

PROGRAM SUMMARY

The Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program is a rental assistance program operated by the Housing Authority of the City of McKeesport (**MHA**) and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (**HUD**). The program utilizes private rental units in the City of McKeesport and subsidizes the difference in the rent between the amount the family contributes (generally 30% of their monthly income) and the amount of the rent the owner charges.

The family applies to the MHA for this rental assistance and is placed on a waiting list according to date and time of the application. When the MHA has Vouchers available, it will select families from the waiting list and determine their eligibility for the Section 8 program according to HUD requirements and MHA selection policies. The MHA will verify income, family composition and complete a criminal background check. Once determined eligible, the family will be contacted to attend a "briefing session" where they will learn the program requirements and responsibilities as a tenant. At the conclusion of the briefing session, the family will be issued a Voucher so that they can begin their search for decent affordable rental housing. A family may wish to stay in their current unit if the owner is willing to participate in the program and the unit is in good condition.

The MHA selects tenants according to HUD requirements and its own selection criteria. The MHA does not determine family behavior or suitability which is the responsibility of the owner.

When the landlord finds a Section 8 family interested in renting their unit, a Request for Tenancy Approval will be filled out by both parties and submitted to the Section 8 office along with the other required paperwork. At that time we will schedule an inspection to determine if the unit passes HUD's housing quality standards or what repairs would be needed in order for the unit to pass.

Once the unit passes the inspection, a lease and contract will be executed and the housing assistance payments will begin.

Although there are allowances given towards tenant paid utilities in calculating the family's portion of the rent, the MHA does not pay towards security deposits or utilities. They are the responsibility of the owner and tenant. The Section 8 program only provides assistance towards the actual rent.

In addition, the MHA keeps a list of vacant units of landlords interested in participating in the program. You may list any properties that you have available by contacting our office.

OWNER PARTICIPATION

Any property owner who is interested in the MHA Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program should contact the Section 8 Office and provide information on available units. A property listing is maintained by MHA staff and provided to voucher holders at the time of tenant briefing to assist in their housing search. Property vacancies will remain on the list until the owner calls MHA to indicate that the unit has been rented. The unit will then be removed from the list until such time the owner may call to re-list the property.

MHA suggests that owners become familiar with Federal, State, and local Fair Housing Laws, as well as tenant/landlord laws, to insure that their screening criteria is not discriminatory. Federal Fair Housing Laws state that owners must not discriminate based on race, color, creed, religion, sex, national origin, age, familial status, or handicap.

MHA will make every effort to provide participating property owners with prompt, courteous and knowledgeable service in order to maintain and adequate supply of housing throughout the City of McKeesport.

Under certain conditions, MHA is required to deny participation to an owner when:

- HUD informs MHA that the owner has been disbarred, suspended or subject to a limited denial of participation under 24 CFR Part 24.
- HUD has informed MHA that the Federal government has instituted a judicial or administrative action against the owner for violation of the Fair Housing Act or other Federal Equal Opportunity requirements and that such action is pending.
- The owner has violated obligations under a Housing Assistance Payments contract under Section 8 of the 1937 Housing Act.
- The owner has committed fraud, bribery or any other corrupt act in connection with any Federal housing program.
- The owner has engaged in drug-related criminal activity or any violent criminal activity.

Owners will be required to provide MHA with their current address, telephone number(s) and their Social Security or Taxpayer ID number for reporting purposes. Any change in address or ownership should promptly be reported to MHA to avoid a delay in the processing of the monthly HAP check.

LEASE-UP PROCESS

Request for Tenancy Approval

The Request for Tenancy Approval must be completed by the property owner and tenant and returned to the MHA for processing. This form provides basic information on the unit such as housing type, the proposed rent, the utilities and appliances that will be furnished as part of the monthly rent and the rent most recently charged for the unit.

Rent Reasonableness

The MHA will determine and document that the proposed rent is reasonable in comparison to the rent for other comparable units in the general vicinity (immediate surrounding neighborhood). The MHA maintains a database which includes data on unassisted units when making these rent reasonableness comparisons. This data is updated on an ongoing basis.

After the MHA staff makes the rent analysis, the MHA will establish the acceptable rent for the unit size and will calculate the percentage of the tenant payment due the landlord. The tenant is limited to paying no more than 40% of the household income for rent and utilities.

