

# MESQUITE HOUSING OFFICE'S SECTION 8 INSPECTION OVERVIEW

## INITIAL HOUSING QUALITY STANDARDS INSPECTIONS

- ➡ A unit must be inspected and pass HUD's minimum housing quality standards (HQS). Upon receipt of a Request for Tenancy Approval (RTA), an inspector will confirm the readiness of the unit's inspection with the owner or property management. An initial inspection is usually conducted within 2-3 days of the confirmed ready date.
- ➡ Owners of single-family residential units in Mesquite must have their units inspected and passed through the City's Rental Certificate of Occupancy (ROC) Program. To request that inspection, owners may call 972-329-8505 or go to:  
[www.cityofmesquite.com/buildinginspection/rentalco.php](http://www.cityofmesquite.com/buildinginspection/rentalco.php).
- ➡ All utilities must be connected and appliances in place before an inspection can be conducted. The appliances must be the appliances to be used by the tenant during occupancy AND NOT installed for inspection purposes only.

- ➡ **Before the Housing Authority can make payments on behalf of a tenant family, the unit must meet HUD's minimum HQS. These standards have been implemented by HUD, nationwide, to ensure that all assisted units meet minimum health and safety standards. Housing will inspect the unit for HQS initially and at least annually.**
- ➡ **In order to ensure the unit meets HQS, owners and property managers must review the requirements and correct any HQS violations before the inspection. At the time of the inspection, the unit should be "move-in" ready. This will prevent delays in the housing assistance payments.**

## **RENT REASONABLENESS**

- ➡ **The requested rent amount must be reasonable as compared to other similar unassisted units. The Housing Authority must approve all rents based on size, condition, age, zip code and amenities of each unit.**

# **ANNUAL HOUSING QUALITY STANDARDS INSPECTIONS AND COMPLAINT INSPECTIONS**

- ▶ **The Housing Authority is required to inspect the unit at least once annually. The Housing Authority may also perform a complaint inspection if it is determined that an owner is not maintaining the unit. Any deficiencies will be noted and a notice mailed indicating a repair deadline. The owner or property manager is required to repair items within 30 days or 24 hours for serious health and safety hazards. The family is responsible for any tenant caused damages beyond normal wear and tear.**

# Required Repairs

- ➡ If the unit fails the initial inspection or annual inspection, an inspection report with the failed items will be left at the unit on initial inspections and will be mailed on annual inspections. When the repairs are complete, housing inspectors are to be contacted to request reinspections. Initial housing assistance payments cannot be made until the unit passes an inspection. Repairs for the annual inspection must be made within 30 days or 24 hours for serious health and safety hazards. For annual inspections, if repairs are not made by the stated deadline or approved extension, housing assistance payments will be abated and no retroactive payments will be made.

# Most Common HQS Failed Items

- ✘ Non functional and improperly located smoke detectors,
- ✘ Missing or cracked electrical outlet cover plates ,
- ✘ Railings not present where required,
- ✘ Peeling exterior and interior paint,
- ✘ Trip hazards caused by floor coverings (carpets/vinyl),
- ✘ Cracked or broken window panes,
- ✘ Inoperable ovens or burners on stoves or inoperable amenities, if present,
- ✘ Missing burner control knobs, burners or drip pans,
- ✘ Inoperable bathroom fan or window,
- ✘ Leaking faucets or plumbing,
- ✘ No temperature/pressure relief valve on water heaters,
- ✘ Weather strip on doors must be reasonably weather tight,
- ✘ All sewer clean-out covers must be installed,
- ✘ Inoperable or ununlockable exterior entry doors,
- ✘ Missing windows or windows not opening or locking as designed with a permanent locking device.



