



Setting the Standards for
Home Energy Efficiency

Temporary RESNET Protocols for Default Test Values During the COVID Pandemic

April 27, 2020

During the National Emergency caused by COVID-19 and concern over public health, RESNET is urging that Rating Providers and HERS Rating Companies restrict to the extent possible their certified RESNET HERS Raters and RFIs going into the field to inspect and test homes. However, RESNET recognizes that in many areas rating services (as part of Residential Construction) have been deemed essential infrastructure. The decision of whether the HERS professionals go on a job site rests with the Provider/Rating Company.

For the safety of RESNET professionals and for the viability of the HERS Industry during this national emergency, RESNET adopted Emergency Interim Amendment 48i on April 20, 2020.

The emergency amendment is set to expire 120 days from its adoption and may be revisited by RESNET as necessary in light of developments with the COVID-19 pandemic.

This document outlines the RESNET Protocols for the use of Default Test Values for Infiltration, Ventilation, and Duct Leakage to Outside as part of the temporary emergency policies allowing for complete remote field inspection and diagnostic testing by HERS Raters and Rating Field Inspectors (RFI).

IMPORTANT: The emergency interim amendment provides additional options and is not mandatory. Individual Providers, HERS Rating Companies, utility programs, code jurisdictions, and above-code programs may or may not wish to implement these diagnostic testing alternative procedures.

Alternatively, a Provider can deploy strategies that would limit the HERS Rater or RFI exposure at a construction site. RESNET has produced an infographic on how Raters and RFIs can limit their exposure. To download the infographic, click on [How HERS® Raters and RFIs can Limit Exposure to the Coronavirus](#).

Another option is for the HERS Rater/RFI to use the RESNET protocol for remote inspection of the home and come back later when it is safe to conduct the field diagnostic testing.

This document contains the procedures to implement the temporary Interim Amendment.

Quality Assurance Requirements

Rating Providers must follow all QA requirements outlined in Chapter 9 of the RESNET MINHERS Standards for Confirmed, Sampled, and Threshold ratings. In addition, the following Temporary Policies apply:

- Restrictions limiting Remote Field QA Reviews have been temporarily waived. Where raters and RFIs are still performing live inspections on homes, Remote Field QA Reviews may be used to satisfy minimum Field QA Reviews outlined in Chapter 9 of the MINHERS Standards.
- Variance may be granted to Rating Providers for Quarterly Field QA Review requirements upon request.
- Alternative documentation of minimum rated features may be allowed for File QA Reviews consistent with Remote Field Inspection Protocol. Options include:
 - Video Recording
 - Screenshots taken during the Remote Field Inspection
 - Supplemental Photo Documentation taken by the Builder Representative
- When selecting Ratings for File QA Reviews, Providers and QADs shall give priority to Ratings using Remote Field Inspections and/or Default Test Values.
- For Ratings using Default Test Values, Field and File QA Reviews shall include verification by the QAD that correct default test values were used and documented by the rater.

Reporting and Documentation Requirements

1. The Rater/RFI shall comply with documentation of minimum rated features as required by RESNET Standards, including the source of any default test values.
2. All HERS Ratings that are completed using Default Test Values AND/OR Remote Field Inspections shall be reported by the Rater/RFI to the RESNET-Accredited Rating Provider for inclusion in the Annual QA Reporting to RESNET.
3. The Rater/RFI shall indicate in the revised *RESNET COVID-19 REMOTE INSPECTION HOME ENERGY RATING Standard Disclosure Form* that the HERS rating inspection was completed using RESNET's COVID-19 interim remote verification

protocols. The revised disclosure form can be downloaded at [RESNET COVID-19 REMOTE INSPECTION HOME ENERGY RATING Standard Disclosure Form](#)

4. Rating Provider compliance with the protocols outlined in this document are subject to RESNET Quality Assurance oversight.

Ventilation Default Options

1. Installer-measured and documented airflow rate -OR-
2. HVI Rated equipment airflow rates
 - a. These rates can be found in the [Home Ventilating Institute's Product Directory](#)
 - b. For HRVs and ERVs, use the Net Supply Airflow at 0.4" w.g.
 - c. For Ducted Fans, use the Rated Airflow @ 0.1" w.g.
 - d. For Inline Fans, use the Rated Airflow @ 0.2" w.g.

Infiltration and Duct Leakage to Outside (LTO) Default Options

1. RESNET-calculated Default by Climate Zone from Table 3.1
2. Provider-calculated Default by Builder following procedures outlined in Appendix A
3. Other default values adopted by program sponsors (such as a building department, a utility program, or a program such as ENERGY STAR) as approved by RESNET

Default Values Table 3.1

Climate Zone	Duct LTO CFM25 per Square Foot	Infiltration ACH50
1A	0.032	5.11
2A	0.033	4.91
2B	0.037	4.26
3A	0.036	5.08
3B	0.037	3.9
3C	0.033	3.99
4A	0.034	4.54
4B	0.051	5
4C	0.028	3.43
5A	0.033	4.01
5B	0.036	3.21
6A	0.033	3.35
6B	0.026	3.46
7B	0.023	2.99

Appendix A

Alternative Default Calculation Procedures

General

RESNET has created a [spreadsheet calculator](#) with formulas consistent with the Climate Zone default methodology. Using this spreadsheet calculator, Rating Providers may calculate Alternative Default Infiltration and Duct Leakage to Outside (LTO) values for a specific builder based on past performance within a given metro area. Defaults shall be calculated separately for different housing types (i.e. single-family detached vs attached or stick frame vs SIPs).

Metro Area

To determine the Metro Area, and therefore the data set for default calculations, Providers shall use the core-based statistical areas defined by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget and used by the Census Bureau. There are multiple resources to find this information. Some resources are searchable by zip code but may require subscription. One free resource can be found here:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_core-based_statistical_areas.

For ratings conducted on homes outside of any defined core-based statistical area, the Metro Area shall be defined by county.

Minimum Data Set

The minimum data set for a given default calculation shall be four (4) measurements for each test type. The measurements in the data set must be the same measurements that were used in the registered rating. For Sampling Projects, this means the data set would use the Worst Cast Threshold values as modeled in the registered rating, not the actual measured test values from field tests.

Date Range

The allowed date range is based on the date of the test (typically “date rated”) and per Addendum 48i, “based on measured data from the 120 days immediately preceding to the Effective Date of this Exception.” Therefore, the allowed date range for calculating alternative default values is December 22, 2019 to April 20, 2020.