

Dear _____,

This packet is being sent to you because you requested information from the HomeOwnership Center at Rural*Edge* for the Revolving Loan Fund Home Repair Program. Please complete the enclosed Eligibility Packet and submit it along with the required supporting documents which will allow Rural*Edge* to evaluate your eligibility for our Home Repair Program. Please note that *you will be initially evaluated for a low interest loan*. Grant funds are limited, and eligibility is based on area median income guidelines.

Due to high demand for these services, funding requests are prioritized based upon the scope of work and funding availability. Emergency situations will take priority. In those cases, when a delay is unavoidable, or funding is unavailable, a letter will be mailed to you defining the current waiting period.

This packet contains the following items:

- 1) Checklist of Additional Documentation Needed for Processing (Page 2)
- 2) Privacy Policy and Practices (Pages 3 & 4)
- 3) Eligibility Packet (Pages 5-14)
- 4) Your copy of <u>What You Need to Know to Have a Successful Home Repair</u> (Page 15)
- 5) Your copy of *Things to Consider When Selecting a Contractor* (Page 16)

Please complete, sign, and return to our office along with *all* required supporting documentation as noted on the **Documentation Checklist** (page 2). If you need assistance completing these documents, please contact our office at 802-535-3555 or email us at: <u>homeownership@ruraledge.org</u>.

Thank you,

HomeOwnership Center







DOCUMENTATION CHECKLIST - REQUIRED FOR ELIGIBILITY REVIEW INTAKES MISSING ANY **BOLDED** ITEMS BELOW ARE CONSIDERED INCOMPLETE.

CHECKLIST:

- □ One (1) month of income documents for every member of the household 18 years and older (pay stub, benefit award letter, pension statement, etc.).
 - If you collect Social Security or Disability benefits, please provide the most recent Social Security, SSI, or disability benefits statement(s). Or, if your benefits are deposited directly to a bank account, you may provide your two (2) most recent bank statements which show the benefit deposits.
 - If you are self-employed, please provide the most recent two (2) years of Federal Income tax returns, including all schedules.
- Two (2) months bank statements for all accounts for every member of the household 18 years and older (checking and savings) (all pages).
 Internet print outs are not acceptable. Statements must be stamped by a bank employee if they do not contain the bank logo.
- □ Written documentation of any other income which may include, but is not limited to: 3SquaresVT, Reach UP, Fuel Assistance.
- □ Current property tax bill.
- □ Warranty Deed or Quit Claim Deed showing the current owner(s) of the property. If you don't have a copy of your Warranty Deed or Quit Claim Deed, you can obtain one from your Town Clerk's office. If you own a mobile home, please provide your Bill of Sale as proof of ownership.
 - If you have a mobile home and live in a park or association, please provide a copy of your lot agreement. *Our program requires a <u>signed five-year lease</u> beginning the date funds are awarded. Please discuss this with your park owner.*
- □ Current homeowner's insurance bill with policy declarations page.
- □ **Most recent Mortgage Statement,** if applicable.

FYI – After the site visit, you will be <u>required</u> to provide at least two (2) detailed written estimates (please see pages 15 & 16 for additional information). <u>Please begin seeking estimates</u> as soon as possible.

If you have questions, please call us at (802)535-3555 ext.1304 or 1301.

Please return documents to Rural Edge, 1222 Main Street, St. Johnsbury, VT 05819 or via email at <u>homeownership@ruraledge.org</u>.







RuralEdge/ NORTHEAST COMMUNITY LENDING CORPORATION PRIVACY POLICY AND PRACTICES

Rural*Edge* /Northeast Community Lending Corporation and the NeighborWorks® HomeOwnership Center value your trust. Protecting your confidential information is important to us. This notice describes our policy regarding the collection and disclosure of personal information.

Rural*Edge* /Northeast Community Lending Corporation does not sell or share any personal information with commercial companies for the purpose of marketing their products to you.

What Information We Collect

Personal information means information that identifies an individual and is not otherwise publicly available information. This includes personal financial information, such as credit history, income, employment history, financial assets, bank account information, financial debts, Social Security Number, and other information you provide on a Personal Profile or Intake application.

