., only stabilization is required. Clearance testing is not required.** Stabilization means removal of deteriorated paint, repair of the substrate, and application of a new protective coating or paint. Lead-based paint owner certification is required following stabilization activities except for *de minimis level* repairs.

PASS 1

FAIL 2

FAIL 3

FAIL 4

Owner Certification

If the owner is required to correct any lead-based paint hazards at the property including deteriorated paint or other hazards identified by a visual assessor, a certified lead-based paint risk assessor, or certified lead-based paint inspector, the PHA must obtain certification that the work has been done in accordance with all applicable requirements of 24 CFR Part 35. The lead-based paint owner certification must be received by the PHA before the execution of the HAP contract or within the time period stated by the PHA in the owner HQS violation notice. Receipt of the completed and signed lead-based paint owner certification signifies that all HQS lead-based paint requirements have been met and no reinspection by the HQS inspector is required.

Tenant Preference

Families with children under 6 years of age have no decision-making authority related to the presence of lead-based paint.

- The Lead-Based Paint Poisoning Prevention Act as amended (42 U.S.C. 4821–4846) and the Residential Lead-Based Paint Hazard Reduction Act of 1992 and implementing regulations at 24 CFR Part 35 Subparts A, B, M, and R apply to the housing choice voucher program.

Photo Contents

1. Window trim and components in well maintained condition
2. Exterior wall exceeds *de minimis* levels
3. Interior wood window with peeling paint
4. Exterior window with peeling paint

ELECTRICAL NOTICE PIH 2010-10

GROUNDING

Types of Outlets and Their Proper Operating Condition

In response to an OIG audit, HUD is issuing this Notice to clarify the proper operating condition of electrical outlets (110V/120V). There are two basic types of outlets: two-pronged (also called “two-slotted”) and three-pronged outlets. Three-pronged outlets have an additional hole for a ground wire, and are “grounded outlets.” Two-pronged outlets are “ungrounded.” Generally, original two-pronged, ungrounded outlets and original three-pronged, grounded outlets are acceptable under the HQS.”Upgraded” outlets, which have been changed from two-pronged to three-pronged, are the major area of concern in this Notice.

PASS 1

PASS 2

FAIL 3

PASS 4

Ungrounded Outlets

Older construction (pre-1975) housing will usually have ungrounded two-pronged outlets, which is an acceptable type of outlet under the HQS. Homes constructed with a two-wire electrical system include only a hot and neutral wire. Two-pronged ungrounded systems and outlets are acceptable under HQS as long as the outlet is in proper operating condition. An owner does not need to upgrade the electrical system of the unit (convert two-pronged outlets to three-pronged) in order for the unit to pass an HQS inspection.

Grounded Outlets

Newer construction housing will usually have three-pronged outlets, which are acceptable under HQS if the outlets are grounded. Newer units constructed with a three-wire electrical system include a hot, neutral, and ground wire. This Notice outlines traditional methods of testing grounded outlets for proper operating condition below.

Photo Contents

1. Duplex receptacle with test device lit 3 prong grounded
2. GFCI receptacle with test device showing open ground
3. Duplex receptacle 3 prong test device showing open ground
4. Duplex receptacle with test device lit 2 wire 2 prong ungrounded

"Upgraded" Outlets

Many of the cords for today's appliances contain three-pronged plugs, which can cause problems when an older home does not have three-pronged outlets for these grounded plugs. In the case of older homes, owners often replace two-pronged, ungrounded outlets with three-pronged, grounded type outlets in order to establish appropriate outlets for appliances that have cords with three-pronged plugs. However, in some cases, owners may replace two-pronged, ungrounded outlets with the three-pronged, grounded type outlets without the necessary rewiring that adds a ground wire to the newly installed, grounded type outlet.

Three-pronged, grounded type outlets should not be substituted for ungrounded outlets unless (1) a ground wire is connected to the outlet, or (2) a Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI) protects the outlet. Installing a new ground wire may require a licensed electrician to install a new wire to the circuit breaker box and may be prohibitively expensive. A more cost-effective method is to protect the outlet with a GFCI, which provides protection to the outlet. If the GFCI senses a difference in current flow between the hot and the neutral terminals, it shuts off the flow of current to the outlet.

