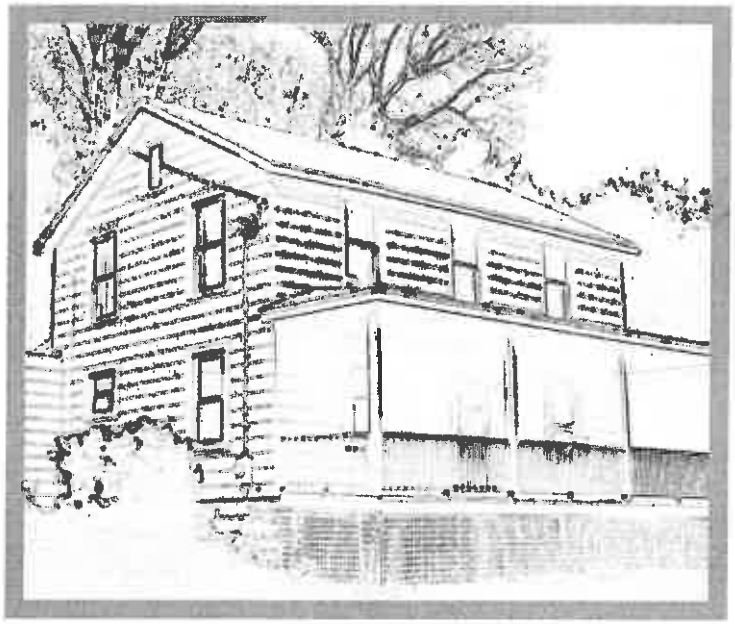
Homeowner Handbook

A Guide to Participating in the Mifflin County Housing Rehabilitation Program



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Homeowner Handbook

Developed by the Mifflin County Planning and Development Department

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The Purpose of this Handbook

This handbook was prepared as a reference manual to provide housing rehabilitation clients with information about the program. The handbook lists the criteria that must be met in order for a homeowner to be accepted into the program. It also describes the rights and responsibilities of the homeowner once they have been accepted into the program.

Please keep this document to refer to during the course of your participation in the program.

The Mifflin County Housing Rehabilitation Program

The Mifflin County Housing Rehabilitation Program provides grants for home repairs to income eligible homeowners. The County will pay for repairs that correct deficiencies in the home that are potential health and safety problems. Minor or cosmetic rehabilitation activities are not funded by this program. Investor-owned (rental) properties **are not** eligible for assistance through this program.

Project Administration

This project is being administered by the Mifflin County Planning and Development Department located in the Mifflin County Courthouse, 20 North Wayne Street, Lewistown, PA 17044. Contact us at (717) 242-0887 if you have any questions while participating in the program.

How to Determine If You Qualify For a Grant

1. You must own and occupy the structure you live in on a year-round basis for at least the previous twelve months.
2. If you are in the process of buying the structure, your payments must be current.
3. Taxes on your property (school, county & local) must be current in payment.
4. You must have homeowner's or fire insurance.
5. You cannot have more than $50,000 in liquid assets, such as savings, cash, or stocks and bonds ($75,000 if you are 65 years or older). Assets also include accounts you hold jointly with other members of your family. Your primary residence is not considered part of your liquid assets; however, any rental properties which you own

preceding your application date.

7. If your property is located in a flood zone (Zone A) you must have flood insurance. Some assistance in obtaining flood insurance may be available from the program.

Income Criteria For The Housing Rehabilitation Program

The income eligibility criteria considers your household size, household gross income, and liquid assets. The income eligibility chart below is provided to assist you in determining if your household is eligible for this program. The amount shown is the total amount earned by all members of the household within the most recent 12 month period. Income for this program includes wages, social security and pension payments, worker's compensation, disability payments and child support. Your exact eligibility will be established during the interview process.

Income Eligibility Chart

Family Size	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8+
Annual Income Limit	$35,400	$40,450	$45,500	$50,550	$54,600	$58,650	$62,700	$66,750

(*as of 5/2/2019*)

Dollar Limit on the Amount of the Rehabilitation Grant

Grants are limited to the lesser of $20,000 or 75% of the fair market value of the property (building and land) as determined by the County Tax Assessor or a recent appraisal of the property. In cases where lead based paint hazards have been identified, the costs of controlling theses hazards are not included in the grant limit.

Improvements That Can Be Completed under the Grant

Rehabilitation can be done only to a house which is defined as a structure designed for residential occupancy on a permanent foundation including stick built dwellings, log cabins, mobile and modular homes. Mobile homes must be tied down and wheels removed to be considered eligible. If the property is a duplex (double), only the half in which you reside can be rehabilitated.

Improvements That Can Be Completed under the Grant

Rehabilitation can be done only to a house which is defined as a structure designed for residential occupancy on a permanent foundation including stick built dwellings, log cabins, mobile and modular homes. Mobile homes must be tied down and wheels removed to be considered eligible. If the property is a duplex (double), only the half in which you reside can be rehabilitated.

All work will be completed according to Housing Quality Standards or other local standards. By following those standards, each participating homeowner will receive assistance in correcting major house problems that might endanger the health and safety of members of his/her family if left unrepaired. The program will not correct all problems with your house, but will attempt to address major health and safety issues as identified.

Note: It is **not** the policy of the program to undertake cosmetic rehabilitation for cosmetic sake.

Once you are accepted into the program, the rehabilitation specialist will discuss with you the specific repairs and improvements to be made to your house. The types of repairs that are possible under the program are listed below:

1. First Priority Repairs (Health & Safety)

Water and Sewage
Lead Based Paint Interim Controls
Electrical
Roofing
Heating
Foundations
Chimney
Plumbing & Bath
Porches

2. Secondary Priority Repairs

Windows & Doors
Insulation
Ceiling/ Walls/floors
Siding Repairs

First priority repairs will generally have precedence over secondary priority repairs. The County may, on occasion, undertake a repair not specifically identified on this list.

Home Maintenance Standards

When public funds are made available to correct serious health and safety deficiencies in a home, it is expected that your property will be maintained in a safe and sanitary condition, as well as being in compliance with any ordinance in effect in the municipality in which you reside.

At the time of your interview you will be asked to review and sign a maintenance agreement regarding blight conditions (see Appendix B), stating that you will comply with this agreement, and that you understand that no work will be initiated until such time as your property is found to be in accordance with this policy. If during the conduct of work it is determined that a homeowner has failed to comply with the agreement, rehabilitation work can be terminated at the discretion of the program administrator.

Three primary examples of conditions which would violate this blight agreement are:

1. Garbage and debris not being properly stored in containers and removed at least weekly;
2. Appliances dumped or abandoned on the property; and
3. Storage or deposit of two or more unregistered old or secondhand motor vehicles, no longer intended or in condition for legal use on the public highways, constituting an "automobile junkyard" as defined by Pennsylvania law.

Steps You Must You Go Through to Obtain a Grant

A homeowner who is interested in participating in the housing rehabilitation program must complete several steps to obtain assistance on his/her home. The steps are outlined below and will be covered in more detail as the project moves to completion and closeout.

Step 1 : Submit an Application -Applications are available in the Mifflin County Planning and Development Department on the second floor of the County Courthouse. Once you have submitted your application to this office, you will be placed on a waiting list. When you are selected as the next eligible applicant our office will contact you to set a time for an eligibility interview. There may be a considerable time delay before you receive a phone call. Our waiting list is currently two to three years.

Special Priority for Lead Exposed Young Children:

Suspected Lead Exposure: If you have very young children (age six or under) in your home and you have reason to suspect lead-based paint may be a hazard (for example, if your home was built before 1978 and has peeling paint), provisions can

be made under the program to conduct a risk assessment to determine whether lead exposure is a hazard in your home. If lead hazards are found, you will be asked to participate in the PA Department of Health Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program. We require that your child be tested for blood lead levels as a condition of participating in the Mifflin County Housing Rehabilitation Program. This test must be conducted before the rehabilitation work can be done on your home. Regardless of the results of the blood test, you will then be placed at the top of the rehabilitation waiting list.

Child Identified as Having Elevated Blood Lead Levels: If you have a child under the age of six who has been identified by the PA Department of Health as having high blood lead levels, and if you otherwise qualify for the program, you will be placed at the top of the waiting list.

