



RESNET® Revised Sampling Protocol FAQs

EPA has announced that effective on January 1, 2025, sampling of single-family homes for labeling of ENERGY STAR homes will no longer be permitted.

- RESNET’s survey of members and industry determined that the industry believes that HERS® Index rating requirements should be maintained consistent with the ENERGY STAR program policy and that sampling of single-family homes should not be allowed effective January 1, 2025.
- The RESNET MINHERS Standards have been amended to sunset sampling for single-family homes at the same time EPA’s policy change takes effect.

Frequently Asked Questions Regarding RESNET Sampling Protocol

Q: What is the definition of a “Sampled Feature?” Can you give some examples?

A: A "Sampled Feature" is any Minimum Rated Feature that has been selected to Qualify for the Sampling process rather than be Inspected/Tested 100%.

Q: What is the difference between a “Sampled Feature” and a “Threshold Specification?”

A: “Threshold Specification is a defined term. "The specific pass/fail criterion for the inspection or testing of each Sampled Feature, which is based on a predetermined prescriptive or worst-case specification." An example: The Dishwasher is a sampled feature, that the dishwasher is ENERGY STAR Certified is the Threshold Specification.

Q: What does it mean in 608 that “at any time a given sample feature is permitted to be removed from sampling and every remaining instance shall be verified?”

A: You can opt out of sampling a feature and revert to 100% inspection /testing at anytime....why you would do this depends on many variables, but the intent is to provide options and flexibility should sampling prove not to be the best way forward.

Q: There are references to “Sampled Features”, but we have always done sampling at the “unit” level. Are we still allowed to select “units” for sampling, and then just evaluate whichever “Sampled Features”

happen to apply to that unit? For example, if we choose a ground level unit it includes the “crawlspace floor insulation” as one of the “Sampled Features.” But that unit does not include an attic. Are we not allowed to group attic units into a set with non-attic units?

A: Sampling is done by “Sampled Features” meaning 20% of the crawlspaces must be inspected and 20% of the attics also must be inspected. For the example above, (assuming most other features are common to all units) one way to handle this is to inspect all the available “Sampled Features” in that ground level unit, and then visit a top floor unit just for the attic insulation.

Q: Does the Qualification Set need to include 100% of the Sampled Features for a project?

A: Each Sampled Feature must individually qualify for sampling, however there is flexibility in how this is achieved.

Q: 606.2.1 states “A builder or developer shall complete and have verified the installation of a minimum of five (5) of each Sampled Feature prior to conducting a Qualification Set for each Sampled Feature.” What is the purpose of the “verified installation” requirement and can these five “verified” Sampled Features also be in the same units used for the Qualification Set?

A: Footnote 1 makes it clear that the intent is that qualification always requires a minimum of 10, (5 completed and 5 more “passing” to complete the qualification set). Units can fail during the initial verification without initiating a failure protocol of inspecting additional units, but during qualification, 5 consecutive must pass before a given feature may be sampled. The intent is to a) help ensure the Q set passes at the first attempt b) set the project up for success from the get-go. You can think of this as trades training and establishing expectations from day 1. One way to deal with this is to break this group out as a mandatory training set in your contract.

Q: Does the 20% sampling rate get applied to the total number of units for a project, or do you subtract out the units inspected for the 5 “verified” and 5 for the Qualification Set?

A: Footnote 1 makes it clear that the intent is for the sampling rate to apply to the number of units (more accurately units with a given feature) remaining after qualification. See example from the footnote:

¹ For example, consider a 100-unit Sampled Project. The minimum quantity of Verifications for a given Sampled Feature is $100 - 10$ (Qualification Set) = 90, then $90 * 0.2 = 18$. Note: Qualification Set number may vary depending on Failures but always requires a minimum 5 completed + 5 consecutive without Failure.

Q: Regarding the application, do we need to apply for projects that are “in progress” or are those grandfathered in?

A: For projects that are permitted after January 1, 2025, the application is required.

Q: What is meant by threshold specifications are permitted to be “adjusted” at any point during sampling? How is this different than a “failure?”

A: An example of “adjusting” might be where supply shortages force a different mechanical equipment selection midway through the project. If the new equipment has different efficiency, the worst-case models need to be modeled. The same could be done for other thresholds such as infiltration or duct testing. A project could start off aiming for a top-tier incentive but learn during the process that the infiltration rate necessary to achieve it is just too difficult to. If the builder/developer decides to aim for a lower (more achievable target) the threshold specifications could be adjusted and applied to inspections from that point forward to avoid unnecessary failures and re-inspections.

Q: In Section 604, it states “All units within a sampling project must be uploaded to the RESNET Registry.” Is this a new requirement?

A: This was always the intent, but it had not been spelled out in the standard language and has resulted in some Energy Efficiency Programs (EEPs) giving guidance that not all units have to be registered to meet their program. This was likely a concession to lower project costs.

Q: Will Sample Set IDs still be required in the software? How is the use of this term different than the old standard where seven or fewer homes would share one ID?

A: Sample Set IDs are required by the current software schema for all ratings using the type "Sampled Rating."

Q: In Section 609.1, there is mention of Enhanced QA review as a pre-requisite to be approved as a new Sampling Provider. What is “Enhanced QA Review?” Is the “Enhanced QA Review” supposed to take place before the committee approval?

A: Enhanced QA Review is the Online Review or Field Visit that the RESNET QA Team does with Providers as part of our oversight responsibilities.

Q: I have heard that the ZERH program has additional restrictions for sampling that go beyond RESNET's. Is this true?

A: Yes, for multifamily projects, units in different buildings cannot be grouped together. In other words, for the DOE ZERH program, sampling is restricted to dwelling units within the same building.