Protect Your Family From Lead in Your Home
Are You Planning To Buy, Rent, or Renovate a Home Built Before 1978?

Many houses and apartments built before 1978 have paint that contains lead (called lead-based paint). Lead from paint, chips, and dust can pose serious health hazards if not taken care of properly.

By 1996, federal law will require that individuals receive certain information before renting, buying, or renovating pre-1978 housing:

**LANDLORDS** will have to disclose known information on lead-based paint hazards before leases take effect. Leases will include a federal form about lead-based paint.

**SELLERS** will have to disclose known information on lead-based paint hazards before selling a house. Sales contracts will include a federal form about lead-based paint in the building. Buyers will have up to 10 days to check for lead hazards.

**RENOVATORS** will have to give you this pamphlet before starting work.

**IF YOU WANT MORE INFORMATION** on these requirements, call the National Lead Information Clearinghouse at 1-800-424-LEAD.

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IMPORTANT!

Lead From Paint, Dust, and Soil Can Be Dangerous If Not Managed Properly

**FACT:** Lead exposure can harm young children and babies even before they are born.

**FACT:** Even children that seem healthy can have high levels of lead in their bodies.

**FACT:** People can get lead in their bodies by breathing or swallowing lead dust, or by eating soil or paint chips with lead in them.

**FACT:** People have many options for reducing lead hazards. In most cases, lead-based paint that is in good condition is not a hazard.

**FACT:** Removing lead-based paint improperly can increase the danger to your family.

If you think your home might have lead hazards, read this pamphlet to learn some simple steps to protect your family.
People can get lead in their body if they:

◆ Put their hands or other objects covered with lead dust in their mouths.
◆ Eat paint chips or soil that contains lead.
◆ Breathe in lead dust (especially during renovations that disturb painted surfaces).

Lead is even more dangerous to children than adults because:

◆ Babies and young children often put their hands and other objects in their mouths. These objects can have lead dust on them.
◆ Children’s growing bodies absorb more lead.
◆ Children’s brains and nervous systems are more sensitive to the damaging effects of lead.

Even children who appear healthy can have dangerous levels of lead.

1 out of every 11 children in the United States has dangerous levels of lead in the bloodstream.

Even children who appear healthy can have dangerous levels of lead.
**Lead's Effects**

If not detected early, children with high levels of lead in their bodies can suffer from:

- Damage to the brain and nervous system
- Behavior and learning problems (such as hyperactivity)
- Slowed growth
- Hearing problems
- Headaches

*Lead is also harmful to adults.*

Adults can suffer from:

- Difficulties during pregnancy
- Other reproductive problems (in both men and women)
- High blood pressure
- Digestive problems
- Nerve disorders
- Memory and concentration problems
- Muscle and joint pain

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**Lead affects the body in many ways.**
A simple blood test can detect high levels of lead. Blood tests are important for:

- Children who are 6 months to 1 year old (6 months if you live in an older home with cracking or peeling paint).
- Family members that you think might have high levels of lead.

If your child is older than 1 year, talk to your doctor about whether your child needs testing.

Your doctor or health center can do blood tests. They are inexpensive and sometimes free. Your doctor will explain what the test results mean. Treatment can range from changes in your diet to medication or a hospital stay.

Many homes built before 1978 have lead-based paint. The federal government banned lead-based paint from housing in 1978. Some states stopped its use even earlier. Lead can be found:

- In homes in the city, country, or suburbs.
- In apartments, single-family homes, and both private and public housing.
- Inside and outside of the house.
- In soil around a home. (Soil can pick up lead from exterior paint, or other sources such as past use of leaded gas in cars.)

Get your children tested if you think your home has high levels of lead.

Where Lead-Based Paint Is Found
Where Lead Is Likely To Be a Hazard

**Lead-based paint** that is in good condition is usually not a hazard.

**Peeling, chipping, chalking, or cracking lead-based paint** is a hazard and needs immediate attention.

Lead-based paint may also be a hazard when found on surfaces that children can chew or that get a lot of wear-and-tear. These areas include:

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

**Lead dust** can form when lead-based paint is dry scraped, dry sanded, or heated. Dust also forms when painted surfaces bump or rub together. Lead chips and dust can get on surfaces and objects that people touch. Settled lead dust can reenter the air when people vacuum, sweep, or walk through it.

**Lead in soil** can be a hazard when children play in bare soil or when people bring soil into the house on their shoes. Call your state agency (see page 12) to find out about soil testing for lead.