**MISSING COVER FOR  
SMOKE DETECTOR.**

**HARDWIRED SMOKE DETECTOR  
HANGING BY WIRES.**



**SMOKE DETECTOR MOUNTED  
IN WRONG LOCATION.**

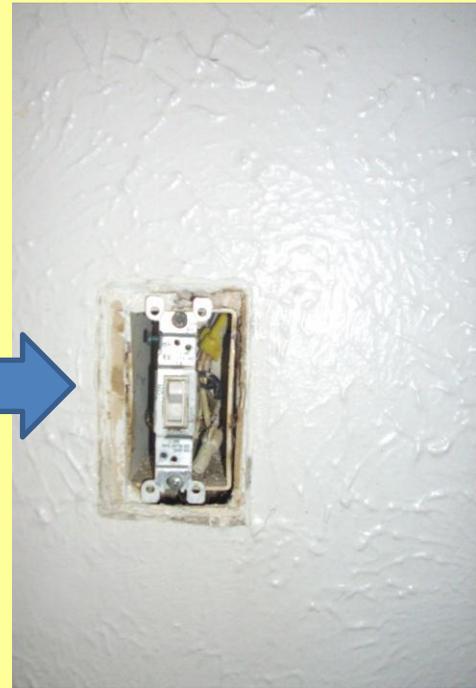




**MISSING OUTLET COVER.**



**MISSING SWITCH PLATE.**



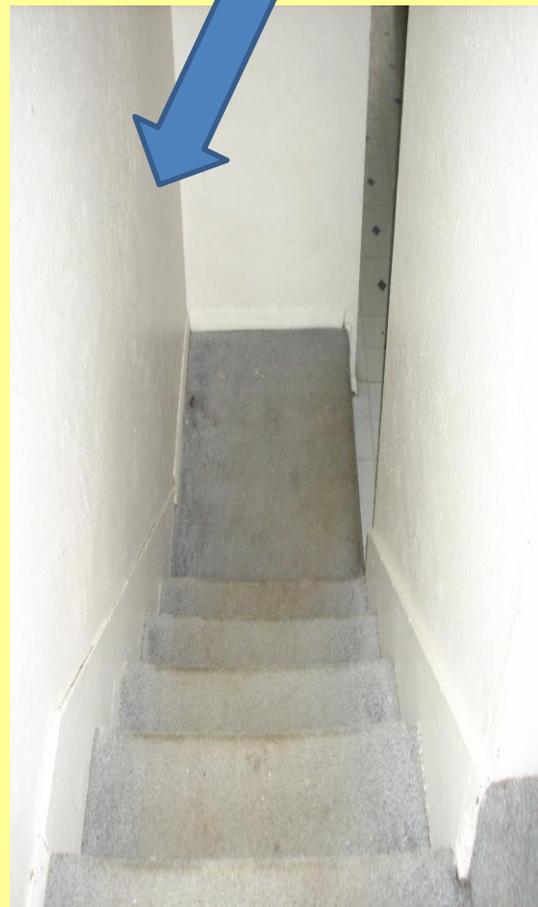
**CRACKED OUTLET COVER.**





**MISSING HANDRAILS.**

**MISSING BALUSTERS.**





**PEELING PAINT**





**TRIP HAZARDS.**





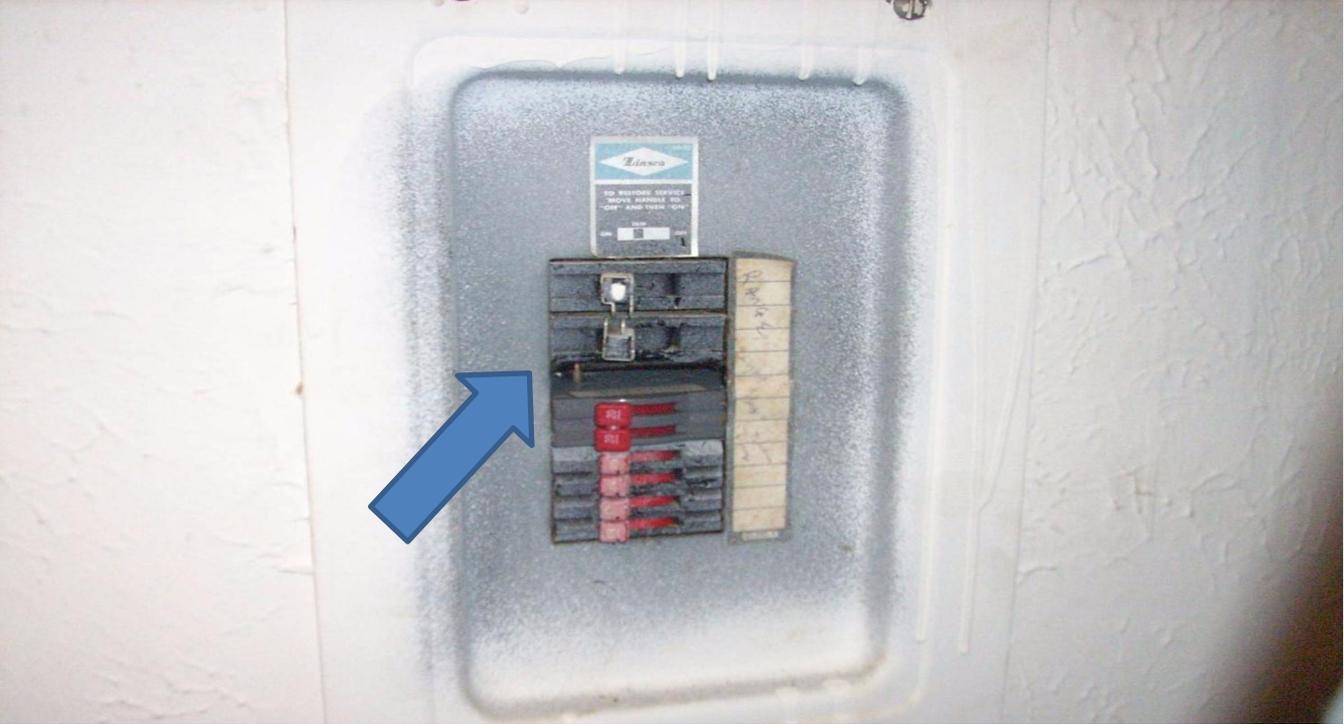
**STOVE MISSING PARTS.**





**PLUMBING ISSUES.**

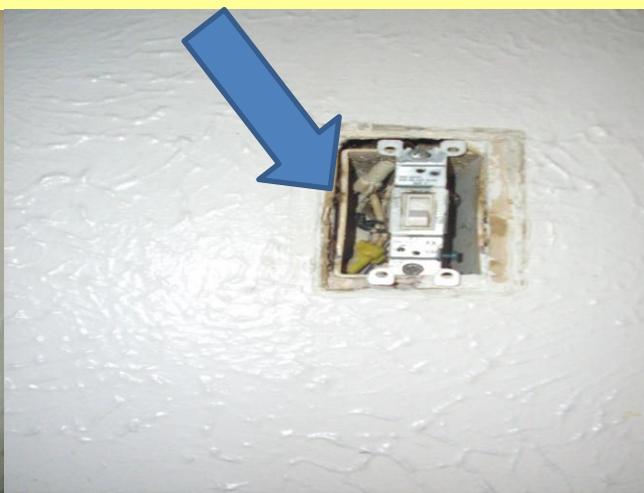




**ELECTRICAL ISSUES.**



**ELECTRICAL HAZARDS**



**EXCESSIVE GAP AT DOOR SEAL**



## Missing Window Lock



## UNACCEPTABLE THUMB LATCH



## ACCEPTABLE THUMB LATCH





**ROOF NOT WATER TIGHT**





**UNACCEPTABLE  
HOUSEKEEPING**

**FIRE HAZARD**



**UNSANITARY  
CONDITIONS**

# **HQS CHECKLIST**

**THE FOLLOWING IS A LISTING OF  
ITEMS INSPECTED TO MEET HQS**

## **BATHROOM**

- ✓ **The bathroom must be located in a separate room and have a flush toilet.**
- ✓ **The unit must have a fixed basin with a sink trap and hot and cold running water.**
- ✓ **The unit must have a shower or bathtub with hot and cold running water.**