We collect the personal information in order to provide financial fitness, counseling, counseling to prepare you for applying for a home mortgage from a conventional lender, counseling to prevent foreclosure, and our own lending for down payment, closing costs, home rehabilitation, or other purposes related to home purchase or foreclosure prevention.

Restrictions on Disclosure of Personal Information

In general, Rural*Edge*/ Northeast Community Lending Corporation and the NeighborWorks® HomeOwnership Center disclose personal information only when necessary to provide services to you, or when allowed by law.

We may disclose the following kinds of personal information about you:

- Information we receive from you on applications for a loan or other product or service, such as name, address, telephone number, social security number, assets and income.
- Information about your transactions with us, such as your loan balance, payment history and parties to your transactions; and
- Information we receive from third parties such as credit bureaus, including information about your credit worthiness and your credit history.

We may disclose your personal information to the following types of unaffiliated third parties:

- Financial service providers, such as companies engaged in providing home mortgages, reverse mortgages, or home equity loans.
- Other service providers with whom we may coordinate efforts in order to make efficient use of resources, such as NETO (Weatherization), PATH (Emergency Assistance), NEKCA, VHCB Lead Abatement, VT Center for Independent Living, HeatSquad, or other nonprofit community resources.
- Other third parties when the information is provided to help complete a transaction initiated by you, such as reporting a payoff on a loan, or to otherwise administer our business, and other third parties who are involved in program review, auditing, research, or oversight purposes.



EQUAL HOUSING OFFORTUNITY EQUAL HOUSING LENDER Page 3 of 16



PRIVACY POLICY AND PRACTICES

(Continued)

We may disclose personal information about you to third parties as permitted by law, such as auditors in connection with a financial audit of us, to government entities, in response to subpoenas, and to credit bureaus.

In material intended for public distribution, such as newspaper articles, Rural*Edge*/Northeast Community Lending Corporation publications, press releases, or reports to funding sources, it is sometimes useful to illustrate our services by highlighting our work with a family or individual. In those cases, we will specifically seek your permission to use any personal information.

Medical Information

We will not use or share personally identifiable medical information about you for any purpose other than that which is authorized by you.

Protecting the Confidentiality of Your Personal Information

All Rural*Edge*/Northeast Community Lending Corporation employees are required to use strict standards of care regarding the confidentiality of your personal information as outlined in Personnel Policies. Employees not adhering to our policies are subject to disciplinary action. We maintain physical and electronic security procedures to safeguard the confidentiality and integrity of personal information in our possession and to guard against unauthorized access. Our safeguards comply with Federal regulations to guard your personal information.

More Information

If you have any questions regarding our Privacy Policy, please contact the Director of the NeighborWorks HomeOwnership Center.

By Phone: (802) 535-3555 Ext. 1301 or Toll Free at 1-888-MYVTHOME (888-698-8466) By Email: Homeownership@ruraledge.org By Mail: RuralEdge, 1222 Main Street, St. Johnsbury, VT 05819.







HOME REPAIR PROGRAM - ELIGIBILITY PACKET

The completed packet, along with the supporting documents that you provide (see page 2) is used to make an initial assessment of your eligibility for the Home Repair Program. All inquiries will initially be reviewed for a low interest loan.

Grant funds are limited.

Eligibility is based upon area median income and other program guidelines.

Name: First	MI	Last
Mailing Address:		
Street	City	State Zip Code
Physical Address:	Cit	
Street lome Phone:	City Work Phone:	State Zip Code
Cell Phone:	Email:	
Social Security #	Date of Birth:	
Marital Status: 🗆 Unmarried 🛛	Married 🛛 Separated	
Disabled? 🗆 Yes 🗆 No		
/eteran? □ Yes □ No		
Active Military? 🗆 Yes 🗆 No		
Jnited States Citizen? 🗆 Yes 🗆	l No	
Current Housing Arrangement:		
🗆 Rent 🗆 Homeowner 🗆 Homel	ess 🗆 Other (Describe)	
Household Type:		
□ Female-headed Single Parent Household □ Two or More Unrelated Adults	 Male-Headed Single Parent Household Married with Dependents 	□ Single Adult □ Married without children
□ Other (Describe)		
Do you receive Section 8 Housin	g Payment Assistance? 🛛 Yes 🗆	No Monthly Amount \$
How did you hear about us? □ Real Estate Agent □ Social Ser	Brochure Workshop Flyer vice Radio USDA Walk	□ HUD □ Lender □ NET In □ Website □ Word of Mou
NeighborWorks		

