



## Quality Assurance Processes

The Program uses a “3 strikes, you’re out” policy. Contractors may receive a strike for a variety of quality related reasons, as defined below in the Probation Section. When a contractor receives a strike, they will be informed in writing within 5 business days.

### ***Office Review – Contractor Paperwork – 100% reviewed for non-utility customers***

The Program will review every reported job to make sure that overall health, safety and cost-effective energy upgrade goals are upheld. Specifically, we will be looking at:

- Test in – test out numbers
  - No un-safe results during test-out
  - Review for consistency and reasonableness
- Comprehensive list of improvements
- Reasonable number/quality improvements installed
- Proper Installation order (air seal before attic insulation)
- Software inputs/results are reasonable

### ***On-Site Review (non-utility customers)***

100% of the first 5 jobs will be on-site reviewed, 25% of the next 20 will be reviewed and 5% of all jobs thereafter. Jobs to be reviewed will be chosen randomly or as part of a customer complaint review. If a contractor fails quality assurance at any time, the number of QA reviews will increase and the contractor may be put on probation or suspended (see below). Please provide schedule of upcoming test-outs to Erik at [erik\\_lundquist@sra.com](mailto:erik_lundquist@sra.com) to facilitate QA scheduling.

- Review process with customer
  - Satisfaction/complaints/confusion
  - Reason for QA visit and process
- Health & Safety Testing
  - CAZ worst case, CO, Spillage, Draft
  - Compare with contractor test-out numbers
  - Zone Pressure test to garage and possibly other areas
  - Moisture Issues inside and out
- Efficiency Improvements
  - Blower Door test – compare to contractor
  - Duct Leakage using pressure pan
  - Verify installs – visual and/or IR scan
  - HVAC tests
- Review Results with customer
- Review Results with contractor
  - Immediately if on-site during QA
  - In writing if no immediate concerns
  - If critical problems, verbally and immediately (followed by written).

Results of the QA review will be provided to the contactor as quickly as possible. Items subject to extreme safety and health issues will be reported to the contractor immediately. The results will be provided to MEA and the EPA as part of the monthly and/or quarterly reporting process.

## ***Customer Complaint Resolution Process***

It is very important to the Program that customers of Maryland Home Performance contractors be satisfied. If at any time, a customer of a Maryland Home Performance Contractor complains to the Program, Program staff will mediate the situation.

Program staff will take the following actions:

1. Verify that customer and contractor have spoken with one another about the issue.
  - a. If not, direct customer to contact contractor before MDHPwES becomes involved.
2. Contact the customer to understand the nature of the problem
3. Contact the contractor to explain the allegations, and get their view of the situation
4. Determine if the customer's complain is justified. If necessary, go out to the customer's home to inspect any alleged problems
5. Mediate solution to any additional repair work on the customer's home from the contractor, if necessary

## ***Probation and Suspension***

### **Probation**

A contractor will be put on probation for receiving 3 strikes within any 6 month period, or by not actively engaging in clearing up a strike within 30 days. When on probation, the contractor's listing will be removed from [www.MdHomePerformance.org](http://www.MdHomePerformance.org), and may not attend any marketing events on behalf of the Program. However, the contractor may still use the Maryland Home Performance with ENERGY STAR logo and all related marketing material, and may call themselves a Maryland Home Performance with ENERGY STAR Contractor.

### **Causes for Receiving a Strike**

1. Justified customer complaint
2. Critical testing failure – home or life in danger
3. Consistently failing to provide complete improvements list
4. Consistently improper/inadequate installation
5. Blatant disregard for program requirements

As a summary, a participating contractor will be put on probation for:

- A) Receiving 3 strikes
- B) Failure to take steps to rectify in good faith the cause of any strike within 30 days

- C) Not reporting their first completed job within 4 months of the kick-off meeting
- D) Not reporting minimum number of jobs per year
- E) Not listing [www.MdHomePerformance.org](http://www.MdHomePerformance.org) on contractor's website within 4 months of kick-off meeting

## **Reinstatement**

To get off probation, the contractor must resolve the reasons for getting each of the strikes. Specifically, for each of the 5 above reasons for getting a strike for quality related reasons, the contractor must:

### **Reinstatement Requirements**

1. Clear customer complaints
2. Additional mentoring and 100% QC review – 3 passes
3. Additional training and provides complete list
4. Additional training and 100% QC review – 3 passes
5. 100% QC – passes 5 in a row

A contractor may remain on probation for up to 3 months. If after 3 months all issues are not cleared, they will be suspended from participating in the Program.

## **Suspension**

As stated in the Maryland Home Performance Partnership Agreement: *This Agreement is completely voluntary and can be terminated at any time for any reason by either MEA or the Participating Contractor with prior written notice from the terminating party to the other party.*

When suspended, contractors are expressly forbidden from using the Maryland Home Performance with ENERGY STAR logo, and may not refer to themselves as a qualified or participating Maryland Home Performance with ENERGY STAR Contractor.

