

Find Lead Hazards

Preventing poisoning means knowing where lead is from the start.

- In pre-1978 buildings, you should assume a surface has lead unless you tested it.
- Home test kits are useful but negative results should be verified.
- Paint chip tests are the easiest way to confirm the presence of lead.

Contain Paint Waste

Containing paint waste from the start prevents exposure and makes clean up much easier. Steps to take include:

- Remove as much furniture as you can from the room.
- Cover remaining furniture with plastic securely taped in place.
- Close off the work area by taping 6 mil plastic over all doors, windows, the floor, ground, and other exposed surfaces.
- Turn off forced-air heating and air conditioning systems and seal vents with 6-mil plastic.
- Allow only workers to enter the area until the job is complete.
- Be careful not to track dust out of the work area.
- If others do the work, ensure that they follow these work practices to protect your family's health and safety.
- For outdoor work, close windows and doors, remove screens, seal air intakes, and cover the ground.

Protect Yourself

Children are most vulnerable to lead but adults can be poisoned too. To avoid getting sick:

- Don't eat, drink, or smoke while in the work area.
- If you're making dust, wear a respirator approved by NIOSH for lead dust and make sure it fits.
- Wear a hat, shoe covers, and coveralls.
- Change clothes and wash when you leave the work area for the day. Shower as soon as possible.



The Right Stuff

Using the proper equipment will help you complete your job safely. Here's what you should have:

- Plastic drop cloths
- Duct tape
- Mops and 3 buckets
- All-purpose cleaner
- Spray bottles
- Disposable rags or paper towels
- Heavy duty plastic bags
- HEPA-filter vacuum (see Resources)

Leave the Scene Clean

Proper cleaning after paint removal may be the most important step for keeping children safe. Steps for doing the job right:

- Lightly wet all dust and chips and place in double plastic garbage bags.
- Lightly wet drop cloths and carefully roll or fold inward and discard in double plastic garbage bags.
- Learn about effective methods for cleaning lead dust (see resources).
- Use a HEPA-filter vacuum to collect paint waste.
- Wash all surfaces including floors, walls, and window components.
- Change rinse water frequently.
- Dispose of towels in plastic bags.
- Homeowners can dispose of lead paint waste through their regular trash pick up. Lead paint waste should be double-bagged with heavy plastic bags and sealed before placing with the trash.
- Contractors must dispose of waste according to WI Dept of Natural Resources rules.



Resources

The following resources are available to help you work lead safe:

- **Detailed Guidance on Lead Safe Practices**
Lead Paint Safety
www.hud.gov/offices/lead/training/LBPguide.pdf
- **Public Health Madison & Dane County**
210 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd., Rm. 507
Madison, WI 53703
(608) 266-4821
www.publichealthmdc.com
 - General guidance on lead safe methods and lead poisoning
 - Information on local regulations
 - Lead testing of paint chips and water
- **WI State Lab of Hygiene**
2601 Agriculture Dr.
Madison, WI 53718
(608) 224-6210
 - Lead testing of dust, paint chip, and water.
- **Project Home**
1966 S. Stoughton Rd.
Madison, WI 53716
(608) 246-3737
www.projecthomewi.org
 - HEPA-filter vacuum rental
- **WI Dept of Health Services**
1 W. Wilson St.
Madison, WI 53703
(608) 224-6202
www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/lead
 - General guidance on lead safe methods and lead poisoning
 - Information on training and certification
- **WI Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program (WCLPPP)**
(608) 261-6876
 - Lead and Asbestos Certification Program

A Guide to Lead-Safe Painting Projects

Avoiding Lead Exposure in Older Homes



210 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd., Rm. 507
Madison, WI 53703-3346
Phone (608) 266-4821
www.publichealthmdc.com

The Problem with Lead

Lead is a poison. Lead poisoning can result in serious harm to the brain, kidneys, nervous system and blood. Lead is especially dangerous to children and pregnant women.

Lead paint and varnish was used in homes built before 1978 and commonly in homes built before 1950. Painting and remodeling surfaces with old paint and varnish in these buildings may create lead dust, chips, or fumes.

Lead dust, which is practically invisible, is the most common way children are poisoned by lead. Lead dust cannot be cleaned up with a broom or regular vacuum. It takes very little lead dust to poison a child.

The important thing to know is that painting or remodeling, whether you do it by yourself or hire a professional, can be done in ways that do not create a lead hazard.

Lead Safe Methods

Lead safe methods of painting and remodeling are critical to preventing lead poisoning in children and adults. Basically, this means that you should:

- Identify lead hazards before you start.
- Keep children and pregnant women out of the work area.
- Avoid creating dust by removing lead paint safely.
- Keep paint waste in the work area.
- Wear protective clothing to avoid exposure.
- Clean thoroughly.
- Check to make sure it's clean.

Rules to Work By

It is always wise to use lead safe methods; but in some cases, it's the law. Here are some important legal requirements in Dane County:

- You may do lead work in a home you own and live in without being certified by the State.
- If your renovation work involves disturbing old paint in other people's homes, and if the homes were built before 1978, you must be certified by the state to do that kind of work.
- Madison City Ordinance 7.49 requires lead safe methods during exterior painting and remodeling of pre-1978 homes.
- All persons doing any work on surfaces that might contain lead must notify the occupants and property owners of the potential lead hazard.

Safe Paint Removal

To remove lead-based paint:

- Hand scrape or sand after wetting the surface.
- Use chemical strippers (avoid those with methylene chloride).*
- Use heat guns at a low-medium setting, less than 700°F.*
- Power sanders and grinders can be used only if connected to a HEPA-filter vacuum.*



*Proper dust masks must be worn while using these methods.