



**COVID-19 Pandemic Emergency Event
Performance Evaluation Protocols
5/26/2020**

Scope:

The following protocols have been developed by the Northeast Gas Association to help mitigate the risk of exposure to, and spread of, the COVID-19 virus. These protocols shall be used for all Performance Evaluation testing administered by NGA. This guidance has been developed in accordance with CDC and government recommendations regarding social distancing. The requirements are intended to be comprehensive, while still allowing flexibility in certain aspects of implementation, dependent on-site conditions. This document outlines expectations for host sites (facilities), management of host sites, Examinees and NGA Evaluators. As such, these minimum requirements shall be followed by all stakeholders. Host sites may have additional requirements, which should be communicated to NGA and the NGA Evaluator during the scheduling and confirmation process.

The key to success in safely resuming performance evaluations is commitment and full cooperation by all involved. The two key roles are the Evaluator and the Host Site Representative. Both need to be aligned and working cooperatively to ensure that these health and safety measures are followed. As such, we strongly emphasize the presence of an empowered and engaged Host Site Representative throughout each day.

The following sections, organized by host site, personnel, check-in/close-out processes, and the evaluation process itself, outline requirements for each aspect of the evaluation process.

Host Site and Facility Requirements:

1. **Testing must be held at a site that can accommodate a minimum of 6-foot separation between the Evaluator and Examinee at all times. For most evaluations, this will require at least 6-feet of clear area completely around each station.** Additional space must also be provided to store and be able to access necessary equipment, materials, and cleaning supplies.
2. All evaluations will be performed using a 1:1 Examinee/Evaluator ratio. Site set-ups shall accommodate the minimum 6-feet of separation requirement as described above.
3. **Outdoor testing is strongly encouraged whenever possible. Outdoor testing set-ups may be protected from weather with canopies or other means which do not restrict air exchange. Other acceptable testing options include the use of “open-air” facilities and spaces such as high-bay garages, delivery docks, etc. Any indoor testing set-up must be discussed and pre-approved by NGA before scheduling. Additional safeguards for indoor testing set-ups include layouts that allow for greater than 6-feet of distancing, the use of fans/air-movers, opening of doors/windows to improve air**

exchange, the use of physical barriers such as clear plexiglass or shower curtains, and strict adherence to site cleaning and social distancing requirements.

4. If possible, Examinees will utilize their own (company issued) equipment during the evaluation. This will help mitigate the risk of cross-contamination.
5. Rest rooms and common areas must be routinely cleaned and sanitized. Hand soap and/or hand-sanitizer must be readily available.
6. Disposable gloves, sanitizing wipes or bottles of disinfecting agent and rags must be readily available.
7. The host site is responsible for delivery and handling of testing materials and equipment, including the test location's set up. Materials and equipment should be handled by as few individuals as possible, and precautionary PPE (disposable gloves, facemask) must be worn at all times.
8. A garbage disposal area/barrel must be available to discard used PPE.
9. A table will be required to facilitate the check-in process.
10. The evaluation site and equipment shall be cleaned prior to the start of testing each day.
- 11. The host site must assign a company representative to ensure these requirements are in place for testing and followed through the course of the evaluations. Additionally, the Host Site Representative will manage site logistics, waiting areas, and ensure that social distancing protocols are followed.**
- 12. If these protocols are not being followed, the Evaluator will address issues directly with the Host Site Representative. If resolution cannot be reached, the Evaluator will suspend performance evaluations and immediately notify the NGA office.**

Personnel Requirements:

- 1. Evaluators, Examinees, host site personnel – if anyone is sick, has been sick, or have been exposed to someone who tested positive for COVID19 within the past two weeks, NGA strongly recommends that those individuals stay home to help ensure the safety of all involved. If the Evaluator notices any individual exhibiting signs of sickness, they will immediately address the situation with the Host Site Representative.**
- 2. All Evaluators and Examinees must bring and wear a facemask during the entirety of their time at the test center.** Cloth facemasks or cloth coverings are acceptable. Medical/surgical face masks are also acceptable, but not required. NGA will provide masks to the NGA Evaluators on a best-efforts basis. Evaluators may also procure their own masks. Masks for Examinees and host site support employees are the responsibility of the host site.
3. Evaluators and Examinees shall wear disposable gloves (e.g. Nitrile, Latex, Neoprene) during the evaluation. Evaluators will replace gloves after Examinee to avoid cross-contamination. Disposable gloves will be provided by the host site for both Evaluators and Examinees.
4. There must always be a minimum of 6-feet separation between the Evaluator and Examinee.

Check-In and Close-Out Processes:

1. Examinees will wait for their turn for the PE testing in a designated location at a safe distance from the Evaluator and other Examinees.