CUSTOMER



EQUAL HOUSING LENDER

Please list dependents below:	Nu	mber of People Liv	ing in the H	lome:	
Name:	Age:	Relationship:	C)isabled?	□Yes □ No
Name:					
Name:					□Yes
Are there non-dependents who liv If YES , please list non-dependen		ome? □Yes □No			
Name:	Age:	Relationship:	C	isabled?	□Yes □ No
Name:	Age:	Relationship:	C	isabled?	□Yes □ No
Name:	Age:	Relationship:	C	isabled?	□Yes □ No
<u>Emergency Contact</u> - <i>Person not</i> Name: Mailing Adress:		Phone:			
CUSTOM		<u>YMENT</u> (<i>If Applica</i> Employers			
Street:	City		State:	_Zip Code:	
		Part-Time 🗆 Full-Tim	e		
Title or Job Description				Hire Da	te
Gross Monthly Income (before tax	(es): \$		(Annual \$)		
Select One: \Box Hourly \Box Salary \Box Co Can you be contacted at work? \Box Yes \Box		Other:			
Secondary Employer (if applicable)		Emplo	yers Phone	:	
Street:	City	:	State:	_Zip Code:	
		Part-Time 🗆 Full-Time	1		
Title or Job Description				Hire Da	
Gross Monthly Income (before tax	(es) \$		(Annual \$)		
Select One: \Box Hourly \Box Salary \Box Co	mmission \Box	Other:	-		
Can you be contacted at work? Yes] No				
NeighborWorks*				دەنىم دەن	

NeighborWorks* CHARTERED MEMBER

<u>CO-CUSTOMER</u> (If Applicable)

Name: First			
First	MI	Last	
Aailing Address:		6	
Street	City	State	Zip Code
hysical Address:	City	State	Zip Code
Succi	City	State	Zip couc
lome Phone:	Work Phone:		
Cell Phone:	Email:		
ocial Security #	Date of Birth		
Narital Status: 🗆 Unmarried 🗆 Marrie	ed 🗆 Separated		
Disabled? 🗆 Yes 🗆 No			
'eteran? □ Yes □ No			
Active Military? 🗆 Yes 🗆 No			
Inited States Citizen? 🗆 Yes 🗆 No			
CO-CUSTON	IER EMPLOYMEN	IT (If Applicable)	
Primary Employer:	Err	ployers Phone:	
itreet:	City:	State:	Zip Code:
	Part-Time	Full-Time	
Title or Job Description			Hire Date
Gross Monthly Income (before taxe	es): \$	(Annual \$)	
Select One: \Box Hourly \Box Salary \Box Com Can you be contacted at work? \Box Yes \Box			
Secondary Employer (if applicable) _		Employers Phone:	
Street:	City:	State:	Zip Code:
	□ Part-Time	Full-Time	
Title or Job Description			Hire Date
Gross Monthly Income (before taxe	es): \$	(Annual \$)	
Select One: \Box Hourly \Box Salary \Box Com Can you be contacted at work? \Box Yes \Box			
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ALL HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Type of Income	Customer Monthly Amount	Co-Customer Monthly Amount	Other Household Member(s) Monthly Amount
Salary/Employment Income			
Alimony/Child Support Income			
Public Assistance Income			
3Squares			
Social Security Income			
Supplemental Security Income			
Disability Income			
Pension Income			
Other Income:			

ANNUAL FAMILY OR HOUSEHOLD INCOME: \$_____

Can you document your child support/alimony income? □Yes □ No If yes, how long will it continue?____

*I certify that the income stated above is a complete and accurate household income and includes all sources from all members of your household. Intentional omissions will be subject to penalties and possible immediate repayment of funds awarded.

