

The New Orleans City Council passed legislation that governs activities that disturb or remove painted surfaces on the exterior and interior of buildings/ structures built before December 31, 1978. No person shall disturb or remove lead paint, or in any other way generate excessive lead containing dust or excessive airborne lead concentrations during work on the interior or exterior of any building or structure except in accordance with the requirements of the 2001 Lead Ordinance.

The EPA has set two standards for lead hazards in soil: 400 parts per million (ppm) in play areas of bare soil, and 1200 ppm in bare soil in the remainder of the yard.

The EPA lead hazard standard for dust is 40 micrograms per square foot ($\mu\text{g}/\text{ft}^2$) for floors and carpet, 250 $\mu\text{g}/\text{ft}^2$ for interior window sills, and 400 $\mu\text{g}/\text{ft}^2$ for window troughs. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) extends the 400 $\mu\text{g}/\text{ft}^2$ standard to include exterior concrete and other rough surfaces.

The State of Louisiana mandates that all cases of lead poisoning and all laboratory lead test results, regardless of the blood lead level, be reported to the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals.

- ▶ Cases of adult lead poisoning must be reported to the Department of Health and Hospitals (DHH) via fax at 504-568-8149 or telephone 1-888-293-7020 or 504-568-8150 during business hours. A reporting form can be located on the DHH website at www.dhh.state.la.us/offices/miscdocs/docs-205/Heavy_Metal/Form_Heavy_Metal_Poisoning.pdf
- ▶ The Louisiana Administrative Code mandates universal blood lead screening of children under 6 years of age. All results of blood lead testing for children under 72 months of age must be reported to the Louisiana Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program. The Childhood Lead Program can be reached at 504-568-8254. Reporting forms and additional information can be found on their website at www.dhh.louisiana.gov/offices/?ID=263

LDHH Lead Resources

Adult Blood Lead Epidemiology and Surveillance Program (ABLES): The ABLES program is a state-based surveillance program of laboratory-reported adult blood lead levels. The program objective is to build state capacity to initiate, expand and improve adult blood lead surveillance programs. ABLES program staff can be reached at 1-888-293-7020.

Louisiana Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program (LACLPPP): LACLPPP services include monitoring of blood lead levels in children 6 years of age and under; identification of children; care coordination and environmental inspection for children with elevated blood lead levels; and community and professional education. LACLPPP can be reached at 504-568-8254.

Public Health Assessment/Health Studies Program (PHA/HS): The PHA/HS program reviews available environmental data, health outcome data and community concerns about chemical contamination at Superfund sites and other hazardous waste sites. The program evaluates whether exposure to the contaminants might cause harm to people and recommends actions to reduce exposure and/or provide further information, such as health studies or medical surveillance. The PHA/HS program can be contacted at 1-888-293-7020.

**Center for Environmental Health Services,
Section of Environmental Epidemiology & Toxicology
www.seet.dhh.louisiana.gov**

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Educating Families About the Dangers of Lead



What is lead?

Lead is a metal found in the earth. For years, lead was used in paint, gasoline, plumbing and many other products. Lead paint was banned from home use in 1978 due to the impact on public health. Children are more vulnerable to the adverse effects of lead than adults. Pregnant women, nursing women, women who are planning to become pregnant and parents of young children need to be aware of the options available for identifying and reducing lead hazards in the home.

How can I be exposed to lead?

The most common source of lead exposure in the United States is from lead-based paint found in homes and buildings built before 1978. Both inside and outside the home, deteriorating lead paint mixes with household dust and soil where it builds up on window sills and floors. Children become exposed by putting their hands or toys, which may be contaminated with lead dust, into their mouths.

Renovation of older homes that contain lead-based paint puts families at an increased risk of exposure. Renovation may put lead dust from paint into the air where it may be inhaled or ingested.

More than 90 percent of adults with elevated blood lead levels are exposed to lead-containing dust and fumes in the workplace. Occupations with the greatest risk of exposure include battery manufacturing, soldering, refinery workers, lead smelters, sandblasters and bridge and construction workers.

How can lead affect my health?

Lead poisoning can occur by swallowing or inhaling lead. Lead affects nearly every organ and system in the body, but the main target is the nervous system in both adults and children.

Young and unborn children are more vulnerable to the effects of lead. Harmful effects include premature births, reduced growth, learning difficulties and behavior problems. Some of these effects may persist beyond childhood.

Reported symptoms of lead poisoning in adults include decreased performance in nervous system

functioning, weakness in the extremities, increased blood pressure and anemia.

Lead poisoning is often a silent disease. The only way to determine lead poisoning is by testing for lead levels in blood.

What can I do to protect myself from lead?

Don't bring lead into your home. Workers in leaded environments often transport lead on shoes and work clothes into their homes. Shower and change work clothes and shoes after work and before playing with your children. Store soiled clothing and shoes in a plastic bag before washing and wash them separately from ALL other clothes. Run the empty washing machine again to rinse out the lead.

Keep a pre-1978 home in good repair. Pregnant women and children should leave the home during home repairs. Be careful that toddlers don't eat or play with paint chips, plaster, dust or dirt. Ask your landlord or realtor about lead before you rent or buy a home.

Wash away lead dust. Never vacuum as it spreads the lead dust. Wet mop floors and wet dust furnishings, baseboards and window sills before children reenter the home. Wash children's hands and toys often, even if they don't look dirty. Lead in dust enters a child's body easily, so care should be taken to prevent lead exposure.

How do I know if a building contains lead?

Three different approaches for testing lead are available for residential and commercial buildings, a lead-based paint inspection, a risk assessment and a lead hazard screen.

A **lead-based paint inspection** is a surface-by-surface investigation to determine whether there is lead-based paint on the premises and where it is located. An inspection may be particularly useful before renovation, repainting or paint removal (EPA, 2001).

A **risk assessment** is an on-site investigation to determine the presence, type, severity and location of lead-based paint hazards. The presence of deteriorated lead-based paint or high levels of lead in dust or soil pose potential hazards to children who may ingest lead inside or while

playing outside. A risk assessment includes a visual inspection to determine deteriorated paint locations and testing of the paint and dust of affected areas. Testing of bare soil from play areas and optional water testing may also occur (EPA, 2001).

A **lead hazard screen** is a limited version of a risk assessment for houses or commercial buildings with a low chance of lead risks. A lead hazard screen is only recommended for properties that are generally in good condition with little visible dust and with paint in good condition. In general, a lead hazard screen will be more useful in properties built after 1960 (EPA, 2001).

It is strongly recommended that testing be performed by a certified inspector or certified risk assessor. Certified inspectors can perform only lead-based paint inspections. Certified risk assessors can perform both risk assessments and lead hazard screens. The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality maintains a list of licensed lead professionals on their website at www.deq.state.la.us/portal/tabid/2884/Default.aspx

Lead-based paint abatement contractors must be licensed by the Louisiana State Licensing Board for Contractors (LSLBC). Consumers may search the LSLBC website at www.lslbc.louisiana.gov to determine if an abatement contractor is properly licensed.

What laws are in place to protect against lead poisoning?

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) 2008 Renovation, Repair and Painting Rule (RRP) requires that companies performing renovation, repair and painting projects that disturb lead-based paint in pre-1978 homes, child care facilities and schools be certified by the EPA and that they use EPA-trained, certified renovators to follow lead-safe work practices. Individuals can become certified renovators by taking an eight-hour training course from an EPA-approved training provider. The Louisiana State University Agriculture Center (LSU-Ag) provides RRP classes conducted by EPA-approved training providers. More information on classes can be located on the LaHouse website at www.lsuagcenter.com/en/family_home/home/la_house/