



# Probationary Policy for Assessment/Improvement Contractors

The Town of Chapel Hill has taken steps to pre-qualify each of the assessment/improvement contractors (hence forth “Contractor(s)”) working for the Chapel Hill WISE program. In doing so, however, the Town acknowledges that pre-qualification must also be complemented by quality assurance (QA) and quality control (QC) measures. The Town expects each participating contractor to perform adequate QC on their work and has hired the Advanced Energy Corporation to provide QA. Quality assurance is a check on the type of work performed and the methods used to perform that work. Quality control is a check on the quality of the work after it has been performed, but typically before the quality assurance is done.

In addition to the contract that each pre-qualified Contractor must sign and adhere to, this document explains the Town’s expectations of the Contractor and offers guidance for how non-compliance with program expectations will be addressed.

Each Contractor is expected to do the following as part of their participation in the WISE program:

1. Maintain a satisfactory (or above) customer rating, either through customer surveys or customer star ratings.
2. Perform work in a manner that is professional and comply with all program design standards (even those issued or modified after a contract has been signed).
3. Perform quality control checks during each installation to ensure program standards are correctly implemented before designating the job as completed.
4. Perform work in a manner that is compliant with the quality assurance provider’s expectations.

Based on the criteria above, each Contractor may have an annual review and receive written feedback. If program compliance concerns emerge in the interim, the Contractor is subject to the following process:

1. *Preliminary review of concerns* – Program staff will address the issue(s) directly with the Contractor’s appointed representative and will provide written notice of what must be done to correct the issue(s) and the amount of time given to do so. If the issue is deemed gross negligence by the Town, the Town reserves the right to skip the additional steps below and remove the Contractor from the program as stipulated in the Contractor’s programmatic agreement. If it is determined by the Town or by the QA provider that the Contractor did not perform work in a manner that is consistent with the expectations of this program, the Town reserves the right to give the homeowner the option of reopening the job to other pre-qualified Contractors, depending on the circumstances.



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Examples of concerns include but are not limited to:

Customer service complaints\*

Failure to act in a professional manner and adhere to program design

Failure to perform QC checks during each installation

Failure to perform work in a manner that is compliant with QA provider's expectations

\*Customer service complaints must first go through the Contractor's dispute resolution procedure unless the Town or QA provider deems the complaint immediately worthy of the probationary procedure outlined here. Additionally, the Town may choose to exercise the latter option during the early stages of the QA process (i.e., first 10 jobs) to help protect the program and, more importantly, its customers.

2. *Probation* – If the issue(s) identified in step 1 are not resolved to the Town's satisfaction within the amount of time specified in step 1, the Contractor will be placed on probation. The Town will define the level and duration of probation in accordance with the issue(s) and the efforts made to resolve the issue(s), and will provide this information in writing to the Contractor.

a) *If the contractor has completed or is still in the 1<sup>st</sup> Probationary Period with Advanced Energy*, probation will entail temporary removal of the Contractor's name from the list of pre-qualified Contractors available to perform work, such that the Contractor's name would not be seen by prospective homeowners for a set period of time. The Contractor, under close over-sight of both the WISE program staff and the QA provider, could still perform work on assessments or installations where they have been selected by a homeowner. While the Contractor is under Probation, if it is determined by the Town or by the QA provider that the Contractor did not perform work in a manner that is consistent with the expectations of this program, the Town reserves the right to give the homeowner the option of reopening the job to other pre-qualified Contractors, depending on the circumstances. Return of the Contractor's name to the list as a pre-qualified Contractor would be determined by WISE program staff and the QA provider and based on successfully meeting the program requirements in the subsequent jobs.

b) *If the contractor fails the 1<sup>st</sup> Probationary Period with Advanced Energy*, probation will entail removal of the Contractor's name from the list of pre-qualified Contractors available to perform work, such that the Contractor's name would not be seen by prospective homeowners and all future scheduled work for the WISE program must STOP until further notice. Any jobs or assessments that are in process may be completed under close oversight from WISE program staff and the QA provider. Any future scheduled assessments or jobs may NOT be started. Any WISE participants working with the contractor would be given the



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option to select another pre-qualified contractor.

In order to be returned to the WISE pre-qualified Contractor list the contractor must:

- Pay \$1800 to engage Advanced Energy in a second probationary period;
- Complete a corrective action plan under the direction of Advanced Energy. The plan must include the following elements:
  - Standards (for performing individual tasks, e.g. duct seal plenum to air handler connection)
  - Processes (for performing commonly associated tasks, e.g. duct sealing an entire system)
  - Quality Checks (these are built into the process to minimize mistakes and catch defects)
  - Training Plan (how is this information conveyed to crews, recognizing the relatively high turnover in the industry)
- Successfully complete the 2<sup>nd</sup> probationary period. ALL assessments and jobs must be brought to the WISE program by the contractor.

3. *Dismissal* – If the Contractor is unable to resolve the issue(s) identified in step 1 during the probationary period OR cannot come to some resolution with the Town, the Town reserves the right to remove the Contractor from the program as stipulated in the Contractor’s programmatic agreement. By default, Contractors that are dismissed from the Chapel Hill WISE program *may not* reapply unless the Town agrees to reconsider an application 1) after a set period of time has passed and 2) if the Contractor, to the Town’s satisfaction, has demonstrated the ability to avoid the unresolved issue in the future.



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