

Keeping Your Home Lead Safe

How Can You Keep Your Family Safe During Remodeling, Renovation, and Repainting?

If you are going to prepare for repainting, remove paint, or tear out walls in an old home, you should do one of the following:

Have the paint tested to see if it is lead-based paint.

Assume that it is lead-based paint and take the appropriate precautions.

When renovating, never dry scrape, dry sand, sand blast, power wash, use a torch, or use a high temperature heat gun to remove lead-based paint.



Contact the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) at 1-800-972-2026 to find a contractor who has been trained to do the work safely. IDPH can also tell you how to do the work safely.



Protecting Your Family



Tell Me About Lead Poisoning So I Know Why I'm Concerned

Many homes built before 1978 have lead-based paint in them. Lead-based paint, chips, and dust can pose serious health hazards.



Renting:

Landlords must tell tenants about known lead-based paint and lead-based paint hazards before leases are signed. In the case of verbal leases, landlords must do this before tenants agree to a verbal lease. Leases must include a disclosure form about lead-based paint unless a certified inspector has checked the property and said in writing that it is lead-based paint free.

Buying:

Sellers must tell buyers in writing about lead-based paint and lead-based paint hazards before entering into a sales contract. Sales contracts must include a disclosure form about lead-based paint in the building. Sellers must offer buyers 10 days to check for lead hazards.

Remodeling:

Remodelers must give homeowners and occupants the "How To Protect Iowa Families" booklet from the Iowa Department of Public Health and a form before they begin work. Landlords and property managers who perform renovations must also give this booklet and a form to tenants before they begin work.



Interim Controls

You can reduce lead hazards by repairing deteriorated paint surfaces to keep them from peeling and chipping. This is called "interim controls".

If you choose "interim controls," you need to watch these surfaces and keep them in good condition. If they start to peel and chip, they will become hazards again.

You must be very careful when you repair these paint surfaces. If you are not careful, you can make things worse by spreading lead dust throughout your house.

Abatement

You can permanently remove or "abate" lead hazards by removing all of the lead-based paint from a surface or by sealing or enclosing lead-based paint with special materials.

Painting over lead-based paint with regular paint is not "abatement."

If you hire someone to "abate" lead hazards, this person must be a certified lead abatement contractor in Iowa.

Certified contractors must hire trained workers and follow strict safety rules to protect their workers and the people who live in the homes where they work.

Information for this publication was obtained from "Lead Poisoning: How to Protect Iowa Families" by the Iowa Department of Public Health.

Finding the Lead-based Paint Hazards In and Around Your Home

You should assume that all of the paint, stain, or other coatings in your home contain lead.

Look for paint, stain, or other coatings that are:

- Loose
- Cracked or chipping
- Peeling or flaking
- Rubbing off
- Deteriorating in any way



When paint chips off these surfaces, all layers of paint usually come off together. This is a hazard that can cause lead poisoning because the bottom layers of paint may contain lead even if the surface has been repainted with lead-free paint.

Paint that has an "alligator" cracking pattern or rubs off on your hands (chalks) is usually lead-based paint. Cracked or chalking paint is a hazard that can cause lead poisoning.

Old varnish that looks cloudy may contain lead. Lead-based paint was often mixed with varnish to give it a deeper, richer color. If the finish is cracked or peeling, old varnish is a hazard that can cause lead poisoning.

Window Hazards

You must open the window to check the following:

Check the sides and upper part of the window.

Check the window sash.

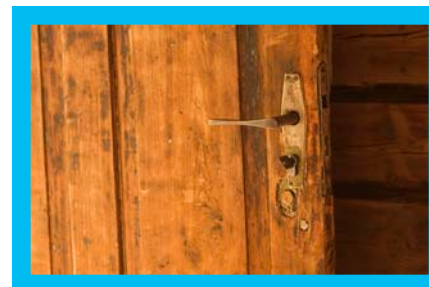
Check area between interior window and screen for paint chips and dust.

Check the sill and window frame.



Look for:

- Peeling
- Chipping (impact)
- Toys in window
- Chew marks



Woodwork, Wall, and Door Hazards

Look for:

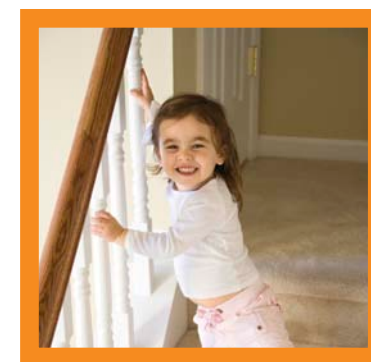
- Door rubbing
- Worn threshold
- Impact chipping

Impact chipping at corners of door frame, baseboards, walls and rub or scrape marks on door edges are signs of potential lead exposure.

Stair Hazards

Look for:

- Baseboards
- Stair treads
- Railing
- Spindle
- Edge
- Newel post
- Riser



Basement Hazards

Check old furniture and toys in storage.



Porch Hazards

Children like to sit and play on porches. Children can get into lead-based paint chips and dust if the porch and house siding have been painted with lead-based paint.

Exterior Hazards

Look for chipping and peeling paint on all surfaces. Be sure to check all exterior window frames (including basement windows) and overhangs. Look for paint chips lying on the ground or sidewalk around all buildings.



Outside Play Area Hazards

Check all the places your children play outside. Look closely for chipping or peeling paint on nearby buildings. Look for paint chips in the soil or on sidewalks. Check for bare soil in play areas. Any bare soil near an old building may contain lead-based paint chips and dust—even if the building has been sided, repainted, or torn down.

How Can You Safely Reduce Lead Hazards in Your Home?

Keeping your home clean will help prevent lead poisoning in your children. However, if there is peeling and chipping paint in your home, you should try to repair the lead hazards.

You do NOT need to remove all the lead-based paint from your home to make it lead safe.

How Do Adults Become Lead Poisoned?

Some adults have been lead-poisoned at home by removing lead-based paint in or remodeling an older home without following safety guidelines.

Guidelines can be found at www.epa.gov.

Lead-Based Paint and Lead-Based Paint Hazards



Any home built before 1978 can have lead-based paint in it.

In Iowa homes, most interior and exterior wood surfaces that were painted before 1960 have lead-based paint on them.

When is Lead-Based Paint a Hazard?

Lead-based paint that is peeling, chipping, chalking, cracking, or otherwise deteriorating is a hazard to small children.

Lead dust may be on floors and other surfaces if you have recently done any remodeling or repainting in your home.

Lead in soil is a hazard when children play in areas of bare soil next to old buildings.