



# Section 8 Owner Newsletter

MAY 2010

Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles

www.hacla.org

## Inspections of Electrical Outlets

United States Department of Housing Urban Development (HUD) has issued a notice regarding the Housing Quality Standard (HQS) Inspections of electrical outlets. The notice offers guidance on what types of three-prong electrical outlets inspectors should consider acceptable.

There are two basic types of outlets: two-pronged, and three-pronged outlets. Two-pronged outlets are ungrounded. Three-pronged outlets have an additional hole for a ground wire, and are grounded outlets.

In general, original two-pronged, ungrounded outlets and original three-pronged, grounded outlets are acceptable under the HQS. "Upgraded" outlets, which have been changed from two-pronged to three-pronged, are the major area of concern.

Older homes constructed before 1975 usually have ungrounded two-pronged outlets, which is an acceptable type of outlet under the HQS (Figure 1). Two-pronged ungrounded systems and outlets are acceptable under HQS as long as the outlet is in proper operating condition. You don't need to upgrade the electrical system of the unit (convert two-pronged outlets to three-pronged) in order for the unit to pass the inspection.

Newer homes will usually have three-pronged outlets, which are acceptable under HQS if the outlets are grounded (Figure 2). Newer units constructed with a three-wire electrical system include a hot, neutral, and ground wire.

Many of the cords for today's appliances contain three-pronged plugs, which can cause problems when an older home does not have three-pronged outlets for these appliances.

### Acceptable Outlet Conversions

You should not substitute three-pronged,

grounded type outlets for ungrounded outlets, unless, a ground wire is connected to the outlet, or a Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI) protects the outlet (Figure 3). A cost-effective way to protect the outlet is with a GFCI. If the GFCI senses a difference in current flow between the hot and the neutral terminals, it shuts off the flow of current to the outlet.

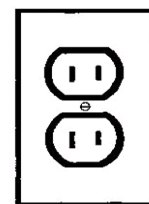


FIGURE 1 UNGROUNDED

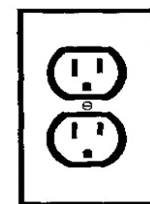


FIGURE 2 GROUNDED

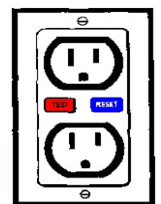


FIGURE 3 GFCI

### Testing of Outlets

During the inspection the inspector will use an outlet tester to determine whether the outlet is properly grounded. There are two types of outlet testers that an inspector can use to determine a properly grounded outlet: a two-wire tester or a three-pronged tester.

For two-pronged ungrounded outlets the inspector may plug an appliance into the outlet to verify the appliance turns on.

Three-pronged Outlets must meet one of the following three standards for the inspector to consider the outlet in "proper operating condition" as required by HQS:

1. The outlet is properly grounded
2. A GFCI protects the three-pronged, ungrounded outlet.
3. The outlet complies with the applicable state or local building or inspection code

Two Wire Tester



Three Prong Tester



Enroll in Direct Deposit today to have your HAP checks directly deposited into your bank account

Rent Request Form

Rents and Vacancy Rates

Attend our free Owner Orientation Seminars to receive valuable information about the Section 8 Program

Legal Questions

List your vacancies with us on our website

## Direct Deposit

To apply for direct deposit you may download an application from our website at: <http://www.hacla.org/owner-info/>

Please keep in mind that the processing of direct deposit applications generally takes between 90 to 120 days. All ownership information must be current and all documents completed with the required signatures to ensure the timely arrival of your direct deposit.

## Rent Request Form

Request for Rent increase form has been revised to include a question regarding subsidized projects. If your home or building is subsidized by the following types of programs you need to check all of the following that are applicable on the form: HOME, Section 202, Section 221(d)(3)(BMR), Section 236, Section 515 Rural Development, Tax Credit. If there are any other types of subsidies please indicate the type of subsidy on the form.

You can submit the form online at <http://www.hacla.org/owner-info/> or you can print the form available online and submit it by mail or fax.

## Rents and Vacancy Rates

The Los Angeles Times reports in Los Angeles, vacancy rates have increased to 3.4% in the first quarter, and asking rents have been coming down since 2008, Grubb & Ellis reported. Vacancy rates will increase as unemployment remains high.

*Los Angeles Times*, April 27, 2010; Roger Vincent

## Legal Questions

If you have any legal questions concerning your Section 8 tenant(s) you may seek legal advice through a private attorney or through the Legal Aid Foundation. The Housing Authority does not provide legal advice.

The contact information for the Legal Aid Foundation is as follows: (213) 640-3881.

## Section 8 Owner Orientation Seminars

These sessions are designed to explain how the Section 8 Program works from the property owner's perspective.

**May 2010**

### Orientation Schedule

Friday, May 7, 2010, 10am-12:30pm

Saturday, May 22, 2010, 10am-12:30pm

Thursday, May 27, 2010, 10am-12:30pm

The dates are also posted on our website at [www.hacla.org](http://www.hacla.org). You must reserve a seat to attend one of the May 2010 sessions by calling (213) 252-1253. Please leave a contact number.

The schedule is subject to change. Persons with a hearing impairment should call the TDD Line at (213) 252-1639.

**Property listing service is available online at [www.hacla.org](http://www.hacla.org) under Section 8, "Property Listings."**  
**You can also register by phone at 1-877-428-8844.**

**The Housing Authority will be closed on: May 31, 2010 in observance of Memorial Day**