Step 2: Eligibility Interview and Determination- The eligibility interview will be conducted at the Mifflin County Planning and Development Department office. All information provided to the office at this time is treated as confidential. The purpose of the interview is to determine income eligibility and ownership of the property. If your property is recorded in more than one name, both parties should be present.

Plan on spending at least one hour with us on this appointment. We will devote the time to completing the interview process, certifying your eligibility, and answering questions you may have about the project.

Bring the Following Documents With You at the Time of the Interview:

	IDENTIFICATION	
1	Social Security Cards	Your social security card and social security cards for all members of your household age 18 and over.
2	Birth Certificates	Birth certificates of all children (under 18) living with you.
	HOME OWNERSHIP	
3	Deed	The deed to your property showing you as owner of the property. You must have been an occupant of the property for 12 full months immediately preceding your application date. Receipts showing your loan payments are up to date. Payments must be current at the time of approval of your application by the County.

4	Taxes	Your paid property taxes for the current year and previous year. Taxes must be paid up to date.
5	Insurance	Copy or proof of fire insurance for the residence and flood insurance (Zone A), if applicable.
	INCOME AND ASSETS	
6	Employment	Copy of your latest pay stub and pay stubs for all employed occupants of your household. If you are self employed you will need to bring a copy of your schedule c or f forms from your federal income taxes return
7	Bank Deposits, Stocks, Etc.	Bank statements, names of banks, account numbers, and list of any other assets showing value. (Verification of asset levels)
8	Social Services	Your latest budget sheet, medicaid, or food stamp (welfare) authorization for the past 12 months.
9	Social Security and SSI	A copy or proof of the amount of the latest social security checks received by you or other members of your household. Also, a copy of the year end statement from social security.
10	Child Support	Any legal document for child support, separation papers, or divorce decree.
11	Unemployment Benefits	Bring verification of unemployment benefits received over the past 12 months.
12	Disability Benefits	Copy or proof of the amount of the latest disability checks received by you or any other members of your household.
13	Veterans Benefits	Copy or proof of the amount received by you or any members of your household during the past 12 months.
14	Pensions	Copy or proof of the amount received by you or any members of your household during the past 12 months.
15	Tax Returns	Copy of last year's tax return, and W-2 forms for any household members.

Note: We will make copies of the necessary items and return the originals to you. All information received is confidential.

Step 3: Lead-Based Paint Disclosure- If your home was built before 1978, it could contain lead-based paint. Lead-based paint is defined as paint or other surface coatings that contain lead equal to or greater than1.0 m/cm2, or 0.5% by weight. Surface coatings include paint, shellac, varnish or any

other coating including wall paper that covers painted surfaces.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires that all home rehabilitation projects that use federal funds take certain actions to control exposure to lead-based paint. The Mifflin County Housing Rehabilitation Program receives most of its funding from HUD and therefore must comply with HUD regulations on lead-based paint hazards.

After you have shown that you meet the income eligibility requirements, you will be given a pamphlet developed by the Environmental Protection Agency entitled *Protect Your Family From Lead in your Home*. You will be asked to sign a form acknowledging receipt of the pamphlet (see Appendices C and D).

Step 4: Inspection by the Rehabilitation Specialist -At the time of your appointment our rehabilitation specialist will arrange a date and time for a comprehensive inspection of your house, to write up the repairs needed, prepare cost estimates, and evaluate project feasibility. Either you or a designated adult representative must be on hand to accompany the rehabilitation specialist in conducting the inspection. (Refer to Step 2 on page 4 if you have children under the age of six at home.)

Step 5: Lead-Based Paint Testing and Hazard Risk Assessment - Your home will be tested for the presence of lead-based paint. We will hire a contractor who will come to your home and test all the surfaces where lead-based paint could have been applied and could be a health hazard. Again, either you or your designated adult representative must be on hand to accompany the contractor in conducting the inspection.

You will receive a copy of the contractor's report, and we will help you interpret the results. The results of the risk assessment will be incorporated in the bid specifications sent to our prospective contractors.

Step 6: Finding a Contractor - The Mifflin County Planning and Development Department does not designate the contractor. A notice will be sent to all contractors currently maintained on the County's contractor list. The notice will indicate the name and address of the property to be rehabilitated and the deadline for bid submissions. Any contractors interested will contact our office for a set of bid specifications. These bid specifications are prepared by the housing rehabilitation specialist and must be approved by the homeowner before the job is ready to bid.

Contractors must be registered and have certificates of insurance on file with the Mifflin County Planning and Development Department. If there is

a contractor not on the list who you would like to participate in the bidding process, he/she must file an application with this office and provide adequate proof of insurance and references in order to participate.

Prior to the contractor notification process, the housing rehabilitation project office will prepare the necessary documentation and mail out requests for bids (RFB's) to eligible firms. The bids will be returned to the Mifflin County Planning & Development Office where they will remain sealed until opened at the date and time designated. The contractor submitting the lowest bid and able to fulfill all the specifications stipulated will be considered fully qualified to receive the job. If a sufficient number of bids is not received, we are required to rebid the project.

If you prefer to choose any other contractor, returning a bid, you may do so but you must bear any additional costs over the low bidder. An exception to this provision would occur if the program administrator, in conjunction with the rehabilitation specialist and the homeowner, determines that the lowest bidder cannot complete the project in a timely manner.

Step 7: Review and Approval of Your Rehabilitation Project

The program rehabilitation specialist will look at total costs and determine project feasibility. The process also includes a review by the program administrator of the priority work items, both primary and secondary, prepared by the rehabilitation specialist, and the funds available per housing unit at the time. If the cost of the repairs exceeds the fair market value of the property or is more than the program can afford because of lead-based paint hazard interim control costs, then the staff must decide whether or not to proceed with the project.

If you are not accepted into the County Housing Rehabilitation Program at this point in the process, you will receive the results of the lead-based paint risk assessment and will not have to reimburse the County for the cost of these services.

Following this determination, the rehabilitation specialist will contact you by phone and inform you of whether your project has been approved, at what funding level, and the work priorities. It will be necessary for you to sign a contract with the selected contractor and a grant agreement.

If any work is done before the contractor receives the notice to proceed,

the program is not responsible for bearing any of those costs.

Construction/Work Phase

You can expect the rehabilitation specialist to make several site visits during this phase. He will be there to make work site inspections for quality of materials, workmanship, code violation corrections, contract compliance, etc. He will also be available to answer any construction questions you may have pertaining to the improvements being done on your home. The rehabilitation specialist will also determine at what points during the project that payments for work are appropriate.

No changes will be made in the contract specifications without the written approval of the program administrator.

Side deals or requests by the homeowner to have the contractor undertake additional work beyond the scope of the approved contract are not allowed while the project is ongoing. Side arrangements authorized by the homeowner without the written approval of the program administrator shall be grounds to terminate all rehabilitation work.

When the Contractor is in Your Home

When major repairs are made in a home, there are bound to be changes in the household's daily routine. There may be disruption in your schedule for several weeks or months before the project is complete. It is much easier if you and the contractor can agree on a mutual schedule.

It is your responsibility to make the work area accessible. In particular, make sure the work area is clear of furniture, appliances, clothes, and other objects which may interfere with the contractor's work. Contractors, however, will be held responsible for leaving their work area neat and clean at the end of each day, but they are not responsible for the general tidiness of your dwelling. Work will not commence if it is determined by the rehabilitation specialist that the work area is unsafe due to untidiness. Children and pets should be kept away from the work area.

Work will also cease if there is interference on the part of the homeowner, their children, or their pets which affects the contractor's ability to undertake the contract. A determination to stop all work will be made by the program administrator based upon consultation with the assigned rehabilitation specialist. As part of your contract, you will be asked to supply all utilities necessary for the performance of the contract work.

Designate a parking and unloading/material storage area for the contractors use. He may have several workers on site, as well as several deliveries to be made. If he requires more parking or storage area than you have available you may have to make arrangements with a neighbor. You are responsible for making these arrangements, not the contractor.

