



**National Center for Healthy Housing**



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**The National Center for Healthy Housing & the National  
Environmental Health Association Announce Nation's First  
*Healthy Homes Specialist* Credential**

**Credential Encourages Greater Awareness of Healthy Housing Practices &  
Encourages Health & Housing Professionals To Work Together**

Atlantic City, NJ -- In partnership with the National Environmental Health Association (NEHA), the National Center for Healthy Housing announced today the creation of the nation's first *Healthy Homes Specialist* credential for professionals in the health and housing fields. Announced at NEHA's annual meeting, the individuals earning the credential must demonstrate extensive knowledge of practices to make and keep homes healthy for occupants.

NCHH Executive Director Rebecca Morley said the credential raises awareness about healthy housing practices and encourages health and housing professionals to work as a team. "A nurse or a housing inspector visiting a family at home should be able to recognize an unhealthy condition that could cause or contribute to illness. Greater awareness of problems or potential problems increases the likelihood that families will be connected to information and resources they need to correct the problems," said Morley.

Nelson Fabian, NEHA's Executive Director and CEO, stated "The home is where we live. There is no environment that is more important. By advancing our ability to understand what it takes to create a healthy home, this credential truly pushes progress in the direction of providing increasing numbers of people with a safe and healthful environment."

To achieve the credential, individuals must complete a comprehensive exam on the seven principles of healthy housing, which include keeping homes: Dry, Clean, Pest-Free, Free from Contaminants, Ventilated, Safe, and Well-Maintained. Individuals seeking a *Healthy Homes Specialist* credential must also meet the following qualifications:

1. Be at least 21 years of age;
2. Have five years of experience in housing, environmental health or public health;
3. Achieve a minimum score of 70 percent on the qualifying examination; and
4. Successfully complete an on-line home assessment exercise.

The credential is being released in conjunction with the National Healthy Homes Training Center, which is managed by NCHH and funded by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. While receiving training through the National Healthy Homes Training Center better prepares applicants for the credential exam, it is not a prerequisite. The Training Center brings together a network of universities and training partners who can offer the training necessary to help the Healthy Homes Specialist succeed. NEHA is the leading national organization of environmental health professionals. It manages eight other credentials for these professionals.

Professionals who may be interested in the Healthy Homes Specialist credential may include:

- ▶ Individuals who have been certified or licensed as **lead risk assessors, radon measurement professionals** or **mold professionals**. These individuals have developed a basic expertise in a specific environmental hazard in the home and should be interested in expanding their capability and services.
- ▶ NEHA registered **Environmental Health Specialists** seeking to document their experience and expertise in housing.
- ▶ **Public health nurses** seeking to document their expertise in healthy homes.
- ▶ **Health department** and **housing agency** staff seeking to document their expertise in healthy homes, or to better position their agencies to receive HUD healthy homes grants.
- ▶ Licensed **pest management professionals** seeking to expand their services. Resolving pest problems using integrated pest management essentially relies on a knowledge base similar to the Healthy Homes Practitioner.
- ▶ Certified **home inspectors** seeking to expand their business by adding healthy homes to their standard services.

To learn more about the Healthy Homes Specialist credential, please visit:

<http://www.healthyhomestraining.org/Credential/index.htm> or  
<http://www.neha.org/credential/HHS/index.htm>.

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*NCHH is the only national non-profit organization dedicated to developing and promoting practical measures to protect children from residential environmental hazards while preserving affordable housing. NCHH develops scientifically valid and practical strategies to make homes safe from hazards, to alert low-income families about housing-related health risks, and to help them protect their children.*

*NEHA is a non-profit professional membership association serving the environmental health and protection professionals in government, industry and the private sector. Its mission is to advance the environmental health and protection professional for the purpose of providing a healthful environment for all. NEHA accomplishes its mission by providing information, networking, education, credentialing, research and development and advocacy. With nearly 80 years of experience providing credentials for environmental health, NEHA is pleased to be a part of the development and promotion of the new Healthy Homes Specialist credential.*