



# NY Rising Housing Recovery Programs

## Understanding Environmental Testing

August 14, 2014

As part of the NY Rising Housing Recovery Program (the “Program”) you are required to comply with Federal and State regulations regarding environmental testing of your damaged property. There are two distinct types of tests that you will be required to carry out, depending on whether or not you have already started construction. **It is important to note that the Program will perform or pay for these inspections, as well as any mitigation work needed.**

**Risk Assessments/Surveys** are conducted BEFORE construction starts, in order to identify hazardous materials that may be disturbed during construction and therefore need special handling.

- **Asbestos Survey:** This test determines if any of the areas where work will be performed have asbestos containing material. This material poses a health risk when the material is disturbed by construction activities. It is impossible to determine if material contains asbestos without sending samples to a lab, so the inspector will take small samples of suspect materials in order to determine if they contain asbestos. The Program **will pay** for the required mitigation work if any materials are discovered.
- **Lead Based Paint Risk Assessment:** This test determines if a lead hazard exists in the home, or if deteriorated paint exists anywhere in the dwelling, through inspection and sampling. The Program **will pay** for the required mitigation or lead safe work practices required to deal with any discovered risks. This test is only required if your house was constructed prior to 1978.

If you have not yet started work you should contact your Customer Representative to schedule an asbestos survey, and (if your house is pre-1978) a lead paint risk assessment. If you have already commenced construction then a risk assessment/survey is not required, but you will be required to obtain a clearance inspection (see below).

**Clearance Inspections** are conducted once construction is COMPLETE, in order to ensure that there are no loose traces of hazardous material remaining in your home:

- **Asbestos Clearance:** After work is performed an inspector will perform a visual, non-destructive evaluation of your dwelling. If there are suspected materials which are damaged then it may be necessary to take small samples to determine if a risk exists. If a risk is discovered the Program **will pay** to remedy the problem. All homes receiving NY Rising funds for repair/reconstruction MUST receive a clean asbestos clearance inspection report after construction is completed.
- **Lead Based Paint Clearance:** After work is performed the dwelling will be tested for lead dust or residue by the use of test wipes. If lead is detected you will be given instructions on how to clean the areas, and a re-test will be required to verify clearance. If you use a contractor the Program **will pay** for the additional costs. This test is only required if your house was constructed prior to 1978.
- **Radon Assessment and Clearance:** Homes in the following Counties need to be assessed for radon, a cancer-causing radioactive gas that can emanate from the earth: Albany, Broome, Chemung, Chenango, Columbia, Delaware, Dutchess, Greene, Orange, Otsego, Putnam, Rensselaer, Schoharie, Sullivan, Tioga, Ulster, Washington, Oneida, Montgomery, Saratoga and Schenectady. Air monitoring canisters will be set up in your dwelling. If radon is discovered the Program **will pay** for a radon mitigation system (consisting of a system of fans and vents) to be installed. If a mitigation system needs to be installed, a final clearance test will be performed after installation, to ensure that it is working properly and that your home does not contain harmful radon levels.



In all cases you will be informed of the existence of lead, asbestos, or radon in your dwelling. Your design professional can assist you with developing a mitigation work plan. Asbestos and radon design and remediation activities are regulated by NYS and require appropriate certification. You have the option of scheduling assessments/surveys AND clearance inspections through the NY Rising Housing Program, or hiring your own testing contractor. If you hire your own contractor these costs are reimbursable by the Program at a pre-determined unit-pricing cost, so long as you submit the results of the testing to the Program, and the testing meets Program requirements.

Lead based paint testing is not required if your home was constructed on or after January 1, 1978.

For all applicants, even those who are reimbursement only, you must perform all clearance testing required by the Program. **Failure to comply with these clearance testing requirements can result in the loss of your award funds.**