Housing Quality Standards (HQS) Inspection

Once the MHA approves the rent, a MHA representative will make arrangements to inspect the unit using Section 8 HQS to insure that the property meets minimum housing quality standards.

Property owners are encouraged to be present at the initial HQS inspection. If the unit does not pass the inspection, the inspector will provide the owner with a copy of the inspection report itemizing the repairs that must be made. The owner will be given an opportunity to make the necessary repairs, and then contact the MHA to schedule a re-inspection of the completed repairs.

The unit must pass inspection before a HAP contract can be executed. The only exception that may be granted is for exterior work needed (such as painting), but cannot be completed because of inclement weather. If an exception is granted by the MHA, a time will be specified when the required work must be completed and re-inspected.

Housing Assistance Payments Contract, Lease and Tenancy Addendum

The owner and family must submit a standard form lease used by the owner. The terms and conditions of the lease must be consistent with State and Local laws. If an owner does not have their own lease, the Section 8 department can use its own standard lease. Regardless of which lease is used, the HUD Tenancy Addendum must be attached.

The lease must be for a 1-year term. Program regulations do not allow the tenant to move prior to the expiration date of the lease unless by mutual consent of the landlord and tenant.

The owner may execute separate agreements for pets, garages or other items not included in the lease if the agreement is in writing and approved by the MHA. All separate agreements must be executed by both the landlord and tenant and attached to the lease. *Side payments are strictly prohibited under any circumstances.*

Payments

After the HAP contract is executed and signed by the MHA designee, the MHA will commence monthly rental assistance payments to the owner on behalf of the tenant. These payments are made between the first and fifth working day of each calendar month and shall be paid each month as long as the terms of the HAP Contract are still in effect. The tenant shall be responsible for making their portion of the monthly rent directly to the owner.

GETTING YOUR UNIT READY FOR INSPECTION

HOUSING QUALITY STANDARDS (HQS)

Before making payments to an owner on behalf of a tenant, the Housing Authority (HA) must determine if the unit meets HUD'S minimum HQS. HUD'S HQS health and safety standards are used nationwide to make sure all assisted units meet minimum health and safety requirements. This pre-inspection checklist and the booklet called "A Good Place to Live" explains the general items of a unit that must be inspected for compliance with HQS. Any additional HA or local standards are listed on the pre-inspection checklist.

PRE-UNIT INSPECTION

Try to correct any HQS violations before the initial inspection. This will prevent delays in the beginning of the family's rental assistance. If the family is already in the unit, go over the checklist with them to make sure the unit meets minimum requirements.

INITIAL INSPECTION OF THE UNIT

The initial inspection of the unit will be set up with the family if they already live in the unit. The initial inspection for a vacant unit will be set up with the owner. If an owner has questions before or after the initial inspection, discuss them with the inspector. The longer an owner participates with the Section 8 program, the more they learn about HQS and will know how to prepare for future inspections.

MAKING REPAIRS

Should the unit not pass the initial inspection, the owner and tenant are notified by mail of any fail items and given a reasonable time period (within 30 days) to make the repairs. Call the inspectors to schedule a follow-up inspection when the repairs are completed. Please keep in mind that the HA is not responsible for any payments prior to the unit passing inspection. The family is responsible for the full monthly rent.

AREAS THAT ARE INSPECTED

1. Living Room
2. Kitchen
3. Bathroom
4. Other Rooms Used for Living
5. Secondary Rooms (Not Used For Living)
6. Building Exterior
7. Heating and Plumbing

Inspection Ratings

1. **PASS** means the item meets the minimum requirement.
2. **INCONCLUSIVE** means that inspectors need more information to make a decision. (Example: A stove and refrigerator are not in the kitchen during the initial inspection or the utilities have not been turned on, inconclusive is marked until the appliances are seen or verification that the utilities are in service.)
3. **FAIL** means the item did not meet the minimum HUD requirement and must be brought up to the standard prior to the tenant receiving rental assistance. Fail items must be corrected and verified prior to executing the Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) Contract.

PRE-INSPECTION CHECKLIST

LIVING ROOM

- Is there a living room?
- Are there at least two working outlets OR one working outlet and one working light fixture?
- Is the room free from electrical hazards?
- Are all windows and doors that are accessible from the outside lockable?
- Is there at least one window, and are all windows free of signs of severe deterioration or missing or broken window panes?
- Are the walls, ceilings and floors in good condition and free from hazardous defects?
- Are painted surfaces free of defective, chipping and peeling paint?