LIABILITIES/DEBTS

Please list any debts, including credit cards and auto loans.

DO NOT INCLUDE UTILITIES

Paid To	Current Balance	Monthly Payment	Whose Debt? C=Customer CC=Co-Customer
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			
Out of Pocket Medical Expenses			
Have your payments been made on time?	Customer		stomer

	Customer	<u>Co-Customer</u>
Have your payments been made on time?	🗆 Yes 🗆 No	🗆 Yes 🗆 No
Are you currently in Chapter 13 bankruptcy?	🗆 Yes 🗆 No	🗆 Yes 🗆 No
If yes, Date it began?		
If yes, when will it be paid out?		
If yes, how much is the payment?		
Have you had a Chapter 7 bankruptcy? If yes, when was it discharged?	🗆 Yes 🗆 No	□ Yes □ No
n yes, when was it uischargeu!		de la celaria



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Additional Questions for Home Repair Program

I)	Do you have a loan on your home now? \Box Yes \Box No (If No, skip to question 2)
	Who is your Mortgage Lender?
	How much is your Monthly Payment? \$
	Does your monthly payment include amounts for taxes and/or insurance? \Box Yes \Box No
	If Yes, how is your payment broken down? Taxes \$ Insurance \$ Principal & Interest \$
2)	Who owns the property? (Name(s) on the Deed):
	 Sole Owner (1-person) Husband and Wife Joint Tenants Tenants in Common Life Estate
3)	Property Address (if different than mailing address):
4)	County:
5)	Approximately what year was your home built?
6)	How many years have you owned your home?
7)	How many years have you lived in your home?
8)	Is your home a mobile home? 🛛 Yes 🗆 No
	Are the wheels and hitch removed? \Box Yes \Box No
	Do you own the lot? 🗆 Yes 🗆 No
	If you do NOT own the lot, who is the owner?
	If you pay lot rent, how much do you pay per month?
9)	What needs to be repaired?
10) Where does your water come from? Drilled Well D Spring DCity DTown DVillage Other:
11) How many bedrooms are in your home? Approximate Square Footage
) How much money do you believe you could spend <u>monthly</u> on a home repair loan? \$0 to \$25.00\$25 to \$50\$50 to \$75 \$75 to \$100 \$100 or Mo
	funds are limited, and eligibility is based upon Program and Area Median Income Guideli



Additional Questions for Home Repair Program

(Continued)

13) What Town do you pay Property Taxes to?
How much are your total Property Taxes? \$
Are your Property Taxes current? 🛛 Yes 🖓 No
If No, how much do you owe in delinquent Property Taxes? \$
14) Do you currently have Homeowner's Insurance? 🗆 Yes 🗆 No
How much is your annual Homeowner's Insurance premium? \$
Your Insurance Agency's Name:
Your Insurance Agency's Phone Number:
Your Policy Expires on (Date):
If you don't currently have Homeowner's Insurance, what is preventing you from obtaining it?
 □ Condition of the Home □ Cannot afford Homeowners Insurance □ Other
15) Is your home located in a flood zone? 🗆 Yes 🛛 No
If Yes, how much is your annual Flood Insurance premium? \$
Your Insurance Agency's Name:
Phone Number: Fax Number:
Your Policy Expires on (date):

Community Resources

- 16) Have you ever had NETO (Northeast Employment and Training Organization Inc.) and/or NEKCA (Northeast Kingdom Community Action) work on your home?
 □ Yes □ No If Yes, what year?_____
- 17) Have you ever worked with VCIL (Vermont Center of Independent Living) regarding work on your home? □ Yes □ No
 Have you completed an application to VCIL? □ Yes □ No
- 18) SASH (Support and Services at Home) is a free program that works to keep senior and disabled individuals living independently at home. SASH Coordinators help individuals connect with local resources to help fulfill their needs and pursue their wellness goals. SASH also includes a free wellness nursing visit.
 Are you interested in learning more about SASH? □ Yes □ No







AUTHORIZATION TO PULL CREDIT

I/We authorize Rural *Edge* and Northeast Community Lending Corporation to:

- a) Pull my/our credit report to review my/our credit file for housing counseling in connection with my/our pursuit for funding to repair or improve real property.
- b) Pull my/our credit report and review my/our credit file for informational inquiry purposes.

