



MENARD COUNTY  
HOUSING AUTHORITY

**Housing Choice Voucher Program**

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Petersburg, Illinois 62675

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TTY- 711

**COMMON HQS FAIL ITEMS**

1. **Deteriorated paint** on all painted surfaces in housing built in 1978 or before in which a pregnant woman or a child under 6 lives or is expected to live. This includes all painted surfaces in the interior of the apartment and all painted surfaces in common and exterior areas accessible to a pregnant woman or a child under 6. Areas of deteriorated paint are particularly common in window wells (the part of the window that the sashes close on); areas under kitchen sinks, the interiors of closets and pantries, door and window interior trim and wear surfaces, interior ceilings particularly in bathrooms and exterior siding and trim.
2. **Improperly wired/broken outlets-** (Reversed polarity, 3 pronged outlets with no ground, faulty GFI outlets and so forth.)
3. **Missing/Broken handrails and/or steps** on interior and exterior stairs. Handrail must be present for any stairwell with 4 or more steps (including top landing.)
4. **No ventilation in bathroom** (There must be an operable window, a power vent or a gravity vent.)
5. **Undgrounded water heater. Missing water heater discharge line. Loose/misaligned exhaust vent on gas water heaters.**
6. **Missing circuit breakers, open slots in electric panels, missing covers on electrical boxes and water heaters, missing/broken switch plate or outlet covers.**
7. **Plumbing leaks under sinks.**
8. **Toilet loose on flange/broken/clogged.**
9. **Clogged drains.**
10. **Missing/broken heater covers.**
11. **Wall holes.** Any holes larger than 8.5X11 sheet of paper are fail items. Any holes, regardless of size, that exposes electrical components or goes through both sides of wall to another room or exterior are fail items.

12. **Deadbolts on exterior doors that require a key to operate both on the inside and the outside.**
13. **Broken window panes/missing sashes/windows that won't open** (bedrooms and living room must have at least one window that opens)
14. **Broken/missing window locks (locks required on all windows accessible from ground level)- Most windows that are nailed shut.**
15. **Entry doors that are not secure.** Entry doors should have secure locks. Bathroom or interior door locks are not acceptable for Entry doors.
16. **Inoperable stove burner or oven.**
17. **Leaking/inoperable refrigerator.**
18. **Ripped linoleum/cracked or missing floor tiles/no finish floor.**
19. **Smoke detector won't test/missing/low tone/missing batteries/unplugged. Smoke detectors not in proper proximity to bedrooms/sleeping rooms.**
20. **Hallway emergency lights won't operate (If present).**
21. **Bath sink/vanity/shower stall not attached to wall or secure.**
22. **Leaking plumbing supply or waste pipes or valves in basement.**
23. **Infestation by pests** (such as mice, rats, fleas, bedbugs, roaches)
24. **Inadequate fire egress-** particularly from Bedrooms.
25. **Hanging electric wires/open un-terminated electric wires.** Wires should be terminated properly and securely enclosed within a junction/electrical box.
26. **Broken door slabs/frames.**
27. **Excessive trash and debris** on exterior grounds and dumpster areas.
28. **Little or no hot water.**

## Proper Care for a Water Heater

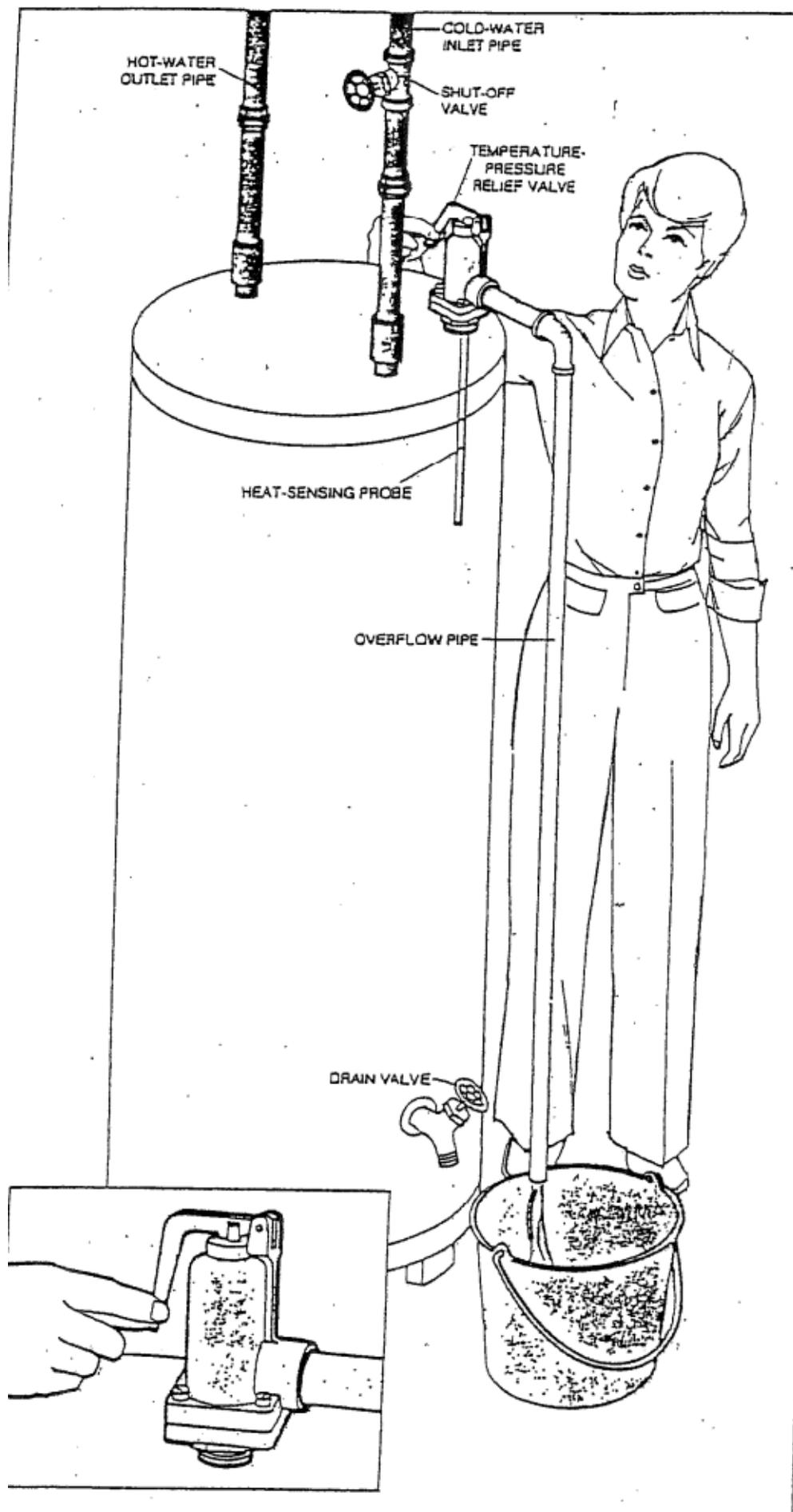
Few modern conveniences are more taken for granted than hot water. And most of the time, the tank that provides it can be taken for granted too. But there are two routine chores that must be done from time to time if you want it to do its job efficiently and safely. One is clearing the tank of sediment; the other is checking the tank's relief valve.