KITCHEN

- Is there a kitchen?
- Are there at least one working outlet and one working permanently installed light fixture? Electrical outlets within 3 feet of a water source (sink bowl or faucets) must be replaced with a GFI (Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter). The GFI must be installed, tested and work properly.
- Is the kitchen free from electrical hazards?
- Are all windows and doors that are accessible from the outside lockable?
- Are all windows free of signs of deterioration or missing or broken window panes?
- Are the walls, ceilings and floors in good condition and free of hazardous defects?
- Is there a refrigerator that works and maintains a temperature low enough so that food does not spoil over a reasonable period of time?

- Is there a kitchen sink that works with hot and cold running water?
- Is there space to store, prepare, and serve food?
- Are painted surfaces free of defective, chipping and peeling paint?
- Is there a working oven, and a stove (or range) with top burners that work? If no oven and stove (or range) are present, is there a microwave oven and, if microwave is owner supplied, do other tenants have microwaves instead of an oven and stove (or range)?

Bathroom

- Is there a bathroom?
- Is there at least one permanently installed light fixture?
- Is the bathroom free from electrical hazards? Electrical outlets within 3 feet of a water source (sink bowl or faucets) must be replaced with a GFI (Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter). The GFI must be installed, tested and work properly.
- Are all the windows and doors that are accessible from the outside lockable? There must be a working lock for privacy on the bathroom door (i.e., lockset, hook & eye, slide bolt, etc.).
- Are all windows free of signs of deterioration or missing or broken window panes?
- Are the walls, ceilings and floors in good condition and free from hazardous defects?
- Is there a working toilet in the unit for the exclusive private use of the tenant?
- Is there a working, permanently installed wash basin with hot and cold running water in the unit?
- Are painted surfaces free of defective, chipping and peeling paint?
- Are there operable windows OR a working vent system?

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OTHER ROOMS USED FOR LIVING & HALLS

If used as a bedroom, are there at least two working outlets OR one working outlet and one working, permanently installed light fixture? If not used as a room for sleeping, is there a means of illumination?

Are the windows and doors that are accessible from the outside lockable?

If used as a bedroom, is there at least one window? Are all windows free of signs of deterioration or missing or broken window panes?

Are the walls, ceilings and floors in good condition and free from hazardous defects?

Are painted surfaces free of defective, chipping and peeling paint?

Is there a working smoke detector on each level? Do the smoke detectors meet the requirements of the National Fire Protection Act of 1974?

In units occupied by the hearing impaired, is there an alarm system connected to the smoke detector?

ALL SECONDARY ROOMS (Rooms not used for living, such as a laundry room)

Is the room free of electrical hazards?

Are the windows and doors that are accessible from the outside lockable?

BUILDING EXTERIOR

Is the foundation sound and free from hazards?

Are all exterior stairs, rails and porches sound and free from hazards?

Are the roof, gutters and downspouts sound and free from hazards?

Are exterior surfaces sound and free from hazards?

Is the chimney free from hazards?

Was the building built prior to 1978? Are painted surfaces (ex. doors, porch floors & ceilings, stairs, decks, window sills and railing) free of defective, chipping and peeling paint?

If the unit is a manufactured home, is it properly placed and all four corners tied down?

HEATING & PLUMBING

Is the heating and plumbing capable of providing adequate heat (either directly or indirectly) to all rooms used for living?

Is the unit free from unvented fuel burning space heaters or any other types of unsafe heating conditions?

Does the unit have adequate ventilation and cooling by means of openable windows OR a working cooling system?

Is the hot water heater located, equipped and installed in a safe manner? The discharge line located on both the hot water tank and a boiler must be extended to within 3" to 6" from the floor. DO NOT use a reducer when extending the discharge line.

Is the unit served by an approved public or private sanitary water supply? A private water supply (i.e. well) must be tested by a public agency and determined safe for drinking.

Is plumbing free from major leaks or corrosion that causes serious and persistent levels of rust or contamination of drinking water?

Is plumbing connected to an approved public or private disposal system, and is it free from sewer back-up?

GENERAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Can the unit be entered without having to go through another unit?