□ I/We have received a copy of the Rural*Edge*/Northeast Community Lending Corporation Privacy Policy and Practices.

Customer

Date

Co-Customer

Date

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN TO: Rural*Edge*/Northeast Community Lending Corporation 1222 Main Street, St. Johnsbury, VT 05819 (802) 353-3555 x1304 or Toll Free (800) 234-0560 Email @ <u>homeownership@ruraledge.org</u>

"The following information is requested by the Federal Government in order to monitor compliance with Federal Laws prohibiting discrimination against applicants seeking to participate in this Program. You are not required to furnish this information but are encouraged to do so. This information will not be used in evaluating your application or to discriminate against you in any way. However, if you choose to not furnish this information, we are required to note the race/national origin of the individual applicant(s) on the basis of visual observation or surname."

CUSTOMER	CO-CUSTOMER
Ethnicity (Select One)	Ethnicity (Select One)
Hispanic or Latino	Hispanic or Latino
Not Hispanic or Latino	Not Hispanic or Latino
Race (Select One or More)	Race (Select One or More)
□ White	□ White
American Indian/Alaskan Native	American Indian/Alaskan Native
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
Asian and White	Asian and White
American Indian/Alaskan Native and Black	American Indian/Alaskan Native and Black
Black or African American	Black or African American
□ Asian	□ Asian
American Indian/Alaskan Native and White	American Indian/Alaskan Native and White
Black/African American and White	Black/African American and White
□ Other	Other
Gender (Select One)	Gender (Select One)
🗆 Male 🛛 Female	🗆 Male 🗆 Female
Were you born in the United States? 🗆 Yes 🗆 No	Were you born in the United States? \square Yes \square No





AUTHORIZATION TO RELEASE INFORMATION



Name:	Social Security #
Name:	Social Security #
Address:	Phone #

I/We authorize the release of information to and/or from the Northeast Community Lending Corporation, (NCLC) NMLS 223009, Rural*Edge* and the HomeOwnership Center (HOC) regarding my/our income, debt, credit, mortgage, rent, employment, homeowners/hazard insurance, housing situation and any other necessary information, including the procurement of a credit report at any time, in order to obtain, verify or re-verify any information for the purposes of assisting in the acquisition, financing, refinancing, retention or repair of housing. I/We further agree that photocopies or facsimiles of this authorization may be used for the purposes stated above.

This document constitutes my/our consent for the following organization(s) to release information to NCLC, Rural*Edge* and the HOC and for NCLC, Rural*Edge* and the HOC to release information to said organization(s), for the purposes stated above:

- 🛛 Area Agency on Aging
- Attorneys and/or Title Companies Associated with the Transaction(s)
- Banks and Other Lending Institutions Associated with the Transaction(s)
- ☑ Community Connections (NVRH)
- 🛛 Caledonia Home Health Care & Hospice
- Credit Bureau Services of Vermont (CBC) and Equifax, Experian and TransUnion (Credit Bureaus)
- Creditors and/or Collection Agencies
- ☑ Efficiency Vermont and/or HeatSquad
- ⊠ Habitat for Humanity
- ☑ Homeowner's insurance /Hazard Insurance Agencies and/or Companies
- Northern Counties Health Care
- \boxtimes Northeast Employment and Training Organization, Inc . (NETO)
- ☑ Northeast Kingdom Community Action (NEKCA)
- 🛛 Northeast Kingdom Human Services
- Social Security Administration
- 🗵 USDA Rural Development (RD)
- ☑ Vermont Agency of Human Services (AHS)
- ☑ Vermont Center for Independent Living (VCIL)
- ☑ Vermont Department for Children and Families (DCF)
- ☑ Vermont Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living (DAIL)
- ⊠Vermont Housing and Conservation Board (VHCB)
- ⊠Vermont State Housing Authority (VSHA)
- ⊠Visiting Nurses Association and Hospice Inc. (Orleans/Essex)
- □ Other (If Applicable): _

This consent is given freely and is open to all information provided to or acquired by NCLC, Rural*Edge* and the HOC and/or the above organizations in connection with my/our pending acquisition, financing, refinancing, retention, or repair of housing. This consent is in addition to the release of information as provided for in my/our Customer Service Agreement with the Home Ownership Center (if applicable).

