

PUBLIC HEALTH FACT SHEET



HEALTH DIVISION
Department of Health & Human Services

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REDUCING LEAD PAINT IN THE HOME

Most homes built before 1978 have lead-based paint. If removing lead-based paint, or renovating a home, proper preparation and clean up of the area will help minimize lead dust accumulation. (See precautions section for additional information).

Various Methods of Reducing Lead Include:

- Covering the Wall Surface

Best method for large surfaces. Painted surfaces can be covered with:

- 1) Wall paper
- 2) Paneling
- 3) Gypsum board (dry wall)
- 4) Specially formulated paint (also known as encapsulating paint)

- Replacement of Items

A permanent solution involves removing the items painted with lead-based paint and replacing with new items.

Replacement is one of the best methods for doors, windows, moldings and some wall surfaces because of friction problems.

- Remove Paint

Heating and Scraping

This is not a recommended method because of the poisonous lead fumes that can be produced. It is difficult to remove all traces of lead-based paint. Low heat and wet scraping work best on flat wood surfaces. If used, heat guns should not exceed 1100° F and masks or respirators with High-Efficiency Particulate Air (HEPA) filters should be worn.

Chemical Stripping

Chemical stripping will remove lead-based paint. However, the chemicals are dangerous and are best used by a professional contractor. In most cases, lead is deep in the pores of wooden surfaces.

Precautions:

- Lead-based paint dust is very dangerous. Keep pregnant women and young children out of the work area while doing remodeling or renovation work until proper cleanup work is complete. If possible, move your family out of the home until the work is done and the area has been properly cleaned and has passed an inspection. If you can't move your family, completely seal off the work area.
- It is important to use the methods that will create the least amount of lead dust. Sanding and burning (with a torch) should not be used because they create large amounts of dangerous lead dust and fumes.

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- Wallpaper, contact paper, or fresh paint are less durable barriers than flexible wall covering, paneling or gypsum board (drywall).
- Seal off the room before renovations or lead removal begins. Use 6 mil plastic and duct tape to seal doors, windows and ventilation ducts. Also, remove or cover furniture, drapes and area rugs.
- Use approved Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) masks or respirators with HEPA filters when removing lead-paint.
- Do not eat or drink in the area.
- Wash hands and face before eating. Change clothes before leaving the area.
- Wear protective equipment (disposable coveralls, HEPA respirator or mask, goggles, shoe covers, gloves) when entering the area where lead is being removed. Leave all protective clothing in the work/dirty area.

Cleanup

- This is the most important step because, if not done correctly, lead levels can increase.
 - MATERIALS NEEDED
 - 1) Liquid detergent such as dish soap.
 - 2) HEPA type industrial vacuum cleaner. A home vacuum or shop vac will not filter out lead dust particles.
 - 3) Duct tape and 6 mil plastic bags.
 - 4) Disposable cloths or paper towels, sponges, mop heads, and rubber gloves.
 - STEPS
 - 1) Vacuum all flat surfaces in area of remediation work until all visible debris and dirt are removed.
 - 2) Wash surfaces with liquid detergent and rinse with clean hot water. Make sure to use disposable rubber gloves and paper towels. Use a clean towel for each surface.
 - 3) Let surface dry and repeat steps 1 and 2.
 - 4) Double bag all lead-contaminated trash with 6 mil plastic bags and seal with duct tape.

For more information on Reducing Lead Paint in the Home, call 248-858-1312 or toll free 1-888-350-0900, Ext.8-1312, or contact the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) at 1-800-424-5323

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