

## 2021 REEL Program Changes

### New Combustion Appliance Safety Testing Requirements

In May 2021, important improvements for the REEL Program took effect, including updates to the combustion appliance safety test triggers and reporting requirements. Combustion safety tests verify that combustible appliances are working properly and not venting dangerous gases, such as carbon monoxide, into the living area. Contractors participating in the REEL Program who work with the building envelope need to be aware of these important updates in order to ensure compliance with the new Program rules.

**Questions? Contact the Contractor Support Team at (800) 484-0109 or [gogreen@frontierenergy.com](mailto:gogreen@frontierenergy.com).**

## Overview of New Safety Test Triggers

### The Following Two Conditions Trigger Combustion Safety Tests:

- The project includes either whole building air sealing AND/OR duct sealing EEEMs AND
- An atmospherically-vented combustion appliance is present *within* the sealed building envelope

### Accepted Tests:

- Combustion Appliance Zone (CAZ)/Combustion Appliance Safety (CAS) Tests
- Natural Gas Appliance Test (NGAT)
- Other similar industry test (must be named/described)

## What's Changing:

- We are removing the arbitrary requirement for safety testing when projects have three or more EEEMs; this helps to avoid unnecessary safety tests (such as when the third EEEM is a pool pump).
- Testing is only required if an *atmospherically-vented* gas appliance is present (see below).
- In addition to CAS/CAZ or NGAT, other industry-standard tests are now allowed.
- The Contractor Support Team will be increasing compliance verification and enforcement.

## What's Staying the Same:

- Safety Testing is required for most air sealing or duct sealing projects (see Overview).
- CAS/CAZ/NGAT testing remain as (the preferred) options for conducting combustion safety testing.
- The safety tester's qualifications must be reported (e.g. CAS/CAZ testers must be BPI certified, NGAT testers trained by an IOU, REN or CCA must indicate the name of the utility or REN).
  - Find a [list of BPI certified contractors in your area](#) or [become BPI certified](#) yourself.

## About Atmospherically-Vented Combustion Appliances<sup>1</sup>

Some (but not all) types of water heaters, furnaces, and boilers are **atmospherically vented appliances**. An atmospherically-vented, or natural draft, combustion appliance draws air for combustion from the inside of the home and relies upon the draft of warm air rising up a flue to carry dangerous combustion gasses out of the home. These appliances are commonly labelled as Category I on the manufacturer's nameplate. Category I appliances can have a draft hood, draft diverter, or a fan-assisted combustion system, but their presence within the sealed building envelope will still trigger safety testing.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.nrel.gov/docs/fy14osti/61326.pdf>