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nyc.gov/builditback

Damage Assessment FAQ

What is a damage assessment?

A damage assessment is a home visit which allows Build it Back to evaluate the damage to your home caused by Hurricane Sandy. Build it Back also determines what work you have done to repair your home, what work is still needed to complete your repairs, and any environmental or safety issues that may be present in your home.

Who will contact me to schedule an appointment for the damage assessment?

You will receive a call from Build it Back to schedule your appointment. In addition, the evening before your scheduled appointment you will receive a reminder call from Build it Back. Please note that the phone numbers used to call you may be different.

Who will visit my home?

The Damage Assessment Team includes the damage assessor and a certified lead-based paint risk assessor.

Does the Damage Assessment Team need to gain entry into every room?

Yes, the Damage Assessment Team will need to visit every room in the home and every unit in the building - even if you do not think the room or unit was damaged by Hurricane Sandy. Build it Back needs to evaluate environmental and safety issues as well as confirm whether storm damage has occurred. This includes visiting rooms upstairs even if the basement was the only area damaged. The same is true for attached garages. Build it Back will not evaluate unattached or separate uninhabited buildings such as sheds and garages on the property, as these are outside of the scope of the Build it Back Program.

Why is the Damage Assessment Team testing for lead-based paint?

If your home was built prior to 1978, Federal regulations require that Build it Back identify lead-based paint hazards. Lead-based paint that is not flaking or chipping is generally not a hazard. However, lead-based paint may become a hazard if it starts to flake or chip and falls to the floor as dust or chips. If Build it Back performs repairs on your home, lead-based paint hazards will be mitigated by licensed professionals.

Does the Damage Assessment Team need to walk around my property?

Yes, the Damage Assessment Team will walk around your property. The Team may sample exposed soil around your home to make sure there is no significant lead contamination. The Team will also evaluate the environmental conditions surrounding your home, such as water frontage, oil spills, etc.

Will the Damage Assessment Team be taking photos?

Yes, the Damage Assessment Team will take photos of the outside and inside of your home.

Who has access to the information that the Damage Assessment Team collects, including the photos?

All staff and consultants employed by the Mayor's Office of Housing Recovery Operations and NYC Build it Back may have access to the information gathered and any photos taken. All staff and consultants have signed confidentiality agreements.

How long will the damage assessment take?

Depending on the size of your home and the extent of storm damage, the damage assessment will take between 1.5 and 3 hours. However, this time may vary by home.

Do I have to be present at the damage assessment? Can I send someone else in my place?

In order for the Damage Assessment Team to conduct a thorough visit and gather accurate information, Build it Back recommends that homeowners are present during the damage assessment. If you cannot attend the damage assessment yourself, you may allow someone else to be there in your place. This person should be familiar with the damage to your home and any repairs already made. Please indicate the name of this person when scheduling the damage assessment.

What repair work is reimbursable?

Only work completed by you or your contractor prior to the one-year anniversary of Hurricane Sandy (October 29, 2013) or the date of your damage assessment, whichever came first, will be eligible for reimbursements.

How and when can I get a copy of the damage assessment report?

The damage assessment report will be available at your Options Review Meeting or you can request one following your Options Review Meeting by contacting Build it Back Customer Service at (212) 615-8329 or housing@recovery.nyc.gov.

I did not have a lead or asbestos inspection during my damage assessment. Do I need another assessment?

If you did not have a lead or asbestos inspection at the time of your damage assessment, Build it Back will either schedule a follow-up visit before your Options Review Meeting or return to the home after you have signed an Options Selection Agreement.