

Frequently Asked Questions

HUD Departmental Radon Policy For Addressing Radon in the Environmental Review Process

Q: Do the requirements of the new HUD radon policy differ depending on the type of HUD program funding or assistance?

A: No. While certain HUD programs may have their own radon requirements, the HUD Departmental Radon Policy Notice acts as a policy “floor” for the Department and provide a minimum set of requirements for considering radon under HUD’s contamination regulations, *regardless of the HUD program or funding source*. However, HUD Office of Housing Programs following the Multifamily Accelerated Processing (MAP) Guide, Healthcare Mortgage Insurance Program Handbook, or Rental Assistance Demonstration Program Notice and supplemental guidance have more restrictive radon requirements that must be followed. Links to these documents can be found within the Radon Policy Notice. For questions about additional requirements, please contact your [HUD Environmental Officer](#).

Q: My state requires the building be tested by a credentialed radon tester, but the HUD Notice doesn’t require that. Does my building have to be tested by a credentialed tester?

A: Yes. You must still follow your state’s requirements, when they apply (note: state requirements do not apply on Tribal land). In this case, following the state testing requirements would satisfy that portion of the HUD Notice. You must still comply with the HUD Radon Policy Notice even if your state does not have any radon requirements that apply to your HUD project, or they are less restrictive than the HUD Radon Policy Notice.

Q: Is there any way environmental review preparers can avoid having to consider radon for all buildings in a public housing portfolio?

A: Yes. PHAs and other grantees with multiple buildings on a site can format environmental reviews so that radon must be considered only in buildings when HUD’s contamination regulations apply, such as buildings undergoing capital improvements or modernization projects. Though not required, the ANSI/AARST testing standards can be followed as a best practice. Contact your [HUD Environmental Officer](#) with project-specific questions related to environmental review aggregation and radon analysis.

Q: My HUD project involves new construction of a residential building. How do I comply with the Policy Notice when there is no building to test yet?

A: For new construction, if the ER preparer has decided to test for radon in order to comply with the policy (there are multiple means by which compliance can occur other than testing), radon testing must be done after the construction is complete and after the environmental review (ER) is certified. The environmental review record (ERR)

must include a condition for post-construction radon consideration followed by mitigation, if needed. The ERR must then be updated with the radon evaluation and proof of any required mitigation when complete. Note, if mitigation is not ultimately performed, HUD may issue a finding of noncompliance, which could require repayment of HUD funds. Though not required, HUD strongly recommends that buildings be tested prior to occupancy.

HUD Office of Housing Programs following the Multifamily Accelerated Processing (MAP) Guide, Healthcare Mortgage Insurance Program Handbook, or Rental Assistance Demonstration Program Notice and supplemental guidance have specific requirements on radon resistant construction, post-construction testing and mitigation that must be followed. For specific questions on the Housing guidance, please refer to the Office of Housing resources linked in the Radon Policy Notice. You may also reach out to your program contact or your [HUD Environmental Officer](#). Additionally, some states have radon-resistant new construction requirements that may apply to the proposed HUD project.

Q: The Notice states that testing isn't required, but it seems like in some scenarios it really is required. Can you clarify this?

A: Under the Notice, radon mitigation is required where an analysis of science-based data (often the mean average of documented test results) indicates radon levels at or above 4.0 pCi/L in the project area. Radon mitigation measures may be avoided if the specific building is tested for radon and all test results for radon are lower than 4.0 pCi/L. If the ER preparer chooses not to test for radon in these cases to document radon levels in a specific building, radon mitigation (e.g., installation of a radon mitigation system) is required as a condition of the environmental review. HUD recommends radon testing in these scenarios to determine if mitigation is truly needed at the building level.

In addition, if there is a lack of science-based data, radon testing for a particular proposed HUD project can be avoided if testing would be infeasible or impracticable. The determination that testing would be infeasible or impracticable is made by the RE or other environmental review preparer, usually in consultation with the grantee. The ERR must document the basis for the determination that testing would be infeasible or impracticable. This can be documented as a paragraph explaining why testing would be infeasible. A common rationale for this may be that when compared to the budget of a very low-dollar proposed project, the cost of testing would be too significant and could cause the project to be untenable. One potential alternative scenario for single-family homes (those with one to four dwelling units), however, is the use of DIY test kits, which are very affordable and should work with project budgets of all sizes. However, the use of DIY kits for a project may also be impracticable, such as when they cannot be mailed back to a lab in sufficient time. More information about this scenario can be found in the question and answer below.

HUD Office of Housing Programs following the Multifamily Accelerated Processing (MAP) Guide, Healthcare Mortgage Insurance Program Handbook, or Rental Assistance Demonstration Program Notice and supplemental guidance must always test for radon, unless the project meets an exception included in those specific guidebooks.

Q: Does the Policy come with any dedicated funding for radon testing or mitigation?

A: The Radon Policy Notice does not provide any new or additional funding for radon testing or mitigation. However, costs to complete an environmental review (including radon testing and mitigation) are eligible program costs for almost all HUD programs (see Table A in the Radon Policy Notice for a list of HUD programs).

Q: Radon mitigation systems use electricity and can have ongoing expenses related to the maintenance and operation – how can these costs be covered?

A: As indicated above, the Radon Policy Notice does not provide dedicated funding for the testing, mitigation and any ongoing maintenance of radon mitigation systems. If the environmental review preparer or grantee works with a radon professional, the operations and maintenance will be included in the recommended mitigation plan. This policy does not provide any funding for the electricity use of the mitigation systems and there are not any proposed changes to utility allowance schedules at this time.

Q: Are there other opportunities to help me pay for radon testing and/or mitigation?

