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nyc.gov/builditback

Repair & Elevation Programs: What to Expect During Construction

How do I know what work will be done?

You and your Design Specialist and/or contractor should review the list of repairs to be performed in your home. This list is in either your Tri-Party Agreement or Home Improvement Contract, depending on whether you chose your own contractor or not. Please be sure that you understand what work is planned and ask questions if you do not.

When will my construction begin?

After you sign your Tri-Party Agreement and your Grant Agreement, Build it Back will reach out to you in order to schedule the date that you will start construction. We will coordinate with your contractor and find a date that works for both of you. If you have selected your own contractor, you will sign a Home Improvement Contract instead of a Tri-Party Agreement. The rest of the scheduling process is the same.

When will my contractor arrive to start the work?

The contractor will contact you one or two days before your scheduled start date to confirm timing. Please call Build it Back Customer Service at (212) 615-8329 if you have any questions regarding scheduling.

What do I do if I need to change my construction start date? What if I have an emergency that prevents me from starting?

If you have an emergency that prevents the contractor from accessing your home on that date, please contact Build it Back Customer Service at (212) 615-8329 as soon as you can. Changing the start date for your construction can cause additional delays for the contractor and we cannot guarantee that we will be able to reschedule your start date immediately.

Do I have to relocate during construction?

You may have to relocate during construction depending on the type of repairs being performed on your home. If there is lead or asbestos abatement necessary, you will need to be out of the house during the abatement process. However, sometimes the abatement can be completed in one day. Your contractor will let you know when and how long you will need to find other arrangements. If your home is being elevated, you will have to make arrangements to be out of your home during the elevation process.

If you have any tenants who must be temporarily relocated, you will have certain obligations associated with their relocation. Prior to relocation, you and your tenants will meet with the Build it Back Program for a discussion about your responsibilities as a landlord.

Should I be home when the construction is going on?

You do not need to be home when the construction is going on; however, you will need to give the contractor access to the parts of your home that need to be repaired. You also need to give the contractor access to utilities.

What do I do if I have a complaint about the work?

If you have a question or complaint about anything relating to construction, please call Build it Back Customer Service at (212) 615-8329.

Can I change the scope of repairs once work has commenced?

Once you have signed the Construction Agreement, the scope of work cannot be changed unless the contractor discovers additional repair needs during construction. For example, if opening up a wall reveals additional electrical repair needs, the contractor will work with Build it Back to add it to the scope of work.

Can I change my custom selections after construction has started?

No, you cannot change your custom selections after you sign the Construction Agreement.

Who will be at my home during the construction phase?

You will meet a representative of the construction company at your Design Consultation. That person may continue to monitor the repairs on your home; however, the contractor may assign additional employees to perform or supervise the work. There will be one "Superintendent" assigned to your home throughout construction. In addition, the contractor will likely hire one or more specialty subcontractors, such as plumbers, electricians, or carpenters to perform parts of the job.

Representatives from inspection firms and other City representatives may also visit your home during the construction. Anyone working on or inspecting your home should have a Build it Back ID badge. If you are concerned about someone on your property without an ID badge, please call Build it Back Customer Service at (212) 615-8329. If you are concerned about fraud, please call the NYC Department of Investigation's Hurricane Sandy Recovery Fraud Hotline (212) 825-5959.

Is anyone inspecting the work?

Yes. Due to the varied nature of eligible construction work there are numerous points where an inspection may be necessary. At a minimum (if the work doesn't require a permit), Build it Back provides a midpoint inspection – prior to closing up walls or after we have completed about 50% of the construction work – as well as a final acceptance inspection once the construction is 100% complete. Any inspections required by the NYC Building Code will be requested directly by the contractor to the NYC Department of Buildings.

Note: not all construction jobs require Building Code inspections.

If your home is going to be elevated, an additional set of program inspections will be performed: prior to elevation, during elevation, and upon completion of the new foundation of your home. Elevations and certain construction projects may also require Special Inspections, which are required by the NYC Department of Buildings.

Do I need to be at the inspections?

You do not need to be present for the inspections, although you are welcome to be there if you wish. The inspectors will be reviewing the contractors' work and will not need to speak to the homeowner. However, you do need to provide access to the home for the inspections, as they take place during the construction job.

How do I know when the construction is finished?

The inspectors will perform a final inspection and, if it is passed, they will approve the home as complete. Build it Back will notify you when the repairs are signed off and complete.