If the type of work to be done will be disruptive to your neighbors, such as noise or heavy equipment movement, you should speak to your neighbors ahead of time to avoid possible problems later.

Special Provisions for Lead-Based Paint Controls

There may be circumstances where the work required to reduce lead base paint hazards may require the temporary relocation of you and your family. In cases where renovation work prevents you from using your kitchen, bathroom or bedroom(s), you may be required to find temporary lodging until the work has been completed and has passed clearance testing. The specifics of any relocation will be discussed on a case by case basis with the program staff.

Within 15 days upon completion of the lead hazard reduction work (if any), you will be provided with a notice that summarizes the work performed, whether the work has passed the required clearance tests, and whether any lead-based paint remains on surfaces within your home.

Contractor Payment Schedule

Since many of our contractors are small businesses, prompt payment for services undertaken is critical. Consequently, partial payments to contractors are normally made within 15 working days following submission of a invoice. Your signature will be required for all payments made to the contractors.

Three payments are normally made under any one contract, according to the following schedule:

> Partial payment #1 -up to 25% of the contract based on the delivery of materials and the contractor initiating work on the site.
>
> Partial payment #2 -up to 65% of the contract based upon the work completed.
>
> Final payment -the third payment, the remaining 10%, shall be processed based upon the final inspection by the code enforcement officer, electric inspector, or

sanitary inspector, if applicable. Otherwise the final inspection by the rehabilitation specialist in conjunction with a signature of the homeowner shall initiate the final payment process. This payment is normally issued within 30 days of all required signatures.

Do not sign partial payment requests in advance unless you fully understand what you are signing. In no case should a final request for payment be signed in advance.

Final Inspection/Contract Completion

When the job is finished, the rehabilitation specialist will come to your home and conduct a final inspection. It is important that you are reasonably satisfied with the completed work before signing the final payment request. If at anytime you are not satisfied with the contractor's work performance you should notify the rehabilitation specialist as soon as possible.

Failure to meet the terms of the contract by the contractor may lead to cancellation of the contract by the program administrator after consultation with the homeowner.

Disputes Between the Homeowner and the Contractor

Disputes between the homeowner and the contractor regarding materials used, workmanship, or the payment for services shall be resolved by the program administrator. If, upon hearing the program administrator's decision you are still not satisfied, then any complaints will be forwarded to the Mifflin County Planning Commission's Housing Rehabilitation Committee for further consideration.

If the dispute is not then resolved, the homeowner has the right to request an independent arbitrator. Any costs incurred for an independent arbitrator shall be shared between the contractor and the homeowner.

A *Contractor's Guidebook* has been provided to registered contractors. Each guidebook contains information a contractor needs to know about the housing rehabilitation program. It also contains a section regarding their working relationship with homeowners.

Payback Requirement if You Sell the Property, Transfer Title To, or Move From the Property

Upon completion of the rehabilitation on your property, a judgment will be filed in the Mifflin County Prothonotary's Office against your property for the total amount of your grant contract. Five years from the date of completion, the Mifflin County Planning & Development Department staff will remove the judgement from your property. A letter will be sent to you when the judgment has been "satisfied in full."

There are three things that you can do to that would result in you having to repay to the County the home repair grant funds. Payback could be required if, within the five years after completion of the work, you:

1. Sell or transfer title of your home,
2. Move the home to a location outside of the County (usually applies only to a mobile home); or
3. Move out of your house during the five year period immediately following the project completion date.

Recapture of grant monies will take place according to the schedule listed below. Completion of work is defined as the date in which the work has received a final inspection and has been determined to be satisfactorily completed.

If Sold, Transferred, or Vacated Within:	% of Grant Recaptured
I st Year Following Project Completion	100%
2nd Year Following Project Completion	80%
3rd Year Following Project Completion	60%
4th Year Following Project Completion	40%
5th Year Following Project Completion	20%
Thereafter	0%

If you move out of your home before the end of the grant payback period, you will not have fulfilled your part of the agreement for which funds were provided. Because circumstances vary considerably with each situation, each case will be reviewed independently to determine payback amounts. Therefore, it is important for you to keep the Mifflin County Planning & Development Department informed if your circumstances change.

Appendix A

GRANT AGREEMENT

APPLICANT: _____

ADDRESS: _____

_____

CASE NUMBER: _____

I/We hereby apply for a grant required to complete rehabilitation work to meet minimum housing quality standards, as specified by the Department of Community & Economic Development, for my property in _____, Mifflin County, Pennsylvania. I/We have approved the specifications and understand the scope of the work to be performed by the Contractor(s),_____ in the amount of $_____. I/We further request that the Mifflin County Planning and Development Department (hereinafter referred to as the "Planning Office") manage the grant under the terms of this AGREEMENT.

The Planning Office, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, or their agents or representatives, shall have the right to enter the rehabilitated property at any time within five (5) years of completion for the purpose of reviewing the completed rehabilitation work or verifying owner occupancy.

Repayment of this grant shall not be required so long as the property,_____ _____is in the name of the undersigned, and/or in the event that the structure (located on the property) which is to be rehabilitated is a mobile home, trailer or modular home and said structure is not moved to a location outside of Mifflin County, PA. If the aforesaid property is in the name of the undersigned continuously for a period of five (5) years from the date of completion of the work, hereof, and is occupied continuously by the undersigned for that period of time, or by the survivor of them, and/or is not moved outside of Mifflin County then the Grant amount provided herein shall not be repaid to the County of Mifflin, PA. Completion of work is defined as the date in which the work has received a final inspection and has been determined to be satisfactorily completed.

However, if title to the subject property is transferred within the said five (5) year period or if the structure is moved outside of the County within said five (5) year period then a pro rated portion of the grant shall be repaid in the following amounts:

SALE OR MOVEMENT:

Before the end of the first year	***100% to be repaid***
Before the end of the second year	***80% to be repaid***
Before the end of the third year	***60% to be repaid***
Before the end of the fourth year	***40% to be repaid***
Before the end of the fifth year	***20% to be repaid***
After the fifth year, no repayment is necessary	

The undersigned does hereby authorize and empower the Prothonotary or any attorney of any court of record within the United States to appear for and on behalf of the undersigned to confess judgement against the undersigned in favor of the County of Mifflin, with or without averment of default or declaration filed, for said sum or sums as may be payable by reason of the terms of this Agreement with costs and sums as may be payable by reason of the terms of this Agreement with costs and attorney's fee of 15%. With respect to any judgment entered herein, the undersigned does waive any right of exemption or stay of execution and does release all errors in said proceedings.

"I, _____, applicant herein, verify that the statements made in this application are true and correct, to the best of my knowledge, information and belief. I understand that false statements herein are made subject to the penalties of 18 Pa. C.S.A. Section 4904, relating to unsworn falsification to authorities."

"The existence of prior criminal convictions of any owner/applicant may be considered and evaluated by the grant administrator as a factor in determining eligibility for Community Development funds." I have no previous felony or misdemeanor convictions in this or any other jurisdiction, except:

_____

Property owner signature_____ Date_____
Property owner signature_____ Date_____
The Review Board hereby approves the requested grant. We further authorize the Planning Office to approve any documented change orders needed for this application.

Signature_____ Date_____

Signature_____ Date_____

Signature_____ Date_____

(Appendix B)

MAINTENANCE AGREEMENT

The following policy, which was approved by the Housing Rehabilitation Review Committee on May 28, 1998, and is effective immediately, is furnished for your information:

> "Properties eligible for housing rehabilitation assistance funded by, or administered by, the Mifflin County Planning & Development Department shall be maintained in a safe and sanitary condition, free from an accumulation of trash, debris, blighting influence, and vermin infestation, inclusive of the storage and concealment of equipment, vehicles, toys, building materials, tools and other household accessories. Failure by recipients to maintain their property in such a manner will be just cause for immediate termination of the Mifflin County Housing Rehabilitation Project upon their property, and grounds for immediate repayment of all grant and/or loan funds expended thereon.
>
> Specific examples include: junk cars, two or more unregistered vehicles; old refrigerators and stoves; and garbage on the property."

