

Lead Based Paint – Facts, Health Hazards, & Resources

The U.S. Government banned lead paint in 1978. Oil companies began phasing out leaded gasoline in 1975. Since then, the percentage of children with high levels of lead in their blood has plummeted from 88% in the 1970s to 1.6% in 2005. A simple blood test can determine lead exposure levels. The following are general recommendations and guidelines. Consult with the EPA, the local health dept, or your family doctor for specific recommendations, procedures and testing.

Facts

1. The Environmental Protection Agency recommends checking for lead paint if you are planning to buy, rent, or renovate a home built before 1978.
2. Years of research show opening and closing windows is the # 1 contributor of lead-paint dust poisoning children decades after the paint was applied. (Lead helped paint adhere better and last longer.)
 - a. Old lead painted windows are like a lead-dust machine, even 40, 50, 100 years after the lead was put into those windows, says Rick Nevin, a Fairfax, Va., economist who has done extensive research on lead's role in rising crime rates.
3. The two major routes of exposure:
 - a. Inhalation: Resulting from activities such as opening/closing windows that create dust and fumes
 - b. Ingestion: Mostly when children touch surfaces, put their fingers in their mouths (lead has a sweet taste), and water supply pipes using lead solder connections.
4. Renovation work disturbing more than 2 square feet of painted surfaces needs to follow EPA guidelines.
5. Lead specific cleaners that contain phosphates or EDTA (ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid) both of which bind with lead aiding (reducing hazard) improve cleanup compared to conventional cleaners.

Health Hazards

1. Unborn children and children under the age of 6 have nervous systems and brains that are more sensitive to lead. Children's growing bodies absorb more lead.
2. Dozens of studies have linked lead to lower IQ's, severe learning difficulties, behavior problems and even death.
3. Researchers also have found that children exposed to lead are more likely to end up with juvenile and adult criminal records.
4. Common lead effects on children: Nervous system and kidney damage, learning disabilities, speech, language, and behavior problems, poor muscle coordination, decreased muscle and bone growth, and hearing damage. High levels of lead exposure may cause seizures, unconsciousness, and death.
5. Common lead effects on adults: Increased chance of illness during pregnancy, harm to the fetus, fertility problems in men and women, high blood pressure, digestive problems, nerve disorders, memory and concentration problems, and muscle and joint pain.

Online Resources

<http://www.epa.gov/lead/pubs/renovation.htm> (*Renovation, Repair and Painting (EPA)*)
<http://www.epa.gov/lead/> **1-800-424-LEAD** (*U.S. Environmental Protection Agency*)

Need More Information? (We do not test or mitigate lead situations. The below documents are informational only.)

Please visit www.phi.bz click our "Post Inspection Support" page and request additional documents covering:

- Remodelers' Guide to Lead Paint
- Protect Your Family From Lead in Your Home (EPA)
- Lead Paint: A Renovator's Hazard
- For Many Kids, Lead Threat Is Right In Their Homes
- Lead Paint Update
- Primed for Lead-Safe Classes

La Crosse: 608-782-8831

Winona: 507-452-6659

www.phi.bz