Is there an alternative fire exit from this building that is not blocked and meets local or state regulations and an acceptable exit?

Is the unit free from rats or severe infestation by mice or vermin?

- Is the unit free from heavy accumulation of garbage or debris inside and outside?
- Are there adequate covered facilities for temporary storage and disposal of food wastes, and are they approvable by a local agency?
- Are interior stairs and common halls free from hazards to the occupant because of loose, broken, or misleading steps on stairways; absent or insecure railings; inadequate lighting; or other hazards?
- Do all elevators have a current inspection certificate?
- Is the unit free from abnormally high levels of air pollution from vehicular exhaust? Is the site and immediate neighborhood free from conditions which would seriously and continuously endanger the health or safety of the residents?

OTHER REQUIREMENTS & MOST COMMON FAIL REASONS

- Are tenant-supplied utilities separately metered?
- Non functioning smoke detectors on every floor, especially near the bedrooms and in the basement. Don't forget to check the batteries!
- Missing or cracked electrical outlet cover plates
- Railings not present where required. Install handrails on any extended length of stairs (i.e., generally four or more steps, around any porches, balconies, or decks which are 30 inches or more above the ground.
- Peeling exterior and interior paint. NO loose and or peeling wall paper. NO loose or bulging plaster.
- Tripping hazards caused by permanently installed floor coverings (carpet/vinyl). Torn or frayed linoleum or carpeting must be removed or replaced.
- Cracked or broken window panes. Windows must operate as designed. Broken or missing sash ropes must be repaired. Cracked panes must be replaced. Window locks are required on all windows.
- Missing stove burner control knobs. Operable stove and refrigerator must be present in the unit with no missing parts.
- No ventilation in bathroom (no fan or operable window).
- Leaking faucets plumbing.
- No temperature or pressure relief valve on water heater.
- The flue from the hot water tank must be located above the furnace flue. Both the hot water flue and the furnace flue must have a 1/4" rise per foot. The flues must be properly sealed where entering the chimney.
- The discharge line located on both the hot water tank and a boiler must be extended to within 3" to 6" from the floor.
- DO NOT use a reducer when extending the discharge line.
- Electrical outlets within 3 feet of a water source (sink bowl or faucets) must be replaced with a GFI (Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter). The GFI must be installed, tested and work properly.
- Oil tanks must be filled and vented on the outside.
- House numbers must be visible and letters must be properly marked. Properly label multiple doorbells.

PROTECTION AT EVERY LEVEL OF YOUR HOME IS A MUST

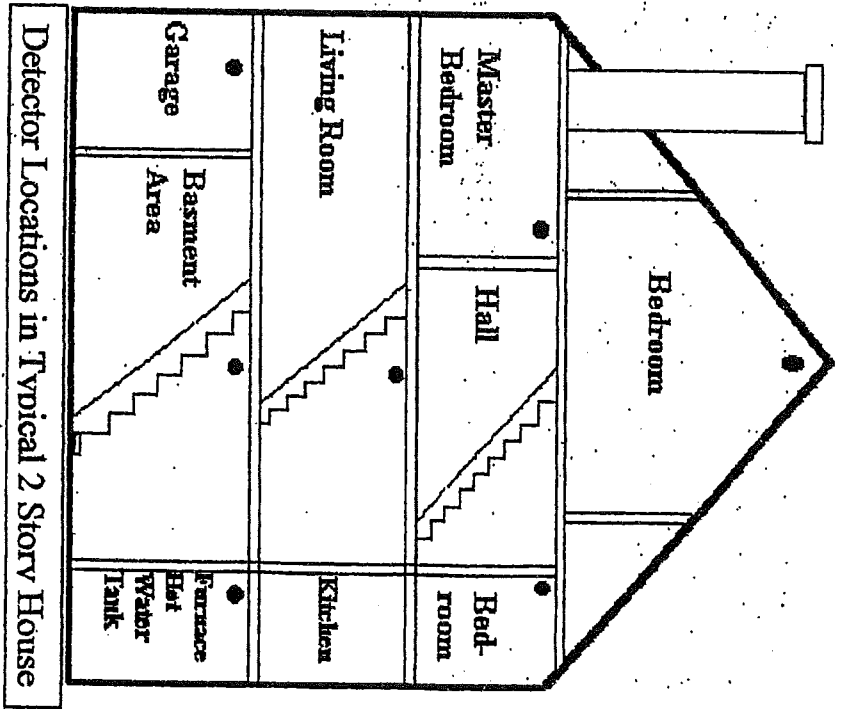
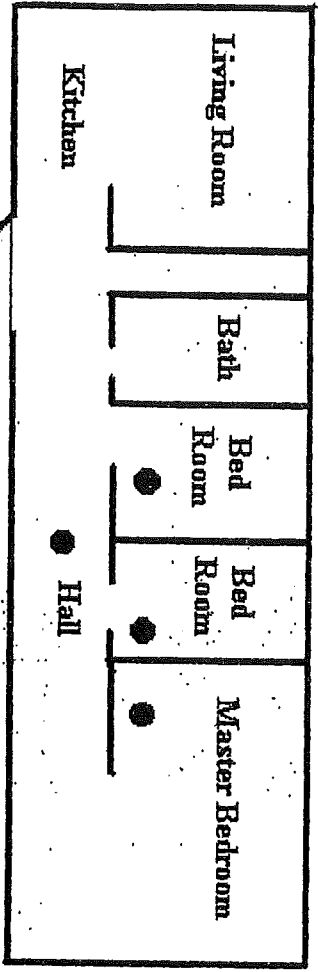
1. SMOKE DETECTORS MUST BE LOCATED ON CEILING AREA.
2. SMOKE DETECTORS MUST BE SECURELY FASTENED TO THE CEILING WITH SCREWS.
3. SMOKE DETECTORS MUST BE LOCATED AT LEAST 12 INCHES AWAY FROM ANY WALL.

