

If tests conducted by the risk assessor or inspector I hire show that the home I plan to buy contains lead-based paint, is the seller required to remove it?

No. The seller does not have to remove any lead-based paint hazards found during testing. With the test results, however, you can ask the seller to hire a certified professional to fix any hazardous lead-based paint conditions, or lower the sale price so you can hire a certified professional. To do this, the sales contract must include a clause that permits further negotiations based on the lead test results. Make sure all lead-related work is done by a certified lead professional.

How can I make sure the lead professional I hire is certified?

Federal law requires all lead professionals to not only be trained, but certified as well. Contact your state or tribal lead poisoning prevention program for more information. Call **1-800-424-LEAD** for a list of contacts in your area.

Where can I get more information about lead-based paint and lead hazards?

Call the National Lead Information Center at **1-800-424-LEAD** for more information on lead or to speak to a lead specialist. Or visit our Web site at **www.epa.gov/lead**.



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United States
Environmental Protection Agency
(7404)
Washington, DC 20460

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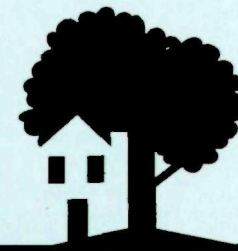
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Buying A Home? Here's What You Need To Know About Lead-Based Paint!



Did you know?

- The older a home is the more likely it is to contain lead-based paint.
- Lead exposure is especially harmful to children who are 6 years old or younger.
- The dust in a home may be contaminated with harmful lead particles that you cannot see.
- Renovation and remodeling activities can make a lot of dust that contains lead.
- You have a right to find out if a home you plan to buy contains lead-based paint or lead-based paint hazards.

Read on for information to help you make the right decision for you and your family.

Over 80 percent of homes built before 1980 in the United States contain some lead-based paint. Since lead exposure can cause serious health effects, don't take chances!

Why should I be concerned about lead-based paint when buying a home?

Today, 83% of private housing and 86% of public housing built before 1980 contains some lead-based paint. That's because lead-based paint was widely used in homes during the early part of this century. While the use of lead-based paint began to drop in the 1950's, it was not stopped altogether until it was banned for home use in 1978.

How can lead exposure affect me and my family?

Even exposure to low levels of lead can permanently affect children. In low levels lead exposure can cause—

- Learning disabilities, attention deficit disorder, and decreased intelligence.
- Speech, language, and behavior problems.
- Hearing damage.
- Decreased muscle and bone growth.

While low level exposure is most common, exposure to high levels of lead can have devastating effects on children, including seizures, unconsciousness, and in some cases, death.

Lead exposure can also be dangerous for adults. In adults, high lead levels can cause—

- Harm to a fetus, including brain damage or death.
- Fertility problems (in men and women).
- High blood pressure.
- Digestive and nerve disorders.

To get more information about lead exposure, especially effects on children, call **1-800-424-LEAD**.

Is all lead-based paint considered hazardous?

Lead-based paint that is in good condition is usually not harmful. Lead-based paint is considered a hazard if it is peeling, chipping, chalking, or cracking. It can also be hazardous if it is on surfaces that get a lot of wear and tear or that children chew such as—

- Windows and window sills.
- Doors and door frames.
- Stairs, railings, and banisters.
- Porches and fences.

Are there other sources of lead hazards I should be aware of?

In addition to lead-based paint, other common sources of lead hazards include—

- **Lead-contaminated dust.** Lead-painted surfaces that are deteriorated, bumped and/or rubbed together can contaminate household dust. This dust can gather on surfaces and objects that people touch. This is especially important if you have young children who crawl and put things in their mouths!
- **Lead-contaminated soil.** Exterior lead-based paint on homes can flake or peel and get into soil. Soil near roadways may also be contaminated from past use of leaded gasoline in cars. Lead-contaminated soil can also be tracked into the house—creating more lead-contaminated dust!

Another potential source of lead is older **plumbing fixtures**—such as faucets, lead pipes, and pipes connected with lead solder—which can contaminate drinking water. Restrictions on the use of lead in plumbing fixtures were expanded in 1986, and again in 1988, but some lead may still

be found in pipes today. Call the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at **1-800-426-4791** for information on lead in drinking water.

Why is buying a home a good time to think about lead?

A vacant house presents a great opportunity to address identified lead hazards safely. That's because there are no concerns about contaminating your family or belongings during the work.

The seller of a home built before 1978 is required to—

- Tell you about and give you any records on any known lead-based paint hazards in the home.
- Give you a copy of the EPA pamphlet titled *Protect Your Family From Lead in Your Home*.
- Offer you—the buyer—10 days, or another mutually agreeable period, to have a certified lead professional conduct a lead risk assessment or inspection before you buy the home.

What are the differences between a lead risk assessment and inspection?

- A **risk assessment** is conducted by a certified risk assessor, who will test dust, deteriorated paint, and soil to identify lead hazards. A risk assessor will also suggest ways to control such hazards. A risk assessment is usually the most appropriate tool for assessing lead hazards in a home.
- A **lead inspection** is conducted by a certified inspector or risk assessor, and tests only painted surfaces to tell you the location of lead-based paint. It is important to know where lead-based paint is in the home so that if you or your contractor disturbs it, additional lead hazards are not created. This is particularly important if you plan to renovate, remodel, or disturb paint in the home you are thinking about buying.