Sediment- the result of rusty or alkaline impurities in many areas- comes into the hot water tank from the water main. If it accumulates inside the tank, it blocks the transmission of heat to the water and wastes energy. But sediment settles near the bottom of the tank and is easily drawn off through a drain valve (below). How often the tank needs draining depends on the composition of the water and the condition of the tank. Experiment by checking every month until you establish a cycle that allows no more than a pailful of cloudy water to accumulate between drawings.

The other maintenance chore- checking the water heater's relief valve- is a safety measure. The valve is designed to backstop the thermostat. In the unlikely- but not impossible- event that the thermostat should malfunction and permit the temperature to rise to a dangerous level, the valve will open automatically and release the overheated water before it can boil into steam and cause an explosion. To be sure that the valve is in working condition, make the simple test shown at right.

**Checking a water heater.** In a typical heater, the safety valve is on top, controlled by a probe beneath it, inside the tank. The probe automatically trips the valve if the temperature or pressure inside the heater exceeds safe limits. Once a season, lift the handle atop the valve (inset). The overflow pipe below it should expel hot water. If it does not, replace the valve at once.

The valve in the pipe above the tank controls the old water supply. At the bottom of the tank is the drain valve, to check for sediment. If water is cloudy or rusty, drain until it runs clear.



## **Lead Paint**

Many older buildings may still have interior and exterior surfaces which have been painted with lead-based paint. Chips of paint containing lead can be picked up and eaten by small children. Over a period of time, ingestion of lead-based paint by children can build up amounts of lead in their bodies causing severe health problems, including brain damage or, in the worst cases, death.

The lead paint requirement applies to all interior surfaces within the unit (ceilings, walls, woodwork, window sills and frames) that are chipping, peeling, cracking, scaling or loose. If any surface in the room has this condition, it fails the Housing Quality Standards (HQS) inspection, regardless of whether the paint has been tested for lead content.

On the exterior of the dwelling unit, any surface with this condition (including stairs, decks, porches, railings, windows and doors) must also be treated. If the problem area is higher than a seven year old child reach, it will pass inspection, but should be corrected periodically for the owner's benefit or maintaining the property.

## **Problem Solving**

The specific interior surfaces that fail inspection must be treated in the following manner: "They must be thoroughly washed, sanded, scraped or wire-brushed to remove all loose paint before repainting with at least two (2) coats of a non-lead paint or they must be covered with a suitable material such as sheet rock, wallboard, wallpaper or other wall covering, plywood, plaster or other paneling material."

Exterior surfaces must be "thoroughly washed, sanded, scraped or wire-brushed to remove all loose paint before repainting with at least two (2) coats of a nonlead paint."

If the owner is required to treat any surface, the attached certification that the work has been done in accordance with the above described requirements prior to the execution or renewal of any contract is required.

Sincerely yours,

Bradley A. Ames  
Housing Programs Coordinator

# GENERAL ROOM STANDARDS

## WINDOWS

### Basic objectives in rating windows:

To assure that windows are located in certain rooms, that windows be openable where required, and to determine that all windows in the room are reasonably weathertight.

### Location and Openability Requirements:

The requirements for location and openability vary by room type:

**Living room:** requires a window, but does not have to be openable.

**Kitchen:** no requirements

**Dining room:** no requirements

**Bedroom (or any other room used for sleeping):** Openable window is required

**All bathrooms:** If a window is present, it must be openable. If no window is present, there must be an exhaust vent system. Ventilation system types may be:

-Electric fan

-Gravity flow

-Shafts designed for this purpose which permit air to escape to the outside.

**Rooms other than those listed:** no requirements

*If you or anyone in your family is a person with disabilities, and you require a specific accommodation in order to fully utilize our programs and services, please call 217-632-7723.*