1 Carbon monoxide detector is needed per household.

Battery Operated Smoke Detectors Apply to Detached Single Family Dwelling Units Only

Where To Locate Smoke Detectors For Your Family's Life-Safety Protection

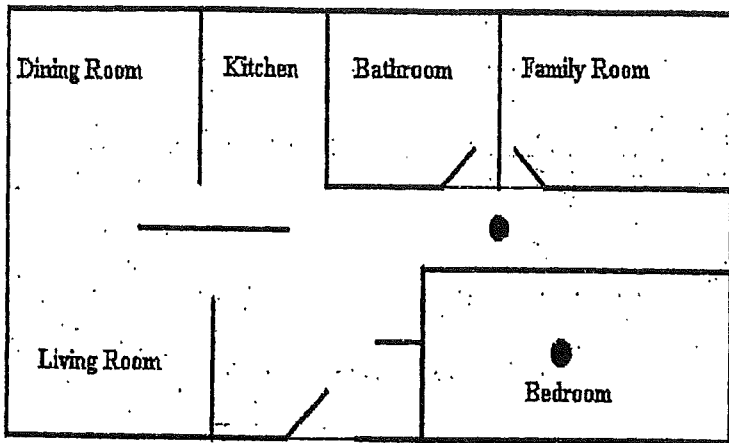
Detectors shall be located at every level of a home: First floor, second floor, basement, attic if it is furnished, at the highest point of fall stairwells, and in every separate sleeping area. Regardless of whether family members smoke in bed or do not smoke in bed or sleep with the door closed or opened, detectors shall be located inside their bedrooms and outside in common hallways. If hallways are over 40 feet in length, detectors shall be located at each end of the hallway.



● = Designates One Smoke Detector

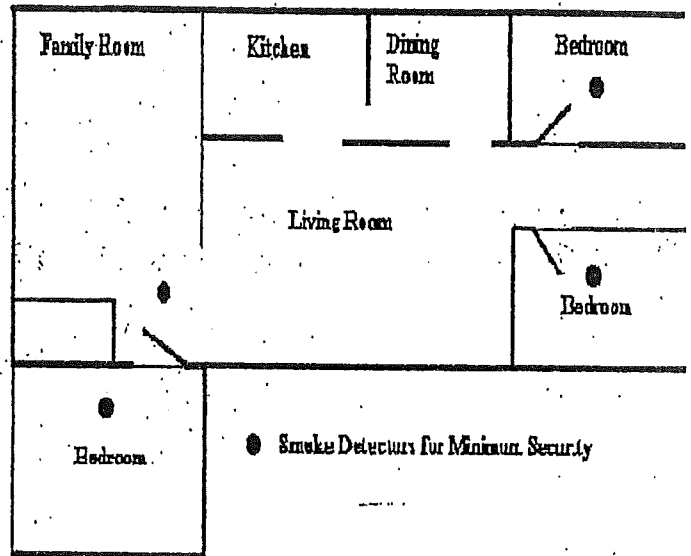
Where To Locate Smoke Detectors For Your Family's Life Safety Protection

