

October 7, 2021

The Honorable Marcia L. Fudge
Secretary of Housing and Urban Development
451 Seventh Street SW
Washington DC

Dear Secretary Fudge:

We are writing to request that HUD expedite the implementation of department-wide occupant-protective policy in response to the findings and recommendations in the Inspector General Report of April 8, 2021, OIG 2020-OE-0003, *HUD Program Offices' Policies and Approaches for Radon*.

Findings in the report characterize the problem well, needing no further embellishment:

- HUD's regulations ... state that it is HUD policy that all properties proposed for use in HUD programs be free of hazardous materials, contamination, toxic chemicals and gasses, and **radioactive substances** where a hazard could affect the health and safety of occupants or conflict with HUD's intended use of the property.
- HUD does not have a departmentwide radon policy that governs operations for all program offices. Instead, HUD relies on each program office to develop radon policies that align with 24 CFR parts 50 and 58.
- Only Multifamily's radon policy includes radon testing and mitigation requirements.
- Absent a departmental radon policy, each program office has developed a radon policy or approach with varying degrees of testing and mitigation requirements. This inconsistent approach does not align with statements in HUD's environmental regulations or support industry standards which recommend that radon testing occur every 2 years after a mitigation system is installed. As a result of this inconsistent approach to testing and mitigation, HUD cannot ensure that residents receive consistent and sufficient protection from the hazardous health effects of radon exposure, as testing is the only way to determine indoor radon levels.

The OIG recommends that the Office of Environment and Energy develop and issue a departmentwide policy that notes that radon is a radioactive substance, outlines HUD requirements to test for and mitigate excessive radon levels that are consistent and sufficient for all HUD programs and specifies radon-related data that HUD should retain. OIG also recommends that the radon policies for PIH, CPD and Multifamily be developed, updated, and implemented to comply with the OEE's departmental policy.

We concur. A department-wide policy is needed.

The decade-plus history of the multifamily radon policy is a model of productive HUD initiative in addressing the dangers of radon and improving the policy over time. Public housing residents, beneficiaries of block grant programs, and others reached by HUD's programs deserve protection from radon comparable to the multifamily program.

We ask you to ensure that all HUD programs test for and mitigate radon consistent with industry standards, and to insist that the disparate treatment of HUD program recipients ends. We know that HUD can solve this under your leadership expeditiously. Radon is a radioactive substance, the health risk is clear, the standards are in place, one program can be the model for the rest.

Please ensure that the necessary actions are taken to establish and implement department-wide radon policy, and don't hesitate to call upon our organizations for any assistance that we can provide.

**American Association of Radon Scientists & Technologists
Conference of Radiation Control Program Directors
National Center for Healthy Housing
National Housing Law Project
National Low Income Housing Coalition**