I have read the above and do understand that no work will be initiated on my property until such time as the Housing Rehabilitation Specialist has inspected said property and recommends approval based upon his findings. I further understand that I must maintain my property, in accordance with the above policy, in a satisfactory manner throughout the work phase and throughout the grant payback agreement phase of the program.

By my signature I agree to maintain my property, as stated above, and to repay all grant money if, at any time, the Housing Rehabilitation Review Committee makes it known To me any dissatisfaction with the condition of said property.

_____

Homeowner's Signature

_____

Date
Application ID:

_____

Witness

_____

Date

Renovate Right

Important Lead Hazard Information for Families, Child Care Providers and Schools

It's the Law!

Federal law requires that individuals receive certain information before renovating six square feet or more of painted surfaces in a room for interior projects or more than twenty square feet of painted surfaces for exterior projects in housing, child care facilities and schools built before 1978.

- Homeowners and tenants: renovators must give you this pamphlet before starting work.
- Child care facilities, including preschools and kindergarten classrooms, and the families of children under the age of six that attend those facilities: renovators must provide a copy of this pamphlet to child-care facilities and general renovation information to families whose children attend those facilities.

Also, beginning April 2010, federal law will require contractors that disturb lead-based paint in homes, child care facilities and schools, built before 1978 to be certified and follow specific work practices to prevent lead contamination. Therefore beginning in April 2010, ask to see your contractor's certification.

Renovating, Repairing, or Painting?

- Is your home, your building, or the child care facility or school your children attend, being renovated, repaired, or painted?
- Was your home, your building, or the child care facility or school your children under age 6 attend, built before 1978?

If the answer to these questions is YES, there are a few important things you need to know about lead-based paint.

This pamphlet provides basic facts about lead and information about lead safety when work is being done in your home, your building or the childcare facility or school your children attend.

The Facts About Lead

- Lead can affect children's brains and developing nervous systems, causing reduced IQ, learning disabilities, and behavioral problems. Lead is also harmful to adults.
- Lead in dust is the most common way people are exposed to lead. People can also get lead in their bodies from lead in soil or paint chips. Lead dust is often invisible.
- Lead-based paint was used in more than 38 million homes until it was banned for residential use in 1978.
- Projects that disturb lead-based paint can create dust and endanger you and your family. Don't let this happen to you. Follow the practices described in this pamphlet to protect you and your family.

Who Should Read This Pamphlet?

This pamphlet is for you if you:

- Reside in a home built before 1978,
- Own or operate a child care facility, including preschools and kindergarten classrooms, built before 1978, or
- Have a child under six who attends a child care facility built before 1978.

You will learn:

- Basic facts about lead and your health,
- How to choose a contractor, if you are a property owner,
- What tenants, and parents/guardians of a child in a child care facility or school should consider,
- How to prepare for the renovation or repair job,
- What to look for during the job and after the job is done,
- Where to get more information about lead.

This pamphlet is not for:

- **Abatement projects.** Abatement is a set of activities aimed specifically at eliminating lead or lead hazards. EPA has regulations for certification and training of abatement professionals. If your goal is to eliminate lead or lead hazards, contact the National Lead Information Center at **1-800-424-LEAD (5323)** for more information.
- **"Do-it-yourself" projects.** If you plan to do renovation work yourself, this document is a good start, but you will need more information to complete the work safely. Call the National Lead Information Center at **1-800-424-LEAD (5323)** and ask for more information on how to work safely in a home with lead-based paint.
- **Contractor education.** Contractors who want information about working safely with lead should contact the National Lead Information Center at **1-800-424-LEAD (5323)** for information about courses and resources on lead-safe work practices.

Lead and Your Health

Lead is especially dangerous to children under six years of age.

Lead can affect children's brains and developing nervous systems, causing:

- Reduced IQ and learning disabilities.
- Behavior problems.

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

Lead is also harmful to adults. In adults, low levels of lead can pose many dangers, including:

- High blood pressure and hypertension.
- Pregnant women exposed to lead can transfer lead to their fetus.

Lead gets into the body when it is swallowed or inhaled.

- People, especially children, can swallow lead dust as they eat, play, and do other normal hand-to-mouth activities.
- People may also breathe in lead dust or fumes if they disturb lead-based paint. People who sand, scrape, burn, brush or blast or otherwise disturb lead-based paint risk unsafe exposure to lead.

What should I do if I am concerned about my family's exposure to lead?

- Call your local health department for advice on reducing and eliminating exposures to lead inside and outside your home, child care facility or school.
- Always use lead-safe work practices when renovation or repair will disturb lead-based paint.
- A blood test is the only way to find out if you or a family member already has lead poisoning. Call your doctor or local health department to arrange for a blood test.

For more information about the health effects of exposure to lead, visit the EPA lead website at **www.epa.gov/lead/pubs/leadinfo.htm** or call **1-800-424-LEAD (5323).**

There are other things you can do to protect your family everyday.

- Regularly clean floors, window sills, and other surfaces.
- Wash children's hands, bottles, pacifiers, and toys often.
- Make sure children eat a healthy, nutritious diet consistent with the USDA's dietary guidelines, that helps protect children from the effects of lead.
- Wipe off shoes before entering house.

Where Does the Lead Come From?

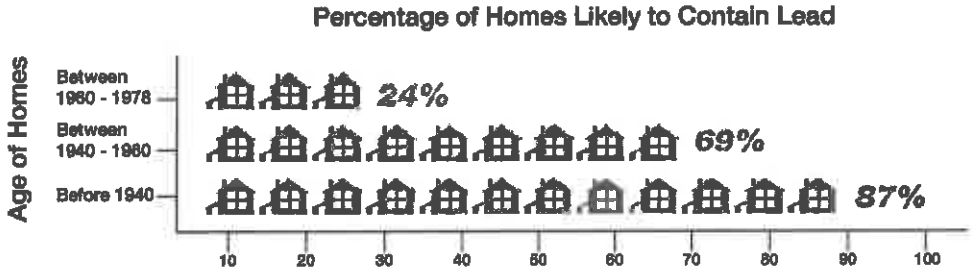
Dust is the main problem. The most common way to get lead in the body is from dust. Lead dust comes from deteriorating lead-based paint and lead-contaminated soil that gets tracked into your home. This dust may accumulate to unsafe levels. Then, normal hand to-mouth activities, like playing and eating (especially in young children), move that dust from surfaces like floors and windowsills into the body.

Home renovation creates dust. Common renovation activities like sanding, cutting, and demolition can create hazardous lead dust and chips.

Proper work practices protect you from the dust. The key to protecting yourself and your family during a renovation, repair or painting job is to use lead-safe work practices such as containing dust inside the work area, using dust-minimizing work methods, and conducting a careful cleanup, as described in this pamphlet.

Other sources of lead. Remember, lead can also come from outside soil, your water, or household items (such as lead-glazed pottery and lead crystal). Contact the National Lead Information Center at **1-800-424-LEAD (5323)** for more information on these sources.

Checking Your Home for Lead-Based Paint



Older homes, child care facilities, and schools are more likely to contain lead-based paint. Homes may be single-family homes or apartments. They may be private, government-assisted, or public housing. Schools are preschools and kindergarten classrooms. They may be urban, suburban, or rural.

You have the following options:

You may decide to assume your home, child care facility, or school contains lead. Especially in older homes and buildings, you may simply want to assume lead-based paint is present and follow the lead-safe work practices described in this brochure during the renovation, repair, or painting job.

You or your contractor may also test for lead using a lead test kit. Test kits must be EPA-approved and are available at hardware stores. They include detailed instructions for their use.

You can hire a certified professional to check for lead-based paint. These professionals are certified risk assessors or inspectors, and can determine if your home has lead or lead hazards.

- A certified inspector or risk assessor can conduct an inspection telling you whether your home, or a portion of your home, has lead-based paint and where it is located. This will tell you the areas in your home where lead-safe work practices are needed.
- A certified risk assessor can conduct a risk assessment telling you if your home currently has any lead hazards from lead in paint, dust, or soil. The risk assessor can also tell you what actions to take to address any hazards.
- For help finding a certified risk assessor or inspector, call the National Lead Information Center at **1-800-424-LEAD (5323).**

For Property Owners

You have the ultimate responsibility for the safety of your family, tenants, or children in your care. This means properly preparing for the renovation and keeping persons out of the work area (see p. 8). It also means ensuring the contractor uses lead-safe work practices.