I/We further agree that the Home Ownership Center may use information, history, and photos taken in connection with your request for promoting the Home Ownership Center, and for the preparation of proposals to the funders of NCLC, Rural*Edge* and the HOC. I/We also authorize the Home Ownership Center to share information about the services I/we receive through the Home Ownership Center with Vermont Housing Finance Agency for research and statistical purposes.

Signature _____

Date _____

Signature _____





"This is an Equal Opportunity Program. Discrimination is prohibited by Federal Law. Complaints of discrimination may be filed with USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Bldg., 14th and Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410".





DECLARATION OF HOMESTEAD RIGHTS

Can anyone, other than you, claim a Homestead* Interest in the property that will secure repayment of the loan?

□ No □ Yes

If yes, who may be able to claim a Homestead Interest?

Name _____

*Vermont law recognizes a Homestead Right in the spouse or civil union partner of the legal owner of real estate, which is used or kept as their primary home, even if the spouse or civil union partner is not a co-owner of that home. This Homestead Interest prevents creditors from attaching the entire Homestead Property without the written consent of both spouses and partners. Therefore, the Lender will require that both spouses and civil union partners sign the Mortgage Deed, or otherwise waive their Homestead Interest in the property, in order to ensure that it is fully enforceable.

This Declaration has been prepared in response to Act 91 of the 2000 Legislative Session, effective July 1, 2000, which provides that parties to a civil union shall have all the same benefits, protections, and responsibilities afforded under Vermont law to spouses in a marriage.

You should consult an attorney for specific legal advice regarding Homestead Rights and for specific legal advice regarding benefits, protections, and responsibilities under Act 91.

Signature

Date

Signature

Date







Accurate Information Acknowledgement Form

Each of the undersigned specifically represents to Rural*Edge* and to Rural*Edge*'s actual or potential agents, brokers, processors, attorneys, insurers, servicers, successors and assigns and agrees and acknowledges that:

- 1) The information provided in this Intake is true and correct as of the date set forth opposite my/our signature and that any intentional or negligent misrepresentation of this information contained in this Intake may result in Civil Liability, including monetary damages, to any person who may suffer any loss due to reliance upon any misrepresentation that I/we have made on this Intake, and/or in criminal penalties including, but not limited to, fine or imprisonment or both under the provisions of Title 18, United States Code, Sec. 1001, et seq.;
- 2) All statements made in this Intake are made for the purpose of obtaining a grant and/or residential mortgage loan;
- 3) Rural*Edge* and its agents, brokers, insurers, servicers, successors, and assigns may continuously rely on the information contained in the Intake, and I/we are obligated to amend and/or supplement the information provided in this Intake if any of the material facts that I/we have represented herein should change prior to closing.

Each of the undersigned hereby acknowledges that Rural*Edge*, its servicers, successors, and assigns, may verify or reverify any information contained in this Intake or obtain any information or data relating to the Intake, for any legitimate business purpose through any source, including a source named in this application or a consumer reporting agency.

Signature

Date

Signature

Date







Steps for a Successful Home Repair What You Need to Know

Due to high demand for these services, requests for <u>emergency</u> situations will take priority. If we are unable to take action due to the demand, a letter will be mailed defining the current waiting period.

<u>Step 1 – Filling out the forms and returning the required documents.</u>

Step 2: Visiting Your Home

Once we have received your completed Intake and supporting documents, we will come to your property to develop a thorough Scope of Work and see if your project meets the requirements of the Program. This visit may require photographs of your property and a discussion with you.

Step 3: Scope of Work

A Scope of Work will be prepared by the Rehabilitation Specialist based upon the initial visit to your home. The Scope of Work will only reflect the repairs that meet our Program requirements.

