

Visual Survey Instructions

I. Talk with the resident before you begin:

- Explain that you will draw floor and site plans, take notes, take photographs, collect samples, and possibly leave roach traps, a carbon monoxide alarm, or radon detectors for more than one day.
- Explain what kinds of samples you plan to take after you finish the visual survey.
- If a tenant, ask whether the resident received lead hazard disclosure information from the landlord and note the response in the space provided at the bottom of the **Visual Survey Report**.

2. Survey the exterior and grounds and draw the Site Plan:

The Site Plan is a sketch of the area around the home where you will not any problems you identify and where you collect soil samples. See CEHRC's website for the Site Plan form and an example.

- Walk around outside the building to look at the overall layout of the property.
- On the **Site Plan**, draw the outline of the building and where it sits on the property.
- Label important features on the **Site Plan**:
 - The location of the street and other landmarks
 - Play areas
 - Trash areas (dumpster, trash collection area)
 - Outdoor parking areas
 - Garages or other buildings

3. Note hazards on Site Plan and Visual Survey Report:

- Note the following hazards, **(1)** on the Site Plan, AND **(2)** by making a check mark next to the name of the problem in the “exterior” column on the **Visual Survey Report**:

- **Bare soil (no grass, mulch, or wood shavings) in the yard around the home or in a common outdoor area:** in play areas (in sand boxes, under swing sets, in areas where kids play), along the “dripline” within three feet of the building, and in other areas of the yard.

- **Deteriorated Paint (peeling, flaking, chipping, cracking):**

- Deteriorated in any way
- Paint coming loose from the surface or substrate (wood, plaster, metal, drywall)
- On the home, fences, etc.

- **Holes in the walls of the building.** Look for openings around windows and doors.

- Indicate the extent of the problem for **deteriorated paint and water damage** by noting on the following on the Visual Survey Report:

- N = None

- L = Low (less than 2ft²)

- M = Moderate (2 - 10ft²)

- H = High (10ft² or more)

- E = Extreme (structural damage caused by this problem)

- Note the following hazards on the **Visual Survey Report** only:

- **Rodents or evidence:** Note if you see, or the resident reports seeing, rats or mice, or very small pellets that may be rodent droppings.



- **Other physical conditions that seem hazardous,** such as standing water, woodpiles near exterior walls, accumulated trash, obvious water damage or wood rot, and damaged gutters, downspouts and other

building components.

4. Draw one Floor Plan for each floor of the home:

The Floor Plan shows the layout of the rooms (as seen from above). The Floor Plan makes it easy for you to note where you identify problems. You will also use the Floor Plan to show where you collect samples, leave testing materials for collection, and take photographs.

The Floor Plan does not have to be drawn using exact measurements. It should show the general relationships between rooms in the home and exterior walls. See CEHRC's website for the Floor Plan for and an example.

- Walk through the home to get a good understanding of the overall layout of the rooms.
- Draw the overall outline of the entire home.
- If the home has more than one floor, note which floor each **Floor Plan** represents before you draw it. If the home has two floors, one copy of the floor plan will be marked "**1 of 2**" and the other will be "**2 of 2**". If you draw a plan for an unoccupied basement, mark it "**0**".
- Draw the walls between rooms, then the doors and windows:
 - a. Draw a rectangle for each door. 
 - b. Draw a circle through the line of the wall for each window. 
 - c. Mark the walls of closets to help you keep the walls in perspective and avoid confusion about the doors.
- Label each room using the same names and abbreviations as listed on the **Visual Survey Report**
- Draw an asterisk (*) in rooms where children sleep or play.
- Be sure to note entryway of the home.

5. Perform the Visual Survey: note hazards on both the Floor Plan and Visual Survey Report

- Fill in the top of the **Visual Survey Report** and cross out columns for rooms that are not present. Add names or areas if necessary. If you

do not have enough columns, use a second copy of the report and write "1 of 2" on the first sheet and "2 of 2" on the second.

- Draw a star/asterisk (*) next to the names of rooms where children sleep or play.
- In each room, look for the problems listed below. For each, (1) note the location of each problem on the floor plan using the abbreviation from the key below, AND (2) make a check mark () next to the name of the problem in the column for that room on the **Visual Survey Report**.

a. Deteriorated paint (peeling, flaking, chipping, cracking paint):

- Deteriorated in any way
- Paint coming loose from the painted surface (wood, plaster, metal, drywall)
- Teeth marks on the painted surface.

b. Cockroaches or their remains: Note the location if you see any cockroaches, their shells or debris, or if the resident reports seeing them.

c. Holes in walls between the inside and outside of the building and between rooms. Look for openings around windows and exterior doors.

d. Unvented gas oven, clothes dryer, or heater: An appliance that burns natural gas, kerosene, wood, or other fuel is "unvented" if it does not have a pipe or ductwork that sends the exhaust outside.

e. Mold or fungus or similar stains on the wall, on the carpet, under sinks, outside of showers, or around windows. On the Visual Survey Report, check "obvious source of moisture" if the mold is near a source such as a dripping drain or moisture around a window. If there is no obvious moisture source for the mold, check the other box.

- Indicate the extent of the problem for **deteriorated paint and water damage** by noting on the following on the Visual Survey Report:
 - N = None
 - L = Low (less than 2ft²)
 - M = Moderate (2 - 10ft²)
 - H = High (10ft² or more)
 - E = Extreme (structural damage caused by this problem)

- On the **Visual Survey Report** only, note the following potential problems:
 - a. Walls appear wet or newly stained, or the plaster or drywall is bulging.**
 - b. Rodents or evidence:** Note if you see, or the resident reports seeing, rats or mice, or very small pellets that may be rodent droppings.
 - c. Strong musty smell like mold or fungus.**
 - d. Natural gas or sewer gas smell.** If you think you smell natural gas, advise the resident to call the gas company immediately.
 - e. Old or worn-out carpeting if in poor condition or extremely dirty.**
 - f. Other:** write in additional physical conditions that seem problematic (such as other odors, water leaks, etc.)

6. Double-check the Visual Survey Report, Floor Plan, and Site Plan:

- The resident's name, address, and unit number, and your name should be filled in.
- Make sure the names of the rooms on the **Floor Plan(s)** match those on the **Visual Survey Report**.

7. Determine further testing needs and locations:

Plan to take samples if you have identified any of the following:

- Deteriorated paint (lead)
- Bare soil (lead)
- Water damage (lead, mold and moisture)
- Unvented appliances (carbon monoxide)
- Cockroaches or evidence

8. Provide follow-up instructions, schedule the next visit, and thank the resident:

- Explain approximately when and how the **Summary Results Report** will be presented.

Schedule a time when someone will be home if you need to return to collect tests for carbon monoxide, cockroaches or radon, and note this on the Visual Survey Report.