Beginning April 2010, federal law will require that contractors performing renovation, repair and painting projects that disturb lead-based paint in homes, child care facilities, and schools built before 1978 to be certified and follow specific work practices to prevent lead contamination.

Until contractors are required to be certified, make sure your contractor can explain clearly the details of the job and how the contractor will minimize lead hazards during the work.

- Ask if the contractor is trained to perform lead-safe work practices and to see a copy of their training certificate.
- Ask them what lead-safe methods they will use to set up and perform the job in your home, child care facility or school.
- Ask if the contractor is aware of the lead renovation rules. For example, contractors are required to provide you with a copy of this pamphlet before beginning work. A sample pre-renovation disclosure form is provided at the back of this pamphlet. Contractors may use this form to make documentation of compliance easier.
- Ask for references from at least three recent jobs involving homes built before 1978, and speak to each personally.

Always make sure the contract is clear about how the work will be set up, performed, and cleaned.

- Share the results of any previous lead tests with the contractor.
- Even before contractors are required to be certified you should specify in the contract that they follow the work practices described on pages 9 and 10 of this brochure.
- The contract should specify which parts of your home are part of the work area and specify which lead-safe work practices should be used in those areas. Remember, your contractor should confine dust and debris to the work area and should minimize spreading that dust to other areas of the home.
- The contract should also specify that the contractor clean the work area, verify that it was cleaned adequately, and re-clean it if necessary.

Once these practices are required, if you think a worker is failing to do what they are supposed to do or is doing something that is unsafe, you should:

- Direct the contractor to comply with the contract requirements,
- Call your local health or building department, or
- Call EPA's hotline **1-800-424-LEAD (5323)**.

For Tenants, and Families of Children Under Age Six in Child Care Facilities and Schools

You play an important role ensuring the ultimate safety of your family.

This means properly preparing for the renovation and staying out of the work area (see p. 8).

Beginning April 2010, federal law will require that contractors performing renovation, repair and painting projects that disturb lead-based paint in homes, child care facilities and schools built before 1978 that a child under age six visits regularly to be certified and follow specific work practices to prevent lead contamination.

The law will require anyone hired to renovate, repair, or do painting preparation work on a property built before 1978 to follow the steps described on pages 9 and 10 unless the area where the work will be done contains no lead-based paint.

Once these practices are required, if you think a worker is failing to do what they are supposed to do or is doing something that is unsafe, you should:

- Contact your landlord,
- Call your local health or building department, or
- Call EPA's hotline 1-800-424-LEAD (5323).

If you are concerned about lead hazards left behind after the job is over, you can check the work yourself (see page 10).

If your property receives housing assistance from HUD (or a state or local agency that uses HUD funds), you must follow the more stringent requirements of HUD's Lead-safe Housing Rule and the ones described in this pamphlet.

Preparing for a Renovation

The work areas should not be accessible to occupants while the work occurs. The rooms or areas where work is being done may be blocked off or sealed with plastic sheeting to contain any dust that is generated. The contained area will not be available to you until the work in that room or area is complete, cleaned thoroughly, and the containment has been removed. You will not have access to some areas and should plan accordingly.

You may need:

- Alternative bedroom, bathroom, and kitchen arrangements if work is occurring in those areas of your home.
- A safe place for pets because they, too, can be poisoned by lead and can track lead dust into other areas of the home.
- A separate pathway for the contractor from the work area to the outside, in order to bring materials in and out of the home. Ideally, it should not be through the same entrance that your family uses.
- A place to store your furniture. All furniture and belongings may have to be moved from the work area while the work is done. Items that can't be moved, such as cabinets, should be wrapped in heavy duty plastic.
- To turn off forced-air heating and air conditioning systems while work is done. This prevents dust from spreading through vents from the work area to the rest of your home. Consider how this may affect your living arrangements.

You may even want to move out of your home temporarily while all or parts of the work are being done.

Child care facilities and schools may want to consider alternative accommodations for children and access to necessary facilities.

During the Work

Beginning April 2010, federal law will require contractors that are hired to perform renovation, repair and painting projects in homes, child care facilities, and schools built before 1978 that disturb lead-based paint to be certified and follow specific work practices to prevent lead contamination.

Even before contractors are required to be certified and follow specific work practices, the contractor should follow these three simple procedures, described below:

1. **Contain the work area.** The area should be contained so that dust and debris do not escape from that area. Warning signs should be put up and heavy-duty plastic and tape should be used as appropriate to:
   - Cover the floors and any furniture that cannot be moved.
   - Seal off doors and heating and cooling system vents.

These will help prevent dust or debris from getting outside the work area.

2. **Minimize dust.** There is no way to eliminate dust, but some methods make less dust than others. For example, using water to mist areas before sanding or scraping; scoring paint before separating components; and prying and pulling apart components instead of breaking them are techniques that generate less dust than alternatives. Some methods generate large amounts of lead-contaminated dust and should not be used. They are:
   - Open flame burning or torching.
   - Sanding, grinding, planing, needle gunning, or blasting with power tools and equipment not equipped with a shroud and HEPA vacuum attachment.
   - Using a heat gun at temperatures greater than 1100°F.
3. **Clean up thoroughly.** The work area should be cleaned up daily to keep it as clean as possible. When all the work is done, the area should be cleaned up using special cleaning methods before taking down any plastic that isolates the work area from the rest of the home. The special cleaning methods should include:
   - Using a HEPA vacuum to clean up dust and debris on all surfaces, followed by
   - Wet mopping with plenty of rinse water.

When the final cleaning is done, look around. There should be no dust, paint chips, or debris in the work area. If you see any dust, paint chips, or debris, the area should be re-cleaned.

For Property Owners: After the Work is Done

When all the work is finished, you will want to know if your home, child care facility, or school has been cleaned up properly. Here are some ways to check.

Even before contractors are required to be certified and follow specific work practices, you should:

Ask about your contractor's final cleanup check. Remember, lead dust is often invisible to the naked eye. It may still be present even if you cannot see it. The contractor should use disposable cleaning cloths to wipe the floor of the work area and compare them to a cleaning verification card to determine if the work area was adequately cleaned.

To order a cleaning verification card and detailed instructions visit the EPA lead website at **www.epa.gov/lead** or contact the National Lead Information Center at **1-800-424-LEAD (5323)** or visit their website at **www.epa.gov/lead/nlic.htm**.

You also may choose to have a lead-dust test. Lead-dust tests are wipe samples sent to a laboratory for analysis.

- You can specify in your contract that a lead-dust test will be done. In this case, make it clear who will do the testing.
- Testing should be done by a lead professional.

If you choose to do the testing, some EPA-recognized lead laboratories will send you a kit that allows you to collect samples and send them back to the lab for analysis.

Contact the National Lead Information Center at **1-800-424-LEAD (5323)** for lists of qualified professionals and EPA-recognized lead labs.

If your home, child care facility, or school fails the dust test, the area should be re-cleaned and tested again.

Where the project is done by contract, it is a good idea to specify in the contract that the contractor is responsible for re-cleaning if the home, child care facility, or school fails the test.

For Additional Information

You may need additional information on how to protect yourself and your children while a job is going on in your home, your building, or childcare facility.

- **The National Lead Information Center** at **1-800-424-LEAD (5323)** or **www.epa.gov/lead/nlic.htm** can tell you how to contact your state, local, and/or tribal programs or get general information about lead poisoning prevention.
  - State and tribal lead poisoning prevention or environmental protection programs can provide information about lead regulations and potential sources of financial aid for reducing lead hazards. If your State or local government has requirements more stringent than those described in this pamphlet, you must follow those requirements.
  - Local building code officials can tell you the regulations that apply to the renovation work that you are planning.
  - State, county, and local health departments can provide information about local programs, including assistance for lead-poisoned children and advice on ways to get your home checked for lead.