Detectors shall be located at every level of a home: first floor, second floor, basement, attic if it is furnished, at the highest point of all stairwells, and in every separate sleeping area. Regardless of whether family members smoke in bed or do not smoke in bed or sleep with the door closed or open, detectors shall be located inside their bedrooms as outside in common hallways are over 40 feet in length, detectors shall be located at each end of the hallway.



● = Smoke Detectors For Minimum Security

Figure 1: Smoke Detector Locations
 For Single-Floor Residence With Only
 One Sleeping Area



● = Smoke Detectors For Minimum Security

Figure 2: Smoke Detector Locations
 For Single-Floor Residence With More
 Than One Sleeping Area

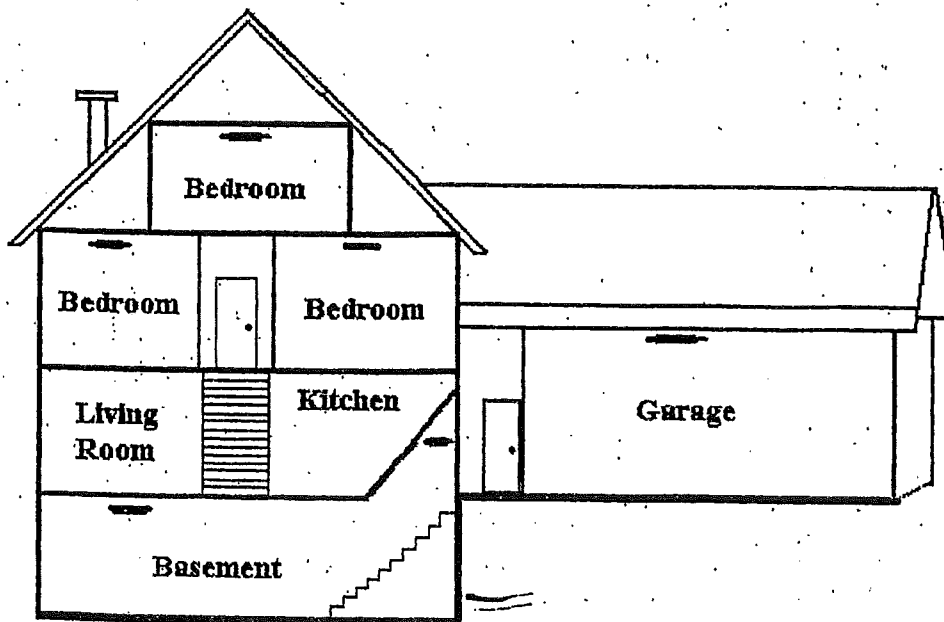


Figure 3: Smoke
 Detector Locations For A
 Multi-Floor Residence
 ● = Smoke Detectors for
 Minimum Security

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MHA
HOUSING AUTHORITY

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Dear Landlord:

Be advised that the City of McKeesport has an ordinance requiring Residential Occupancy Permits for all residential units within the city. You must provide a copy of the Occupancy Permit along with your Request For Tenancy Approval. If you have applied for one and have yet to be approved, you must provide this office with proof of application. If you have not yet applied for one you will find an application attached. Please complete and return to the City of McKeesport (not MHA):

City of McKeesport
500 Fifth Avenue
McKeesport, PA 15132
412-675-5020

Sincerely,

Section 8 Department



Equal Housing Opportunity

2901 Brownlee Avenue - 2nd Floor
McKeesport, PA 15132-1759
Phone: 412-673-6942 • Fax: 412-673-1706
TDD#: 412-673-4711
www.mckha.org



SECTION 8 DEFECTIVE PAINT TREATMENT METHODS

Acceptable Defective Paint Treatments

- * Wet scraping or sanding
- * Chemical Stripping (On or Off Site)
- * Replacing painted components
- * Heat Sources <1,000 degrees F (Infra-Red or Electric Heat Guns)
- * Contained Hydro-Blasting or High Pressure washing with HEPA Recovery System
- * Sanding/Grinding/Mechanical Removal with HEPA Recovery System
- * Abrasive blasting with HEPA Recovery System