## **KITCHEN**

- ✓ **The unit must have a cooking stove or range and refrigerator of appropriate size for the unit (i.e., family) all in proper operating condition. Stoves, ovens, and ranges must have all control knobs and handles. Gas stove burners must light as originally designed to operate.**
- ✓ **The unit must have a kitchen sink in proper operating condition with a sink trap and hot and cold running water, which drains into an approvable public or private wastewater system.**
- ✓ **The unit must provide space for the sufficient storage, preparation, and serving of food.**
- ✓ **There must be facilities and services for the sanitary disposal of food waste and refuse, including temporary storage facilities where necessary (i.e., garbage containers).**

## **SPACE AND SECURITY**

- ✓ **The unit must have a minimum of a living room/sleeping room, kitchen area, and bathroom.**
- ✓ **The unit must contain at least one sleeping or living/sleeping room for each two persons.**
- ✓ **The unit's windows, which are accessible from the outside must be lockable (e.g., window units with sash pins or sash locks, and combination windows with latches). All locks must be permanently attached to the window. Windows designed to open should be in working condition.**
- ✓ **The unit's exterior doors (i.e., those that allow access to or from the unit) must lock properly.**

## **THERMAL ENVIRONMENT (Heating and Cooling System)**

- ✓ **The unit must have a heating and cooling system and be capable of maintaining a thermal environment healthy for the human body. There must be a safe system for heating in the dwelling and a safe cooling system. The system must be in proper operating condition. The system must be able to provide adequate heating and cooling, either directly or indirectly, to each room, in order to assure a healthy living environment appropriate to the climate.**
- ✓ **The unit must not contain any unvented room heaters, which burn gas, oil, or kerosene. A working radiator would be acceptable. Unvented gas bath wall heaters are not permitted.**

# ELECTRICAL OUTLETS, SWITCHES, FIXTURES,

**MANY UNITS BUILT PRIOR TO 1973 MAY HAVE A 2-WIRE, UNGROUNDED ELECTRICAL SYSTEM. WHILE WE DO NOT INSPECT FOR CITY CODE VIOLATIONS, HUD DOES REQUIRE ALL 3-PRONG OUTLETS BE GROUNDED OR GFCI PROTECTED.**



**SO WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?**

**HERE IS A 2-PRONG OUTLET WHICH IS A GOOD INDICATION YOUR UNIT HAS AN UNGROUNDED ELECTRICAL SYSTEM**



**THIS IS A 3-PRONG OUTLET. HOWEVER, JUST BECAUSE YOU HAVE THESE IN YOUR UNIT DOES NOT MEAN THEY ARE GROUNDED- ESPECIALLY IF YOU HAVE A UNIT BUILT PRIOR TO 1973.**



**HERE IS A GFCI OUTLET. ONCE AGAIN, JUST BECAUSE THESE ARE INSTALLED IN YOUR UNIT DOES NOT NECESSARILY MEAN THEY ARE GROUNDED IF YOUR UNIT WAS BUILT PRIOR TO 1973.**



# SO HOW CAN YOU TELL IF YOUR OUTLETS ARE GROUNDED?

IF YOU HAVE 3-PRONG OUTLETS IN YOUR UNIT, INCLUDING GFCI OUTLETS, YOU CAN PURCHASE A PLUG TESTER AT ANY HARDWARE STORE.

THERE ARE TWO KINDS OF 3 –PRONG TESTERS, ONE WITH A GFCI TEST BUTTON.....



AND ONE WITHOUT.

IT WOULD BE A GOOD IDEA TO PURCHASE A TESTER WITH A GFCI TEST BUTTON TO HELP ENSURE ALL OUTLETS CAN BE TESTED FOR PROPER OPERATION.