- The **National Lead Information Center** can also provide a variety of resource materials, including the following guides to lead-safe work practices. Many of these materials are also available at **www.epa.gov/lead/pubs/brochure.htm.**
  - Lead Paint Safety, a Field Guide for Painting, Home Maintenance, and Renovation Work
  - Protect Your Family from Lead in Your Home
  - Lead in Your Home: A Parent's Reference Guide

For the hearing impaired, call the Federal Information Relay Service at 1-800-877-8339 to access any of the phone numbers in this brochure.

EPA Contacts

EPA Regional Offices

EPA addresses residential lead hazards through several different regulations. EPA requires training and certification for conducting abatement, education about hazards associated with renovations, disclosure about known lead paint and lead hazards in housing, and sets lead-paint hazard standards.

Your Regional EPA Office can provide further information regarding lead safety and lead protection programs at **www.epa.gov/lead**.

Region 1
(Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont)
Regional Lead Contact
U.S. EPA Region 1
Suite 1100
One Congress Street
Boston, MA 02114-2023
(888) 372-7341

Region 2
(New Jersey, New York, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands)
Regional Lead Contact
U.S. EPA Region 2
2890 Woodbridge Avenue
Building 205, Mail Stop 225
Edison, NJ 08837-3679
(732) 321-6671

Region 3
(Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Washington, DC, West Virginia)
Regional Lead Contact
U.S. EPA Region 3
1650 Arch Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103-2029
(215) 814-5000

Region 4
(Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee)
Regional Lead Contact
U.S. EPA Region 4
61 Forsyth Street, SW
Atlanta, GA 30303-8960
(404) 562-9900

Region 5
(Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, Wisconsin)
Regional Lead Contact
U.S. EPA Region 5
77 West Jackson Boulevard
Chicago, IL 60604-3507
(312) 886-6003

Region 6
(Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas)
Regional Lead Contact
U.S. EPA Region 6
1445 Ross Avenue, 12th Floor
Dallas, TX 75202-2733
(214) 665-6444

Region 7
(Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska)
Regional Lead Contact
U.S. EPA Region 7
901 N. 5th Street
Kansas City, KS 66101
(913) 551-7003

Region 8
(Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, Wyoming)
Regional Lead Contact
U.S. EPA Region 8
1595 Wynkoop Street
Denver, CO 80202
(303) 312-6312

Region 9
(Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada)
Regional Lead Contact
U.S. Region 9
75 Hawthorne Street
San Francisco, CA 94105
(415) 947-8021

Region 10
(Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, Washington)
Regional Lead Contact
U.S. EPA Region 10
1200 Sixth Avenue
Seattle, WA 98101-1128
(206) 553-1200

Other Federal Agencies

CPSC
The Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) protects the public from the unreasonable risk of injury or death from 15,000 types of consumer products under the agency's jurisdiction. CPSC warns the public and private sectors to reduce exposure to lead and increase consumer awareness. Contact CPSC for further information regarding regulations and consumer product safety.

CPSC
4330 East West Highway
Bethesda, MD 20814
Hotline 1-(800) 638-2772
www.cpsc.gov

CDC Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Branch
The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) assists state and local childhood lead poisoning prevention programs to provide a scientific basis for policy decisions, and to ensure that health issues are addressed in decisions about housing and the environment. Contact CDC Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program for additional materials and links on the topic of lead.

CDC Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Branch
4770 Buford Highway, MS F-40
Atlanta, GA 30341
(770) 488-3300
www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead

HUD Office of Healthy Homes and Lead Hazard Control
The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) provides funds to state and local governments to develop cost-effective ways to reduce lead-based paint hazards in America's privately-owned low-income housing. In addition, the office enforces the rule on disclosure of known lead paint and lead hazards in housing, and HUD's lead safety regulations in HUD-assisted housing, provides public outreach and technical assistance, and conducts technical studies to help protect children and their families from health and safety hazards in the home. Contact the HUD Office of Healthy Homes and Lead Hazard Control for information on lead regulations, outreach efforts, and lead hazard control research and outreach grant programs.

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
Office of Healthy Homes
and Lead Hazard Control
451 Seventh Street, SW, Room 8236
Washington, DC 20410-3000
HUD's Lead Regulations Hotline
(202) 402-7698
www.hud.gov/offices/lead/d

Current Sample Pre-Renovation Form

Effective until April 2010.

Confirmation of Receipt of Lead Pamphlet

- ❑ I have received a copy of the pamphlet, *Renovate Right: Important Lead Hazard Information for Families, Child Care Providers and Schools* informing me of the potential risk of the lead hazard exposure from renovation activity to be performed in my dwelling unit. I received this pamphlet before the work began.

Printed name of recipient _____ Date _____

Signature of recipient _____

Self-Certification Option (for tenant-occupied dwellings only) —
If the lead pamphlet was delivered but a tenant signature was not obtainable, you may check the appropriate box below.

- ❑ **Refusal to sign** — I certify that I have made a good faith effort to deliver the pamphlet, *Renovate Right: Important Lead Hazard Information for Families, Child Care Providers and Schools*, to the rental dwelling unit listed below at the date and time indicated and that the occupant refused to sign the confirmation of receipt. I further certify that I have left a copy of the pamphlet at the unit with the occupant.
- ❑ **Unavailable for signature** — I certify that I have made a good faith effort to deliver the pamphlet, *Renovate Right: Important Lead Hazard Information for Families, Child Care providers and Schools*, to the rental dwelling unit listed below and that the occupant was unavailable to sign the confirmation of receipt. I further certify that I have left a copy of the pamphlet at the unit by sliding it under the door.

Printed name of person certifying _____ Attempted delivery date and time lead pamphlet delivery _____

Signature of person certifying lead pamphlet delivery _____

_____

_____

Unit Address

Note Regarding Mailing Option — As an alternative to delivery in person, you may mail the lead pamphlet to the owner and/or tenant. Pamphlet must be mailed at least 7 days before renovation (Document with a certificate of mailing from the post office).

Future Sample Pre-Renovation Form

This sample form may be used by renovation firms to document compliance with the Federal pre-renovation education and renovation, repair, and painting regulations.

Occupant Confirmation

Pamphlet Receipt

- ❑ I have received a copy of the lead hazard information pamphlet informing me of the potential risk of the lead hazard exposure from renovation activity to be performed in my dwelling unit. I received this pamphlet before the work began.

Owner-occupant Opt-out Acknowledgment

- ❑ (A) I confirm that I own and live in this property, that no child under the age of 6 resides here, that no pregnant woman resides here, and that this property is not a child-occupied facility.

  Note: A child resides in the primary residence of his or her custodial parents, legal guardians, foster parents, or informal caretaker if the child lives and sleeps most of the time at the caretaker's residence.

  Note: A child-occupied facility is a pre-1978 building visited regularly by the same child, under 6 years of age, on at least two different days within any week, for at least 3 hours each day, provided that the visits total at least 60 hours annually.

If Box A is checked, check either Box B or Box C, but not both.

- ❑ (B) I request that the renovation firm use the lead-safe work practices required by EPA's Renovation, Repair, and Painting Rule; or
- ❑ (C) I understand that the firm performing the renovation will not be required to use the lead-safe work practices required by EPA's Renovation, Repair, and Painting Rule.

_____

Printed Name of Owner-occupant

_____ _____

Signature of Owner-occupant Signature Date

Renovator's Self Certification Option (for tenant-occupied dwellings only)

Instructions to Renovator: If the lead hazard information pamphlet was delivered but a tenant signature was not obtainable, you may check the appropriate box below.

- ❑ **Declined** – I certify that I have made a good faith effort to deliver the lead hazard information pamphlet to the rental dwelling unit listed below at the date and time indicated and that the occupant declined to sign the confirmation of receipt. I further certify that I have left a copy of the pamphlet at the unit with the occupant.
- ❑ **Unavailable for signature** – I certify that I have made a good faith effort to deliver the lead hazard information pamphlet to the rental dwelling unit listed below and that the occupant was unavailable to sign the confirmation of receipt. I further certify that I have left a copy of the pamphlet at the unit by sliding it under the door or by (fill in how pamphlet was left). _____

_____ _____

Printed Name of Person Certifying Delivery Attempted Delivery Date

_____

Signature of Person Certifying Lead Pamphlet Delivery

_____

_____

Unit Address

Note Regarding Mailing Option — As an alternative to delivery in person, you may mail the lead hazard information pamphlet to the owner and/or tenant. Pamphlet must be mailed at least seven days before renovation. Mailing must be documented by a certificate of mailing from the post office.