2. Evaluators must visually check Examinees photo ID by having the Examinee place the ID on registration table and distance 6 feet before Evaluator checks the ID. The Examinee will briefly lower their facemask to ID validation. The Evaluator will visually inspect, but not touch the photo ID at any point.
3. The Examinee will not be required to sign any forms such as an Attendee Sheet or a Pass/Fail Sheet. The Evaluator will be the only person to handle daily paperwork. The Evaluator will write "COVID-19" in lieu of the Examinee signature. The Pass/Fail sheet will be amended to include a line for the Evaluator to attest that the individuals who presented themselves for evaluation that day matched the ID card that was presented as well as the photo in the OnBoard LMS.
4. The Evaluator will notify each candidate upon completion of each Covered Task evaluated if they Passed or Failed and will verbally notify the Examinee a second time when the Evaluator signs for the candidate on the evaluation sheet acknowledging Pass/Fail status.
5. At the end of the day, the Evaluator will complete the hand-written evaluation sheet (Pass/Fail sheet) and send an electronic copy of the evaluation sheet to the Host Site Representative. There will be no physical hand-off of the evaluation sheet.
6. The Host Site Representative will electronically confirm receipt of the evaluation sheet and their understanding of the Examinees pass/fail status.

During the Performance Evaluation:

1. **Social distancing and use of PPE, as outlined above, shall be maintained during the entirety of the evaluation.**
2. A thorough wipe down with disinfecting cleaning supplies shall be required of all equipment, prior to the start of testing.
3. The Examinee will handle all testing materials, including equipment, pipe and fittings.
4. When an Evaluator needs to closely inspect any aspect of an evaluation, the Evaluator will instruct the Examinee to step 6-feet away from the evaluation so the inspection can be performed.
5. For pipe joining evaluations, when the Examinee is ready for their joint to be visually inspected, he/she must wipe the specimen down with a disinfectant wipe, place it on the table and step away for the Evaluator's inspection. Upon completion of the visual inspection, the Evaluator will wipe the specimen with a disinfecting wipe and place the specimen in the staging area for destructive test.
6. During the destructive test, the host site will designate a person or to cut the pipe samples (or have the Examinee cut their own pipe samples) and place them on a table for inspection by the Evaluator. The Evaluator will perform the bend-back test and inspection, then dispose of the specimens in the provided garbage receptacles. Social distancing of 6-feet shall be maintained during the process.
7. At the conclusion of the evaluation, the Examinee will wipe down all equipment and surfaces before leaving the testing space

Please note that these procedures are subject to change, as necessary.



**Pipe Joining and Operator Qualification Performance Evaluations
COVID-19 ADDENDUM**

This is an addendum to the Northeast Gas Association's COVID-19 Protocols. Please ensure that you are thoroughly familiar with those Protocols. This form is intended to provide Evaluators, Site Representatives and site owners a common means to pre-assess the readiness of a testing site and both re-assess the site and document the processes being followed. The goal is to mitigate the risk to all participants of COVID-19 exposure. If any of the items or requirements listed cannot or are not being satisfied, the issues shall be noted and resolutions documented. Please contact NGA with any questions or additional recommendations.

Company:		Date:		<input type="checkbox"/>	< Check if Testing Halted Call NGA
Testing Site (If Different):		Address:			
Evaluator Name (L,F):		Site Rep (L,F):			

Item #	Site-Related Items (Comments Below)	Y if OK, N if Issues Are Noted and/or Resolved As Detailed Below
1	Site Rep Has the Ability to Control Social Distancing, Personnel Safety, Test Process and Environment	
2	Site Type (Outdoor / Sheltered Outdoor / Large, Well-Ventilated Indoor Space / No Small Indoor Spaces) Footprint of testing space > ft / ft	
3	Supplemental Airflow (If Appropriate)	
4	Examinee, Evaluator and Site Rep Distancing Controlled (Using Layout / Barriers / Curtains)	
5	Readily Available and Pre-Positioned Supplies and Testing Materials (Pre-Cut and Sanitized)	
6	Separate Safety/Sanitation Supplies for Evaluators, Examinees and Reps (Gloves / Hand Sanitizer / Alcohol Wipes)	
7	Ongoing Sanitation (Amenities / Rest Room / Passages / Common Areas)	
8	Availability of Trash Barrels/Facilities	
9	Availability of Personal PPE for Evaluators, Examinees and Site Reps (Masks / Gloves / Eyewear as appropriate)	

Item #	Personnel Intake and Testing-Related Items (Comments Below)	Y if OK, N if Issues Are Noted and/or Resolved As Detailed Below
10	Site Rep Controls Site Entry	
11	All Intake, Testing and Evaluation to be Done as 1:1 Session	
12	Isolation of Waiting Examinees (In Vehicles / In Socially Distant Indoor/Outdoor setting / etc.)	
13	Health Interview (Prior 14 Days - No Fever, Cough, Chest Pain, Breathing Difficulty, Loss of Taste, No Contact With Sick Individuals - or - per Company Protocols)	
14	Health Check (Temperature - if required by Company Protocols)	
15	Dedicated, Social Distance-Controlled Check-In Area (Table / Barriers / Distance Markers)	
16	Record Keeping per NGA Covid-19 Protocols (Evaluator Sole Possession of Paperwork / ID Check at Distance / etc.)	
17	Social Distancing During Testing (At Least 6' Clear Area Completely Around Each Station / Piece of Equipment)	
18	Examinee Wipedown of All Tool and Equipment Touchpoints Upon Test Completion	
19	Sanitation of Test Pieces at Handoffs (Examinee to Evaluator to Saw Operator, etc)	
20	Destructive Testing Process per NGA Covid-19 Protocols (Destructive Testing at a Distance From Cutting Process)	

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Draft 3.0 2020-05-19	Signature:		AAS
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