**IF YOU HAVE 2-PRONG OUTLETS, YOU CAN PURCHASE A TESTER, LIKE THIS ONE, AT ANY HARDWARE STORE.**



**TESTING OUTLETS IS RELATIVELY SAFE AS LONG AS YOU FOLLOW THE MANUFACTURE'S INSTRUCTIONS FOR USING THE TESTING DEVICES.**

## **ELECTRICAL OUTLETS, SWITCHES, FIXTURES, CONTINUED.....**

- ✓ **Electrical outlets must be securely mounted, function properly, and have cover plates.**
- ✓ **Electrical switches must be securely mounted, function properly, and have cover plates. This includes three-way switch systems designed for hallway and stairwell lighting.**
- ✓ **Both inside and outside light fixtures must be securely mounted and function properly. “Hanging” lights must be supported by the chain or other hardware and not by the electrical wiring.**
- ✓ **Circuit Breaker/Fuse Boxes, both interior and exterior, must have permanent covers preventing contact with bare wiring.**

## **ILLUMINATION AND ELECTRICITY**

### **— Illumination**

- ✓ **There must be at least one window in the living room and in each sleeping room.**

### **— Electricity**

- ✓ **The kitchen area and the bathroom must have a permanent ceiling or wall- type light fixture in working condition. The kitchen area must also have at least one electrical outlet in operating condition.**
- ✓ **The living room and each bedroom must have at least two electrical outlets in operating condition. Permanently installed overhead or wall-mounted light fixtures may count as one of the required electrical outlets.**
- ✓ **All other rooms used for living require a means of natural or artificial illumination such as a light fixture, a wall outlet to serve a lamp, a window in the room, or adequate light from an adjacent room.**

## — Illumination and Electricity (Continued)

- ✓ Each electrical outlet must be permanently installed in the baseboard, wall, or floor.
- ✓ Table or floor lamps, ceiling lamps plugged into a socket, or an extension cord plugged into another room cannot be counted as an outlet for HQS purposes.
- ✓ Electrical hazards of any kind, either inside or outside the unit would receive a fail rating.

## STRUCTURE AND MATERIALS

- ✓ Interior 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 floors must also not have any major movement under walking stress, or tripping hazards presented by the permanent floor coverings.

## **STRUCTURE AND MATERIALS (Continued)**

- ✓ **The roof must be structurally sound and weather tight.**
- ✓ **The exterior wall structure and surfaces must not have any serious defects such as serious leaning, buckling, sagging, large holes, unfastened and falling components, or defects that would result in air infiltration or vermin infestation.**
- ✓ **The condition and equipment of interior and exterior stairways, halls, porches, walkways, etc. must not present a danger of tripping and falling. Examples include, but are not limited to, broken or missing steps and loose boards.**
- ✓ **Elevators must be working, safe, and compliant with locally enforced codes.**
- ✓ **Boilers must be working, safe and compliant with locally enforced codes.**
- ✓ **Current elevator and boiler certificates must be made available when requested.**

## **INTERIOR AIR QUALITY**

- ✓ **The unit must be free from dangerous levels of air pollution from carbon monoxide, sewer gas, fuel gas, dust, and other harmful pollutants.**
- ✓ **The unit must have adequate air circulation.**
- ✓ **Bathrooms must have a window that opens properly or a permanently installed exhaust fan.**
- ✓ **Any room used for sleeping must have at least one window that opens properly.**

## **WATER SUPPLY**

**Mesquite has a superior water supply**

- ✓ **An approvable public or private water supply must serve the unit, which is sanitary and free from contamination.**

## **LEAD-BASED PAINT**

- ✓ **A dwelling unit constructed before 1978 that is occupied by a family that includes a child under the age of six (6) years must include a visual inspection for defective paint surfaces. Defective paint surface is defined as a surface on which the paint is cracking, scaling, chipping, peeling or loose. If defective paint surfaces are found, such surfaces must be treated by a qualified, trained professional.**

## **IT'S THE LAW!!!!**

**Federal law requires contractors and maintenance staff that disturb painted surfaces in homes built before 1978 to be and follow specific work practices to prevent lead contamination. Always ask to see your contractor's certification.**

**Federal law requires that individuals receive certain information before renovating more than six (6) square feet of painted surfaces in a room for interior projects or more than twenty (20) square feet of painted surfaces for exterior projects or window replacement or demolition in housing, child care facilities and schools built before 1978.**

