



Heritage Home Program

Lead Paint Safety Guidelines

Are you planning a project that involves painting, repairing, or removing old siding, old trim, or old walls? Whether you are performing the work yourself or hiring a contractor, following lead paint safety guidelines is a must!

What is Lead-Based Paint?

- ❖ Throughout history, lead compounds were added to paints as pigments and additives to increase the paint's durability.
- ❖ In 1977, the United States banned the use of lead paint in residential properties, public buildings, toys, and furniture because of health concerns.
- ❖ **Many homes built before 1978 still contain lead-based paint**, often under layers of newer paint.

Why Worry About Lead Paint?

- ❖ Lead paint chips and lead paint dust are toxic and can lead to many health problems including brain development issues if inhaled or swallowed.
- ❖ Children and pregnant women have the highest risks for lead poisoning.
- ❖ Lead tastes sweet! Lead poisoning in children often occurs by them playing in lead contaminated soil, putting lead paint chips or dust into their mouths, and chewing or teething on lead-contaminated items like toys, windowsills, and railings.
- ❖ Lead paint chips and lead dust can linger in your yard or inside your home and be inhaled or swallowed long after a project is completed.

How to Protect Your Family?

- ❖ Left undisturbed, in good condition, and covered by newer paint, lead-based paint is often harmless. However, lead paint should be removed or encapsulated in areas where small children and pets are likely to disturb it.
- ❖ Chipping and flaking paint should be repaired without delay.
- ❖ Repair or renovation projects often disturb old paint and create lead paint chips and lead dust.
- ❖ The safest way to handle projects that include removing or disturbing lead-based paint is to hire a Lead-Certified Contractor.
- ❖ If you suspect lead-based paint is present and plan to do the work yourself, contact your local building department or EPA office for guidance.
- ❖ Before beginning any work on a home built before 1978, test all layers of paint in the work area for lead. Home test kits are available at hardware stores; however, professional testing is recommended.





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What are Lead-Safe Work Practices?

- ❖ Any project that may involve lead-based paint should include the following precautions at minimum:
 - Wear gloves, eye protection, and an EPA-approved respirator.
 - Cover the ground or floor in work areas with plastic sheeting.
 - Move any furniture, rugs, dishes, clothes, linens, and toys away from work areas or tightly cover them with plastic sheeting.
 - Tape plastic sheeting over openings and doorways to isolate indoor work areas from other areas of the home.
 - Mist surfaces with water before scraping or sanding loose paint.
 - Mist surfaces with water before drilling and cutting to reduce dust creation and keep dust from becoming airborne
 - If power tools are used, equip them with a lead-safe HEPA vacuum.
 - Do not use open flame torches, infrared scorchers, electric irons, or heat guns operating above 1,100 degrees as this may cause the release of dangerous lead fumes.
 - Clean all surfaces in indoor work areas with damp paper towels that are immediately thrown away or with a lead-safe HEPA vacuum.
 - Clean contaminated work clothes separately from other laundry.
- ❖ Check your local building department for more information regarding lead safety regulations including proper disposal of lead-contaminated materials.



More Resources:

- ❖ **City of Cleveland:**
 - <https://www.clevelandohio.gov/city-hall/departments/community-development/programs-services/lead-hazard-control>
 - Call: (216) 664-2929
- ❖ **Cuyahoga County Board of Health:**
 - <https://ccbh.net/lead-safe-cuyahoga-free-home-repairs/>
 - Call: (216) 201-1000
- ❖ HUD Office of Healthy Homes and Lead Hazard Control:
 - www.hud.gov/offices/lead
 - Call: (202) 755-1785
- ❖ The National Lead Information Center:
 - www.epa.gov/lead
 - Call: (800) 424-LEAD (5323)
- ❖ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead
- ❖ Occupational Safety & Health Administration: www.osha.gov/SLTC/lead

<https://www.heritagehomeprogram.org>