Post Treatment Clean-Up

- * Thorough cleaning of all surfaces in the treatment room or area
- * Specialized Cleaning Methods' I.E. HEPA Vac's & effective Detergents or other methods of Equivalent Efficacy
- * Control debris and waster per applicable regulatory mandates

Clearance Testing

- * Performed after paint stabilization
- * Activity complete only after clearance is achieved

Prohibited Methods of Removal

- * Open flame burning or torching
- * Machine sanding, grinding, abrasive blasting
Blasting without Local HEPA Exhaust
- * Paint stripping in poorly ventilated areas using Hazardous volatile strippers as deemed by Applicable CPSC or OSHA Standards
- * Dry scraping, except near electrical outlets, Areas Totaling No>:
 - * 2 sq. ft. per room space OR
 - * 20 sq. ft on exterior surfaces
- * Soil and playground equipment / areas must be protected from contamination

Occupant Protection / Worksite Preparation

- * Resident and belongings (relocated or covered depending on work area and project duration)
- * Resident exclusion from treatment are until work and clearance has been achieved
- * Warning signs posted @ each entry to work area

UNITS BUILT PRIOR TO 1978

In the case of a unit, for a family which includes a child under the age of six years, if the unit was constructed prior to 1978, the unit must be in compliance with the HUD lead-based paint regulations, 27 CFR, Part 35, which requires that all interior surfaces and those exterior surfaces, such as stairs, decks, porches, railings, windows and doors, be free of cracking, or covered to prevent the eating of lead-based paint.

All surfaces to be treated should have been thoroughly washed, sanded, scraped, or wire-brushed, so as to remove all cracking, scaling, peeling, chipping and loose paint before repainting with, at a minimum, at least two coats of a suitable non-lead paint. All surfaces to be covered should have had the paint removed or covered with materials such as gypsum wallboard, plywood, drywall, plaster, or other suitable material.

The purpose of this regulation is to eliminate as far as practical the hazard of lead-based paint poisoning.

Dear Landlord:

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) announced a new regulation that takes effect on September 15, 2000. The regulation, which is at CFR Part 35, requires public housing authorities and landlords to take practical steps to control lead based hazards in housing units receiving federal assistance.

The regulation only affects housing units built before 1978 that have a child younger than six years of age residing in the unit. It requires a landlord to conduct paint stabilization repairs, clearance, and risk assessment tests prior to signing a new lease, and a t annual re-examination. HUD has given the local housing authority, the responsibility to ensure that landlords comply with this rule.

HUD has exempted the following properties from the regulation:

- a. Units built after January 1, 1978.
- b. Units exclusively for the elderly or disabled.
- c. Zero bedroom units.
- d. Properties already found to be free of lead-based paint by a certified inspector.
- e. Properties where all lead-based paint has been removed.

Landlords are not required:

- a. To abate the unit.
- b. To use safe work practices or to do clearance inspections on surfaces less than 2 sq. ft. and 20 sq. ft. on interior of the unit.
- c. To do anything if the unit has no visible chipping, peeling or cracking surfaces.

For all units, HUD requires every landlord to conduct repairs and testing when the following conditions are present:

- a. Whenever there are chipping, peeling, cracking surfaces greater than 2 sq. ft. on the interior and 20 sq. ft. on the exterior of the unit or in common areas, a landlord must use paint stabilization to repair the surfaces. A qualified person who must use safe work practices must do the repairs.
- b. Whenever paint stabilization repairs are completed, a landlord must conduct a clearance test to ensure that lead dust exists in the unit. A trained or certified clearance inspector must do clearance tests.
- c. Whenever a local housing authority is notified that a child with an environmental intervention blood lead level (EIB) is living in or plans to live in the unit, a certified risk assessor must do a risk assessment test. A risk assessment means an on-site investigation to determine the existence, nature, severity, and location of lead-based paint hazards.

Because most landlords are already complying with housing quality standards (HQS) and other existing local lead-based paint requirements, we believe that this new rule will have minimum financial impact on landlords. You may contact the Section 8 Department at (412)673-0240 for more information on this matter.