## **LEAD BASE PAINT, CONTINUED....**

**Homeowners and tenants: Renovators must give you “THE LEAD SAFE CERTIFIED GIDE TO RENOVATE RIGHT”**

**Pamphlet before starting work. Please visit**

**[www.epa.gov/lead/pubs/renocation.htm](http://www.epa.gov/lead/pubs/renocation.htm)**

**for more information.**

## **ACCESS**

- ✓ The unit must have direct access for the tenant to enter and exit, without the unauthorized use of other private properties.**
- ✓ The building must provide an alternate means of exit in case of fire.**
- ✓ Entry/exits must not be “blocked” by debris, stored items, non-working locks, or doors that have been nailed shut or otherwise obstructed.**

## **SITE AND NEIGHBORHOOD**

- ✓ **The site and neighborhood must be reasonably free of serious conditions, which would endanger the health and safety of residents.**

## **INFESTATION**

- ✓ **The unit and its equipment must be free of vermin and rodent infestation. You should contact a pest control company for more information.**

## **SMOKE DETECTORS**

- ✓ **The unit must have at least one battery operated or hardwired smoke detector that is in proper operating condition on each level of the unit.**
- ✓ **Detectors must be installed in accordance with and meet the requirements of the National Fire Protection Association Standard (NFPA) 74 or its successors (currently NFPA 720). Smoke detectors should be located six (6) to twelve (12) inches from ceiling if wall mounted and no closer than six (6) inches to wall if ceiling mounted.**

## **SMOKE DETECTORS (Continued)**

- ✓ If any hearing-impaired person occupies the unit, smoke detectors must have an alarm system designed for hearing-impaired persons as specified by NFPA 74 (or its successors).

## **UTILITIES**

- ✓ All utilities (water, electricity, and gas where applicable) must be on before the inspection will be scheduled.
- ✓ All gas appliances must have pilots lit before an inspection is scheduled

## **OCCUPANCY**

- ✓ Unit to be inspected must be either vacant or already occupied by the Section 8 tenant/client applying for that unit.

## **DOORS**

### **Interior**

- ✓ Doors must be securely mounted. All required hardware and trim (locks, molding, etc.) must be present and in proper working order. Locking hardware must correctly engage strike plates.

## **DOORS (Continued)**

### **Exterior**

- ✓ **Door surfaces must be in good repair, free of holes and not showing signs of delaminating.**
- ✓ **The doors must operate smoothly without binding on frame or floor.**
- ✓ **Hinged doors must be securely mounted. All necessary hardware and trim (locks, molding, etc.) must be present and in proper working order. Locking hardware must properly engage strike plates.**
- ✓ **Door surfaces must in good repair. Door surface damages that allow thermal transfer (air leakage) are not allowed.**
- ✓ **Keyed, single-cylinder or dead bolt locks are necessary for the exterior entry doors.**

## **DOORS (Continued)**

### **Exterior**

- ✓ **The doors must operate smoothly without binding on the frame or floor. Hinged doors must not allow thermal transfer because of faulty/missing seals or misalignment to the doorframe. Sliding glass doors must have a permanent locking device and must function properly. Excessive force must not be required to open and/or close the sliding panel.**
- ✓ **Sliding doors must not allow thermal transfer because of faulty/missing seals or misalignment to the doorframe.**

## **WINDOWS**

- ✓ **If windows are designed to open, they must open. Window locks must be present and function properly.**
- ✓ **Security bars are allowed. However, if they are installed on bedroom windows and/or exit doors they must be designed to allow emergency egress.**

## **STAIRS AND BATHROOMS.**

- ✓ **Handrails must be present at stair locations that have four (4) or more risers. Missing/damaged parts are not acceptable. Loose, broken, and/or missing treads are not allowed and there must be no missing balusters.**
- ✓ **All bathrooms must have a vent fan or window. AC supply vent IS NOT considered adequate ventilation.**
- ✓ **If glass panes allowing view to the outside are mounted into the door surface then a peephole is not needed. Some glass panes are opaque or they are mounted too high in the door to allow view to the outside.**