<u>Step 4: Review</u>

The Rehab Specialist will review the scope of work with client. It is your responsibility, as the Homeowner, to obtain and submit estimates (at least two) from contractors.

Step 5: Application Process

Once the Scope of Work is complete, your file will be reviewed to determine if you are eligible for a loan. This review is based upon your household income and your debt obligations obtained from your credit report. You may be required to provide additional documentation before final consideration is presented to the Review Committee.

Step 6: Loan Review Committee Decision

The Loan Review Committee will meet to consider your application.

If funding is approved for a loan, a commitment letter will be mailed to you with the details of the decision. At this point, you can either accept or reject the offer. Accepting the offer requires you to send back the signed commitment letter. A title search will be ordered by Rural*Edge*, if needed.

Under certain circumstances you may qualify for a grant. If you do qualify, a grant letter will be mailed to you with the details. At this point you can either accept or reject the offer. Accepting the offer requires you to send back the signed grant letter. <u>Grant monies are very limited and are distributed under very strict guidelines</u>.

Step 7: Mortgage Closing/Grant Award

Once you return the commitment letter and the title search is completed, you will be contacted to schedule a closing. You may be required to sign a mortgage deed or other necessary documents for filing with your city or town and/or the State of Vermont at closing. This means we may need to place a lien on your property.

The funds to complete the home repairs with be held by Rural*Edge* and payments will be approved by you and made directly to the contractor. The Rehabilitation Specialist will monitor the progress on the repairs and ensure that the repairs are completed according to the Scope of Work.







Things to Consider When Selecting a Contractor

Letting someone into your home to do work requires careful consideration. Following please find some steps to take to help make this a safe and pleasant experience:

- 1. Once you receive the Scope of Work from the Rehabilitation Specialist, it is time to find a contractor.
- 2. Ask your friends, neighbors, or local Chamber of Commerce for the names of contractors in your area.
- 3. Make a list of three (3) to five (5) contractors to call. Before you reach out, **do your due diligence as a consumer:**
 - a. Check to see if they are reputable. The internet has reviews; Facebook and Google are sources for background information. Search both the name of the business and the name of the contractor (if applicable). You should be able to find information about most established businesses. If you can't find any information, don't be worried, but understand you will need to ask them more in-depth questions. Try to find as many reviews as possible and thoroughly assess all reviews. Every business gets bad reviews, but most businesses also get good reviews, the balance should favor the good reviews.
 - b. The Better Business Bureau may be another good resource.

4. Meeting the Contractor in Person:

- a. Get the full name and address of the business and contact information.
- b. When the contractor arrives at your home do not let them inside until they identify themselves and you feel comfortable.
- c. Go over the list of repairs created and be prepared to give them access to the areas of interest.
- d. Ask for a detailed written estimate. The more detail you get from each contractor, the easier it is to compare the offers.
- e. Ask them when they may be able to start the project.
- f. Ask for references from past customers. (Please keep in mind they probably will not give you names of people who were dissatisfied with their performance.)
- g. Ask for proof of applicable licenses and insurance.
- h. Ask if they have previously operated under any other business names, and if they have, why they no longer do so.
- i. It is ok to ask if they have been sued by past clients or if they have a felony conviction. It is also good to ask about their employees and their hiring practices and how they conduct background checks.
- 5. Never allow a contractor to pressure you to make a decision that day or give a deposit.
- 6. Once you receive the estimate, send a copy to the Rehab Specialist to review. At least two (2) estimates must be provided.
- 7. Once you have selected a contractor, contact Rural *Edge* with the name of the contractor.
- 8. Rural*Edge* will create and collect the necessary documents needed <u>before</u> any work can begin.
- 9. Once work begins:
 - a. It's ok to observe their work and ask questions, but do not get in the way.
 - b. If changes need to be made, contact Rural *Edge* <u>before</u> agreeing to any changes as this may impact your project cost and may <u>not</u> be covered by available funding.
 - c. In the event of a disagreement or performance issue, contact Rural*Edge* immediately, explain the issue in detail and ask for a meeting if necessary.

