

## More About Paint, Specifically Lead Paint

Worried about lead in your home? If you are living in an older home, you should be informed. Lead can be a serious danger. Let's learn how to identify, safely clean-up, and dispose of lead-contaminated waste created during the renovation or remodeling of an older home.

### The Dangers of Lead

Lead poisoning is a concern for both children and adults. It can cause permanent problems with health, learning, and behavior in young children, as well as high blood pressure, kidney damage, and fertility problems in adults.

You can be exposed to lead any time you breathe lead dust or fumes, or swallow anything that contains lead. About 75% of homes built before 1978 contain some lead-based paint. The older the home, the more likely it is to contain lead-based paint. **You should assume that any home built before 1978 contains some lead.** To be sure, test your home for lead.

If you live in a home built before 1978, the following lead-contaminated items may be generated by renovation activities:

- Paint chips,
- Clean up debris: paper towels, sponges, filters, poly and duct tape,
- Bulk materials: doorframes, windows and carpet,
- Chemical strippers containing lead paint, and
- Cleanup wastewater.

You can protect yourself from lead by following the appropriate safety procedures.

### Renovation/Remodeling Waste

1. Place any rags, paper towels, mops, disposable non-washable clothing, and shoe covers used during the job and clean-up in a heavy-duty garbage bag and seal.
2. Roll up the poly sheeting used to catch the debris and paint chips. Start at the corner and roll the material inward to capture all of the dust and debris, and tape the poly shut with duct tape.
3. Wet wash the entire work area with a cleaning solution of your choice. Be sure to wear waterproof rubber gloves when you wet wash the area. Also, daily wet washing will remove harmful lead dust while you complete the remodeling project.
4. Use a wet/dry shop vac to vacuum up the cleaning solution. Be sure to keep about two inches of water in the bottom of the canister. The water will help to hold the lead dust in. The wet/dry vacuum should be used only to vacuum up the wash or rinse water, not to pick up dry dust and paint chips.
5. Rinse the area with clean water. Be sure to use two separate buckets, one for the cleaning solution used earlier, and one for the clean rinse water. Also, use two separate sets of disposable rags, one for the washing step and one for the rinse step. Remember to wear waterproof rubber gloves.
6. Filter the rinse water.

## More About Paint, Specifically Lead Paint

7. Let the debris in the filter dry out and dispose of it as household hazardous waste.
8. Vacuum the work area again with the wet/dry vacuum.
9. Wait one hour and repeat the cleanup process. This will allow for the cleanup of any lead dust that may have settled.

### *Important Tips:*

- Do not use your household vacuum to clean up lead dust and paint chips! The filter in the household vacuum is not designed to pick up and hold the fine lead dust - it will just spread the lead dust throughout the house.
- Clean up the work area each day. Cleaning up paint chips, dust, and debris will help protect the people working with lead during the remodeling or repair work and the people living in the home.
- Once the worksite cleanup is finished, don't forget to clean yourself up! Thoroughly wash your hands, face and hair. Make sure that your work clothes are washed separately from any other clothing.

### **Disposal of Lead Waste**

Does your Town burn trash after pickup? If so, harmful lead fumes may be released into the air. Call your Transfer Station to find out if they burn trash. If your trash is burned, we recommend that you dispose of lead paint waste at your local household hazardous waste collection site.

### **Additional Information**

For more information regarding household hazardous waste, please contact [hhw@des.nh.gov](mailto:hhw@des.nh.gov), call (603) 271-2047, or go to <http://des.nh.gov/>.