Note: This form is not effective until April 2010.

(Appendix C)

Receipt of Lead Based Paint Pamphlet

I, _____ , residing at _____

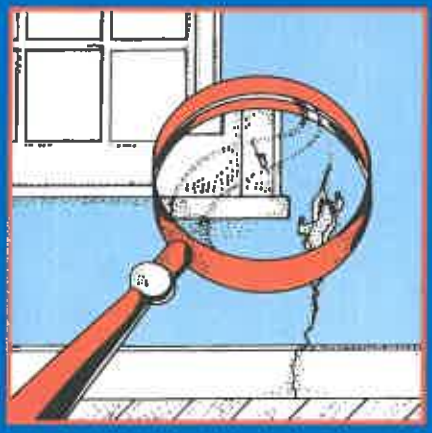
_____ , acknowledge the receipt of the "Protect Your Family From Lead In Your Home"pamphlet, EPA747-K-99-001, April 1999. This pamphlet has been provided to me in conjunction with the Mifflin County Housing Rehabilitation Program.

_____
Homeowner

_____
Homeowner

_____
Witness

_____
Date



Protect Your Family From Lead In Your Home

EPA United States Environmental Protection Agency

United States Consumer Product Safety Commission

United States Department of Housing and Urban Development

Are You Planning To Buy, Rent, or Renovate a Home Built Before 1978?

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

OWNERS, BUYERS, and RENTERS are encouraged to check for lead (see page 6) before renting, buying or renovating pre-1978 housing.

Federal law requires that individuals receive certain information before renting, buying, or renovating pre-1978 housing:

LANDLORDS have to disclose known information on lead-based paint and lead-based paint hazards before leases take effect. Leases must include a disclosure about lead-based paint.

SELLERS have to disclose known information on lead-based paint and lead-based paint hazards before selling a house. Sales contracts must include a disclosure about lead-based paint. Buyers have up to 10 days to check for lead.

RENOVATORS disturbing more than 2 square feet of painted surfaces have to give you this pamphlet before starting work.

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 who 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 containing lead.

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.

Lead Gets in the Body in Many Ways

Childhood lead poisoning remains a major environmental health problem in the U.S.

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

People can get lead in their body if they:

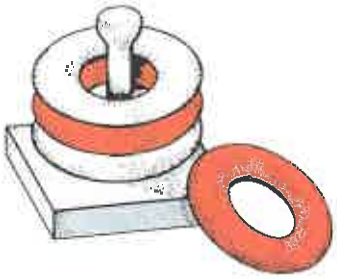
- Breathe in lead dust (especially during renovations that disturb painted surfaces).
- Put their hands or other objects covered with lead dust in their mouths.
- Eat paint chips or soil that contains lead.

Lead is even more dangerous to children under the age of 6:

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

Lead is also dangerous to women of childbearing age:

- Women with a high lead level in their system prior to pregnancy would expose a fetus to lead through the placenta during fetal development.



Lead's Effects

It is important to know that even exposure to low levels of lead can severely harm children.

In children, lead can cause:

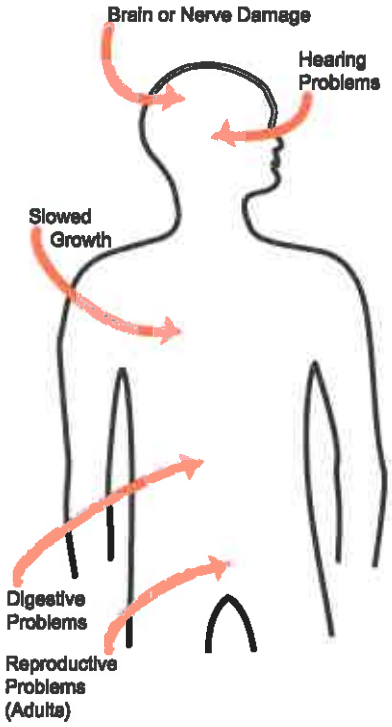
- Nervous system and kidney damage.
- Learning disabilities, attention deficit disorder, and decreased intelligence.
- Speech, language, and behavior problems.
- Poor muscle coordination.
- Decreased muscle and bone growth.
- Hearing damage.

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

Although children are especially susceptible to lead exposure, lead can be dangerous for adults too.

In adults, lead can cause:

- Increased chance of illness during pregnancy.
- Harm to a fetus, including brain damage or death.
- Fertility problems (in men and women).
- High blood pressure.
- Digestive problems.
- Nerve disorders.
- Memory and concentration problems.
- Muscle and joint pain.



Lead affects the body in many ways.

Where Lead-Based Paint Is Found

In general, the older your home, the more likely it has lead-based paint.

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.)

Checking Your Family for Lead

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

To reduce your child's exposure to lead, get your child checked, have your home tested (especially if your home has paint in poor condition and was built before 1978), and fix any hazards you may have. Children's blood lead levels tend to increase rapidly from 6 to 12 months of age, and tend to peak at 18 to 24 months of age.

Consult your doctor for advice on testing your children. A simple blood test can detect high levels of lead. Blood tests are usually recommended for:

- Children at ages 1 and 2.
- Children or other family members who have been exposed to high levels of lead.
- Children who should be tested under your state or local health screening plan.

Your doctor can explain what the test results mean and if more testing will be needed.

Identifying Lead Hazards

Lead-based paint is usually not a hazard if it is in good condition, and it is not on an impact or friction surface, like a window. It is defined by the federal government as paint with lead levels greater than or equal to 1.0 milligram per square centimeter, or more than 0.5% by weight.

Lead from paint chips, which you can see, and lead dust, which you can't always see, can both be serious hazards.

Deteriorating lead-based paint (peeling, chipping, chalking, cracking or damaged) is a hazard and needs immediate attention. It may also be a hazard when found on surfaces that children can chew or that get a lot of wear-and-tear, such as:

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

Lead dust can form when lead-based paint is scraped, 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 re-enter the air when people vacuum, sweep, or walk through it. The following two federal standards have been set for lead hazards in dust:

- 40 micrograms per square foot ($\mu g/ft^2$) and higher for floors, including carpeted floors.
- 250 $\mu g/ft^2$ and higher for interior window sills.

Lead in soil can be a hazard when children play in bare soil or when people bring soil into the house on their shoes. The following two federal standards have been set for lead hazards in residential soil:

- 400 parts per million (ppm) and higher in play areas of bare soil.
- 1,200 ppm (average) and higher in bare soil in the remainder of the yard.

The only way to find out if paint, dust and soil lead hazards exist is to test for them. The next page describes the most common methods used.

Checking Your Home for Lead

Just knowing that a home has lead-based paint may not tell you if there is a hazard.

You can get your home tested for lead in several different ways:

- A paint **inspection** tells you whether your home has lead-based paint and where it is located. It won't tell you whether or not your home currently has lead hazards.
- A **risk assessment** tells you if your home currently has any lead hazards from lead in paint, dust, or soil. It also tells you what actions to take to address any hazards.
- A combination risk assessment and inspection tells you if your home has any lead hazards and if your home has any lead-based paint, and where the lead-based paint is located.

Hire a trained and certified testing professional who will use a range of reliable methods when testing your home.

- Visual inspection of paint condition and location.
- A portable x-ray fluorescence (XRF) machine.
- Lab tests of paint, dust, and soil samples.

There are state and federal programs in place to ensure that testing is done safely, reliably, and effectively. Contact your state or local agency (see bottom of page 11) for more information, or call **1-800-424-LEAD (5323)** for a list of contacts in your area.

Home test kits for lead are available, but may not always be accurate. Consumers should not rely on these kits before doing renovations or to assure safety.

What You Can Do Now To Protect Your Family

If you suspect that your house has lead hazards, you can take some immediate steps to reduce your family's risk:

- **If you rent, notify your landlord of peeling or chipping paint.**
- **Clean up paint chips immediately.**
- **Clean floors, window frames, window sills, and other surfaces weekly.** Use a mop or sponge with warm water and a general all-purpose cleaner or a cleaner made specifically for lead. REMEMBER: NEVER MIX AMMONIA AND BLEACH PRODUCTS TOGETHER SINCE THEY CAN FORM A DANGEROUS GAS.