An older construction house with a grounded outlet would be an indication that the unit may have undergone some upgrading. In such cases, the Department recommends testing a sample of outlets in the unit to determine if three-pronged outlets are in proper operating condition, in addition to verifying the proper operating condition of the required number of outlets per room.

Testing of Outlets to Determine Proper Operating Condition

Two-pronged, Ungrounded Outlets

The traditional method of testing a two-pronged, ungrounded outlet is to plug an appliance into the outlet and verify that the appliance turns on. This simple method is acceptable for determining that the ungrounded outlet is in proper operating condition and meets HQS.

Three-pronged Outlets

A three-pronged outlet must meet one of the following three standards for the inspector to consider the outlet in "proper operating condition" as required by HQS:

1. The outlet is properly grounded
2. A GFCI protects the three-pronged, ungrounded outlet
3. The outlet complies with the applicable state or local building or inspection code

The inspector needs to use an outlet tester to determine whether the outlet is properly grounded. There are two types of outlet testers that an inspector can use to determine a properly grounded outlet: a two-wire tester or a three-pronged tester.

USEFUL ACRONYMS

AAF	Annual Adjustment Factor. A factor published by HUD in the Federal Register which is used to compute annual rent adjustment.	**IG**	Inspector General
ACC	Annual Contributions Contract	**IGR**	Independent Group Residence
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990	**IIP**	Initial Implementation Period (for documentation of citizenship and/or eligible alien status)
BR	Bedroom	**IPA**	Independent Public Accountant
CDBG	Community Development Block Grant	**IPS**	Initial Payment Standard (applies to the Housing Voucher Program)
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations. Commonly referred to as "the regulations." The compilation of Federal rules which are first published in the Federal Register and define and implement a statute.	**IRA**	Individual Retirement Account
CPI	Consumer Price Index. Published monthly by the Department of Labor as an inflation indicator.	**IRS**	Internal Revenue Service
CR	Contract Rent	**JTPA**	Job Training Partnership Act
EOHP	Equal Opportunity Housing Plan	**MSA**	Metropolitan Statistical Area established by the U.S. Census Bureau
FDIC	Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation	**NOFA**	Notice of Funding Availability
FHA	Federal Housing Administration	**OMB**	Office of Management and Budget
FICA	Federal Insurance Contributions Act - Social Security taxes	**PASS**	Plan for Achieving Self-Support
FmHA	Farmers Home Administration	**PHA**	Public Housing Agency
FMR	Fair Market Rent	**PMSA**	A Primary Metropolitan Statistical Area established by the U.S. Census Bureau
FY	Fiscal Year	**PS**	Payment Standard
FYE	Fiscal Year End	**QC**	Quality Control
GAO	Government Accounting Office	**RAD**	Regional (HUD) Accounting Division
GFC	Gross Family Contribution. [Replaced by the term Total Tenant Payment (TTP).]	**RFLA**	Request for Lease Approval
GR	Gross Rent	**RFP**	Request for Proposals
HAP	Housing Assistance Payment	**RIGI**	Regional Inspector General for Investigation (handles fraud and program abuse matters for HUD at the Regional Office level)
HAP Plan	Housing Assistance Plan	**RRP**	Rental Rehabilitation Program
HCDA	Housing and Community Development Amendments of 1981	**SMSA**	Standard Statistical Metropolitan Area
HoDAG	Housing Development Action Grant	**SRO**	Single Room Occupancy
HMO	Housing Management Officer (in a HUD Field Office)	**SSA**	Social Security Administration
HQS	Housing Quality Standards. The HUD minimum quality standards for housing assisted under the tenant-based programs.	**TR**	Tenant Rent
HUD	Department of Housing and Urban Development	**TTP**	Total Tenant Payment
HURRA	Housing and Urban/Rural Recovery Act of 1983	**UA**	Utility Allowance
HV	Housing Voucher	**URP**	Utility Reimbursement Payment