A: In addition to using HUD program funds to pay for testing or mitigation as part of an ER, there may be additional opportunities to assist with covering the costs of testing and mitigation. [HUD's Radon Testing & Mitigation Demonstration Grant Program](#) provides funds to eligible PHAs to plan for, test, and mitigate radon. Additional competitive grant funding may be available through the EPA for radon mitigation:

<https://www.epa.gov/radon>. Other funding may exist for other types of grantees as well. Some states also offer mitigation assistance to low-income homeowners.

Q: Will there be exceptions to requiring radon testing/mitigation in older homes or in historic homes/buildings?

A: Under the Notice, testing is not required for radon consideration, and radon consideration can be completed using a review of science-based data. For required mitigation, there are no exceptions for these types of buildings. Additionally, compliance with Sec. 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act may be required for installation of mitigation systems. Contact your HUD environmental officer or State Historic Preservation Office for additional guidance.

Q: Will there be exceptions to requiring radon testing/mitigation in buildings in very rural areas where testing and mitigation systems may be very expensive or unavailable?

A: Under the Notice, testing is not required for radon consideration, and radon consideration can be completed using a review of science-based data. For required mitigation, there are no exceptions for rural areas.

Q: What if radon mitigation is required, but the cost is too high for my small dollar project?

A: If radon mitigation is required then it must be implemented, otherwise the project must be rejected due to the health hazard that the property may present to residents or occupants.

Q: How do ER preparers apply this policy to demolition projects?

A: Building demolition is exempt from considering radon in the contamination analysis, as demolished buildings will not be occupied at least 4 hours/day. If the project also encompasses new construction after the demolition, then the notice must be complied with accordingly for the new construction.

Q: I am using radon test data from the CDC Environmental Public Health Tracking Network to conduct a review of science-based data and there is a sufficient number of test results from both states and from labs. Can I pick which data set I want to use?

A: No. The Notice requires that the best available data be used. In this case, the best available data would be the tests from states. However, if there is an insufficient number of test results from states (less than 10 documented test results over the previous 10 years for which data is available), then data from labs should be used when there is a sufficient number of reported test results. For additional guidance on how to obtain the best data from the CDC Environmental Public Health Tracking Network, please see the materials from HUD's technical assistance webinar, *HUD Policy for Addressing Radon in the Environmental Review Process*, which can be [found here](#).

Q: I completed a broad level tiered review before the effective date of the Notice, including certification prior to the effective date. Do I have to follow the Notice for subsequent tier II (site-specific) reviews?

A: No, if you completed and certified the tier I review prior to the effective date, then you are encouraged, but not required to comply with the Notice for subsequent tier II reviews. However, if the broad level review was *not* certified prior to the effective date of the Notice, the broad level and site-specific reviews must consider radon as part of the contamination analysis.

Q: How do ER preparers determine if a building will be occupied for at least 4 hours per day? Does this determination need to be documented in the ERR?

A: You may use your best judgment in estimating how many hours per day a building will be occupied. This does *not* need to be documented in the ERR. Additionally, occupation time is counted on an individual basis. For example, if the building will be occupied by four different people for one hour each day, then the building is *not* considered to be occupied for at least four hours per day.

Q: What are the documentation requirements for do-it-yourself test kits?

A: For DIY test kits, you must document the specific test used (i.e. brand and model), as well as the test results received from the laboratory. The latter can be done through a

copy of the email or mailed results from the lab. You must also document the period of test, test conditions (HVAC system off windows closed, outside temperature), and any other conditions relevant to test conditions.

Q: Does HUD have any guidance on when the use of do it yourself “DIY” test kits would be infeasible or impracticable under the notice?

A: The notice allows the use of DIY test kits as a low-cost alternative for testing single-family buildings (those containing one to four dwelling units). Because of the low cost of these kits, cost will generally not be a prohibitive factor in utilizing this method, even for small-dollar projects. One scenario that may make the use of DIY test kits infeasible or impracticable for a project is if the test kit cannot be sent to a lab in sufficient time. DIY test kits must be sent back to a lab in a relatively short amount of time, for the test result to be accurate. For some projects in very remote areas, the environmental review preparer may not have access to a postal/shipping service that can ship the test kit back to the lab in time for an accurate result. In these instances, the use of a DIY test kit would be infeasible under the Radon Policy Notice. This infeasibility may be documented in the ERR. Note: DIY test kits cannot be utilized in multifamily buildings.

Q: Can the same radon professional or company that tested the building also design the mitigation plan and install the mitigation system, if needed?

A: Yes. Having the same professional who tested the building design the mitigation plan and install the mitigation system may even make planning and installing the mitigation system easier because the professional will already be familiar with the building.

Q: If I am testing multiple units within a multifamily building, may I use the average of the units’ test results to determine if mitigation is necessary?

A: No. Any units that test at or above 4.0 pCi/L must be mitigated for radon in accordance with the notice.

Q: Can a Categorically Excluded Subject to 58.5 (CEST) level of environmental review convert to exempt while the RE is waiting for radon test results?

A: No, the CEST review is not complete until all analysis for the related environmental laws and other requirements is completed. Radon evaluation is part of the contamination analysis and is not complete until a determination of whether the project site is impacted by radon is documented in the ERR.

Q: The contamination screen in HEROS does not contain any radon-specific fields. Does this mean I don’t have to comply with the Radon Policy Notice?

A: No. The Radon Policy Notice must be complied with on and after the effective date (April 11, 2024 for all non-tribal recipients; Jan 11, 2026 for Tribal recipients) regardless of whether HEROS contains any radon-specific prompts or fields. The documentation required under the Radon Policy Notice must be summarized in the Compliance Determination text box and uploaded using the Upload File button at the bottom of the

screen. The HEROS contamination screen will be updated in June to reflect the radon policy.