### **Causes for Suspension**

- Failure to actively work on clearing customer complaints within 30 days
- On probation for longer than 3 months
- On probation twice in one year
- Failure to maintain business requirements, E.G. insurance, certifications, etc.

### **Reinstatement Requirements**

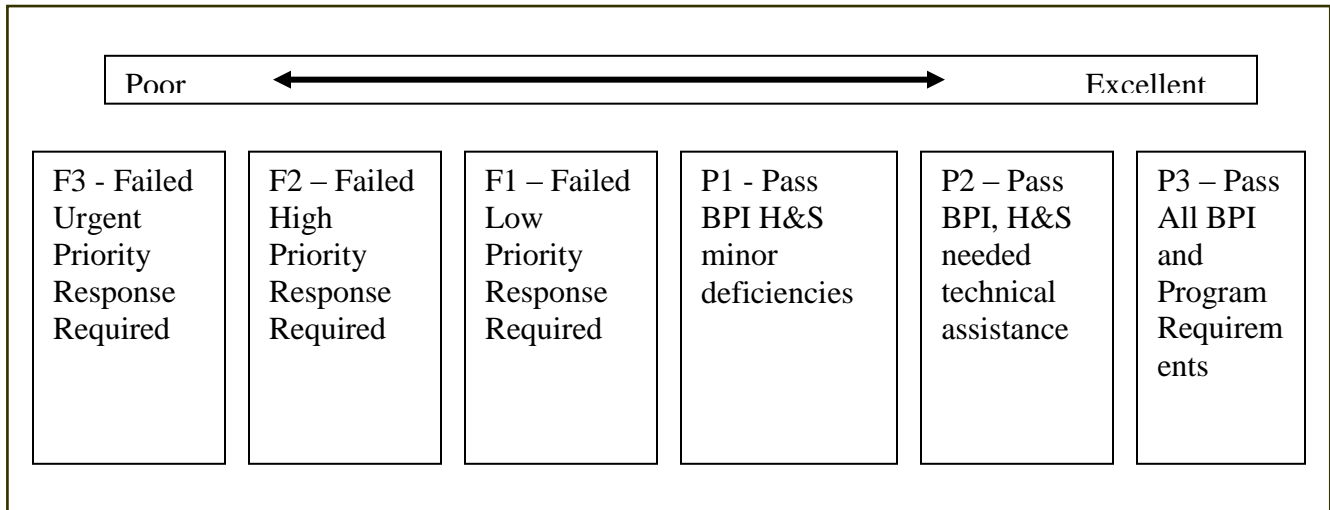
- Determined case-by-case
- Mutually agreed upon action plan

## Decertification

Addressed through BPI processes

Contractor will be notified of Probation or Suspension in writing and has 7 days to respond with extenuating circumstances or other information. The contractor will remain on Probation or Suspension while this information is reviewed.

## Overall Job Rating



**F3 – House Failed – Urgent Response Needed.** The inspector is not to leave the house until the issue is addressed and conditions are safe. Conditions in this category include:

- Combustion safety failures requiring immediate attention as prescribed by BPI Combustion Safety Action Levels
- Gas leak requiring immediate repair
- Measure included in the scope of work as costs to the customer but not installed in the field

**F2 - House Failed – High Priority Response Needed.** The contractor must be notified and arrangements made to remedy the situation as soon as possible following the inspection. Conditions in this category include:

- Combustion safety failures that are below the immediate action levels but still require repairs
- Severe moisture issues
- Other health and safety related problems that do not pose an immediate risk to the building occupants
- No Health and Safety Testing Conducted

**F1** - House Failed – Normal Response Needed. The contractor is to be given instructions for making repairs and a timeline for completing those repairs (typically 30 days)

- Below standard insulation installations
- Air Sealing results significantly below projections (<20%)
- Windows not meeting program standards
- Heating/Cooling and Hot Water equipment not meeting Program Requirements
- Non-Compliance with BPI standards (other than health/safety related measures)
- Failing to conform to Program Administrative Procedures
- Comprehensive Home Assessment not provided to the customer
- Comprehensive Home Assessment does not include information on all cost-effective energy measures
- HVAC equipment not installed to manufacturer's specifications or is not operating properly
- Quality of installation issues observed for measures installed
- Incorrect use of testing equipment

**P1** - Passes All BPI Health & Safety Requirements but other deficiencies were observed. The home has passed BPI and program standards, but procedural issues such as incorrect testing values were found or minor quality of installation deficiencies were documented.

- Air sealing slightly below projections (<20%)
- Incorrect Blower Door Values
- Quality of installation issues observed and corrected
- Project meets Program and BPI Standards but energy saving opportunities were not identified by contractor

**P2** - Passes all BPI & Program Standards with Technical Assistance. The home passed BPI and program standards, but field staff had to provide technical assistance to correct deficiencies before project was complete. In addition, if the home passed BPI and program standards but was not comprehensive in scope, it would fit into this category.

**P3** - Passes all BPI and Program Standards and work scope was reasonably comprehensive. Field inspector may have comments about more that could have been done at the home, but the customer stated that they did not want or could not afford additional recommended measures.