- **Thoroughly rinse sponges and mop heads after cleaning dirty or dusty areas.**
- **Wash children's hands often, especially before they eat and before nap time and bed time.**
- **Keep play areas clean.** Wash bottles, pacifiers, toys, and stuffed animals regularly.
- **Keep children from chewing window sills or other painted surfaces.**
- **Clean or remove shoes before entering your home to avoid tracking in lead from soil.**
- **Make sure children eat nutritious, low-fat meals high in iron and calcium,** such as spinach and dairy products. Children with good diets absorb less lead.

Reducing Lead Hazards In The Home

Removing lead improperly can increase the hazard to your family by spreading even more lead dust around the house.

Always use a professional who is trained to remove lead hazards safely.

In addition to day-to-day cleaning and good nutrition:

- You can **temporarily** reduce lead hazards by taking actions such as repairing damaged painted surfaces and planting grass to cover soil with high lead levels. These actions (called "interim controls") are not permanent solutions and will need ongoing attention.
- To **permanently** remove lead hazards, you should hire a certified lead "abatement" contractor. Abatement (or permanent hazard elimination) methods include removing, sealing, or enclosing lead-based paint with special materials. Just painting over the hazard with regular paint is not permanent removal.

Always hire a person with special training for correcting lead problems—someone who knows how to do this work safely and has the proper equipment to clean up thoroughly. Certified contractors will employ qualified workers and follow strict safety rules as set by their state or by the federal government.

Once the work is completed, dust cleanup activities must be repeated until testing indicates that lead dust levels are below the following:

- 40 micrograms per square foot ($\mu g/ft^2$) for floors, including carpeted floors;
- 250 $\mu g/ft^2$ for interior windows sills; and
- 400 $\mu g/ft^2$ for window troughs.

Call your state or local agency (see bottom of page 11) for help in locating certified professionals in your area and to see if financial assistance is available.

Remodeling or Renovating a Home With Lead-Based Paint

Take precautions before your contractor or you begin remodeling or renovating anything that disturbs painted surfaces (such as scraping off paint or tearing out walls):

- **Have the area tested for lead-based paint.**
- **Do not use a belt-sander, propane torch, high temperature heat gun, dry scraper, or dry sandpaper** to remove lead-based paint. These actions create large amounts of lead dust and fumes. Lead dust can remain in your home long after the work is done.
- **Temporarily move your family** (especially children and pregnant women) out of the apartment or house until the work is done and the area is properly cleaned. If you can't move your family, at least completely seal off the work area.
- **Follow other safety measures to reduce lead hazards.** You can find out about other safety measures by calling 1-800-424-LEAD. Ask for the brochure "Reducing Lead Hazards When Remodeling Your Home." This brochure explains what to do before, during, and after renovations.

If not conducted properly, certain types of renovations can release lead from paint and dust into the air.

If you have already completed renovations or remodeling that could have released lead-based paint or dust, get your young children tested and follow the steps outlined on page 7 of this brochure.

Other Sources of Lead

While paint, dust, and soil are the most common sources of lead, other lead sources also exist.

- **Drinking water.** Your home might have plumbing with lead or lead solder. Call your local health department or water supplier to find out about testing your water. You cannot see, smell, or taste lead, and boiling your water will not get rid of lead. If you think your plumbing might have lead in it:
  - Use only cold water for drinking and cooking.
  - Run water for 15 to 30 seconds before drinking it, especially if you have not used your water for a few hours.
- **The job.** If you work with lead, you could bring it home on your hands or clothes. Shower and change clothes before coming home. Launder your work clothes separately from the rest of your family's clothes.

- Old painted **toys** and **furniture.**
- Food and liquids stored in **lead crystal** or **lead-glazed pottery or porcelain.**

- **Lead smelters** or other industries that release lead into the air.
- **Hobbies** that use lead, such as making pottery or stained glass, or refinishing furniture.
- **Folk remedies** that contain lead, such as "greta" and "azarcon" used to treat an upset stomach.

For More Information

The National Lead Information Center

Call **1-800-424-LEAD (424-5323)** to learn how to protect children from lead poisoning and for other information on lead hazards. To access lead information via the web, visit **www.epa.gov/lead** and **www.hud.gov/offices/lead/.**

EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline

Call **1-800-426-4791** for information about lead in drinking water.

Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) Hotline

To request information on lead in consumer products, or to report an unsafe consumer product or a product-related injury call **1-800-638-2772**, or visit CPSC's Web site at: **www.cpsc.gov.**

Health and Environmental Agencies

Some cities, states, and tribes have their own rules for lead-based paint activities. Check with your local agency to see which laws apply to you. Most agencies can also provide information on finding a lead abatement firm in your area, and on possible sources of financial aid for reducing lead hazards. Receive up-to-date address and phone information for your local contacts on the Internet at **www.epa.gov/lead** or contact the National Lead Information Center at **1-800-424-LEAD.**

For the hearing impaired, call the Federal Information Relay Service at **1-800-877-8339** to access any of the phone numbers in this brochure.

EPA Regional Offices

Your Regional EPA Office can provide further information regarding regulations and lead protection programs.

EPA Regional Offices

Region 1 (Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont)

Regional Lead Contact
U.S. EPA Region 1
Suite 1100 (CPT)
One Congress Street
Boston, MA 02114-2023
1 (888) 372-7341

Region 2 (New Jersey, New York, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands)

Regional Lead Contact
U.S. EPA Region 2
2890 Woodbridge Avenue
Building 209, Mail Stop 225
Edison, NJ 08837-3679
(732) 321-6671

Region 3 (Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Washington DC, West Virginia)

Regional Lead Contact
U.S. EPA Region 3 (3WC33)
1650 Arch Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103
(215) 814-5000

Region 4 (Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee)

Regional Lead Contact
U.S. EPA Region 4
61 Forsyth Street, SW
Atlanta, GA 30303
(404) 562-8998

Region 5 (Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, Wisconsin)

Regional Lead Contact
U.S. EPA Region 5 (DT-8J)
77 West Jackson Boulevard
Chicago, IL 60604-3666
(312) 886-6003

Region 6 (Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas)

Regional Lead Contact
U.S. EPA Region 6
1445 Ross Avenue, 12th Floor
Dallas, TX 75202-2733
(214) 665-7577

Region 7 (Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska)

Regional Lead Contact
U.S. EPA Region 7
(ARTD-RALI)
901 N. 5th Street
Kansas City, KS 66101
(913) 551-7020

Region 8 (Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, Wyoming)

Regional Lead Contact
U.S. EPA Region 8
999 18th Street, Suite 500
Denver, CO 80202-2466
(303) 312-6021

Region 9 (Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada)

Regional Lead Contact
U.S. Region 9
75 Hawthorne Street
San Francisco, CA 94105
(415) 947-4164

Region 10 (Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, Washington)

Regional Lead Contact
U.S. EPA Region 10
Toxics Section WCM-128
1200 Sixth Avenue
Seattle, WA 98101-1128
(206) 553-1985

CPSC Regional Offices

Your Regional CPSC Office can provide further information regarding regulations and consumer product safety.

Eastern Regional Center
Consumer Product Safety Commission
201 Varick Street, Room 903
New York, NY 10014
(212) 620-4120

Western Regional Center
Consumer Product Safety Commission
1301 Clay Street, Suite 610-N
Oakland, CA 94612
(510) 637-4050

Central Regional Center
Consumer Product Safety Commission
230 South Dearborn Street, Room 2944
Chicago, IL 60604
(312) 353-8260

HUD Lead Office

Please contact HUD's Office of Healthy Homes and Lead Hazard Control for information on lead regulations, outreach efforts, and lead hazard control and research grant programs.

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
Office of Healthy Homes and Lead Hazard Control
451 Seventh Street, SW, P-3206
Washington, DC 20410
(202) 755-1785

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U.S. EPA Washington DC 20460
U.S. CPSC Washington DC 20207
U.S. HUD Washington DC 20410

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