



## Additional Information on Contractor Participation in TRC

### **Which Contractors Can Obtain TRC Collection Boxes?**

1. In urban and suburban locations, the contractor must employ 7 or more service technicians/furnace installers. The number of service technicians is a surrogate for the number of mercury thermostats routinely collected. The intent is to capture higher-volume contractors that can fill a TRC collection box annually and/or maintain their own parts inventory obviating the need to visit wholesaler locations.
2. In rural locations in the US, any contractor can obtain a collection box given the potential inconvenience of traveling large distances to reach participating wholesaler locations. Rural is defined as counties not in US OMB Metropolitan Statistical Areas.<sup>1</sup>
3. US State officials may elect to expand the number of contractors eligible for rural consideration by identifying rural contractors located in MSA counties using a specific methodology. This methodology relies upon Rural Urban Commuting Areas (RUCAs) cross-walked to zip codes as employed by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), using codes 3 and higher to identify rural areas.<sup>2</sup>

### **How Does a Contractor Obtain a TRC Collection Box?**

1. The contractor obtains and completes a form requesting the box that includes a certification that company has 7 or more service technicians or is located in a non-MSA county. There is a one-time cost of \$25.00 to participate in the program, to purchase the initial collection box. Replacement boxes, shipping costs, and the cost of recycling the thermostats are paid by TRC.
2. State officials must provide TRC with a list of non-MSA counties in their state to ensure rural contractors can obtain a box. The state should also provide this list to contractors when distributing the TRC application forms.
3. States electing to identify rural contractors in MSAs using RUCAs must approve all contractor application requests before forwarding the application forms to TRC.

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<sup>1</sup> OMB identifies Metropolitan Statistical Areas, which are counties with at least one urbanized area of 50,000 people or more, plus any adjacent counties where there is a "high degree" of social/economic integration (as measured by whether at least 25% of workers in the adjacent county commutes to work in the core county or vice versa). In 2003, there were 1,090 metro counties and 2,052 non-metro counties. Seventeen percent of the US population in 2000 lived in non-metro counties. You can see the MSAs identified in a particular state by going to <http://circ.rupri.org/maparchive/index.html#ruralmaps>.

<sup>2</sup> See <http://www.fammed.washington.edu/wwamirhrc/rucas/methods.html> for a description of the methodology for crosswalking the RUCAs to zip codes, and the website generally for more information on RUCAs.