

April 2020

## **Guidance on the Use of Voluntary Consensus Standards for State Indoor Radon Grant Recipients**

The purpose of this guidance is to recommend that states and other recipients of State Indoor Radon Grants (SIRG) reference the most current voluntary consensus-based standards (VCS) when implementing their radon programs. This guidance is not intended to and does not create or modify any obligations on grantees, EPA, or any other stakeholders. EPA may revise or update this guidance at any time.

In 1988, Congress passed the [Indoor Radon Abatement Act](#) (IRAA or the Act). Among a range of authorities provided by IRAA, the Act authorized funding for grants to help states and tribes establish radon assessment and mitigation programs. In the past, SIRG recipients have often referred to EPA technical guidance when establishing and implementing programs to guide various programmatic components.

More recent guidance and regulatory requirements direct EPA and other federal agencies to use VCS as the basis of regulation and other programs unless use of VCS would be inconsistent with applicable law or otherwise impractical.<sup>1,2</sup> Such standards undergo a rigorous development and a periodic review process to include new science, new technology, and marketplace evolution. In response to these directives, EPA has generally shifted from developing its own technical guidance toward participating in VCS processes to address technical issues. For the last several years, EPA has been actively participating in the VCS process. The VCS development process involves several critical elements including, public transparency, a formal comment and response process, periodic review, and a balanced and representative range of stakeholder involvement. EPA participates with industry, states, and other stakeholders in the development of these standards of practice.

Citing or incorporating current radon VCS in state/tribal legislation, building codes, outreach, and other program elements is a best practice for SIRG recipients. These standards may inform development of state and local building codes. The use of VCS in radon programs across the country will help ensure public health protection by incorporating current science and technology, as well as potentially reducing marketplace confusion.

A list of the current American National Standards and International Building Codes and existing radon VCS is provided. As VCS standards constantly evolve, stakeholders should refer to the [ANSI Bookstore](#), the [AARST Standards](#), and the [EPA Current Radon Standards of Practice](#) websites for up-to-date information.

### **American National Standards Addressing Radon Measurement and Mitigation:**

- (a) MAH: Protocol for Conducting Measurements of Radon/Decay Products in Homes.
- (b) SGM-SF: Soil Gas Mitigation Standards for Existing Homes.
- (c) MAMF: Protocol for Conducting Measurements of Radon/Decay Products in Multifamily Buildings.
- (d) RMS-MF: Radon Mitigation Standards for Multifamily Buildings.
- (e) MALB: Protocol for Conducting Measurements of Radon/Decay Products in Schools and Large Buildings.
- (f) RMS-LB: Radon Mitigation Standards for Schools and Large Buildings.

<sup>1</sup> National Technology Transfer and Advancement Act (NTTAA). Section 12(d). March 7, 1996. Available at: <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/PLAW-104publ113/pdf/PLAW-104publ113.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> Office of Management and Budget Circular A-119 (OMB A-119). 63 FR 8546; February 19, 1998. Available at: <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-1998-02-19/pdf/98-4177.pdf#page=1>.

**American National Standards Addressing Radon in New Construction:**

- (a) RRNC: Rough-In of Radon Control Components in New Construction of 1 & 2 Family Dwellings And Townhouses
- (b) CCAH: Reducing Radon in New Construction of 1 & 2 Family Dwellings & Townhouses.
- (c) CC: Soil Gas Control Systems in New Construction of Buildings.

**American National Standard Addressing Quality Assurance:**

- a) MS-PC: Performance Specifications for Instrumentation Systems Designed to Measure Radon Gas in Air.
- b) MS-QA: Radon Measurement Systems Quality Assurance.

**International Code Council Codes & Standards:**

- a) International Green Construction Code (IgCC): Chapter 8 – Indoor Environmental Quality and Chapter 10 – Construction and Plans for Operation.
- b) International Code Council (ICC-700): National Green Residential Standard
- c) International Residential Code (IRC): Appendix F – Radon Control Methods

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

- 1. How can state or tribal radon programs access these standards? Can SIRG funds be used to purchase copies of codes and standards for state or tribal personnel and for external distribution?**

**Answer:** AARST has collaborated with EPA and CRCPD to provide public access to these standards. AARST recently updated their standards webpage, granting public read-only access to all standards, with options to download and print copies available for purchase through ANSI. Please visit <https://standards.aarst.org/> for a complete list of standards.

EPA encourages states and tribes to utilize the publicly available read-only standards. However, as relevant technical assistance documents, state and tribal radon programs may use SIRG funds to purchase copies of codes and standards if needed to assist in operation of a radon program. Anyone purchasing codes and standards should refer to copyright information included in the documents and may need to contact the copyright owner regarding external distribution.

- 2. As a SIRG grantee, will I lose funding if I do not reference current codes and standards?**

**Answer:** While the use of these codes and standards is not required, and will not directly impact funding levels, EPA is encouraging the use of current codes and standards to help ensure public health protection.

- 3. My state has their own radon standards, are those acceptable to continue referencing?**

**Answer:** Across the country, there are instances of state policies referencing outdated radon standards, which do not incorporate the latest science and technology. Radon program directors should review existing state or tribal radon standards and evaluate whether they are consistent with current methods and practices. Radon program directors are encouraged to update references to outdated codes or standards and collaborate with policy makers to cite current radon standards in state or tribal legislation, building codes, etc.