



Keeping Connecticut Healthy

**State of Connecticut
Department of Public Health
Environmental Health Section
Lead Poisoning Prevention and Control Program**

LEAD-BASED PAINT IN SCHOOLS: MAINTENANCE & RENOVATION WORK

Was Your School Building Built Before 1978? If so...

The State of Connecticut Department of Public Health strongly recommends that you take appropriate safety precautions **before you conduct any maintenance activities or perform renovations on painted surfaces at your school.**

Why School Officials Should Utilize Lead-Safe Work Practices At Their School....

Lead-based paint, which was banned from use in schools in 1978, is considered safe as long as it remains intact. However, if the paint cracks, chips, or flakes, or is disturbed during routine maintenance or renovation activities, the resulting paint chips, dust, or vapors can be inhaled or ingested. This causes a health hazard to both children and adults. Lead-based paint may be present on any interior or exterior painted surface including playground equipment.

When children are exposed to lead hazards, their brain and nervous system can be negatively affected. They may suffer hearing and visual impairments, slowed growth, and headaches. They may also develop behavior and learning problems, such as a shortened attention span, language or speech deficits, poor performance on math and reading tests, or developmental delays that require special education services. Childhood blood lead levels greater than or equal to 10 micrograms of lead per deciliter of blood ($\geq 10\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$) have been associated with lowered IQ, lower class standing in high school, increased absenteeism, lower vocabulary and grammatical-reasoning scores, and poor hand-eye coordination. (² Korfmacher 2003) Children with high blood lead levels are more likely to develop reading disabilities, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, and behavioral problems. (³ Needleman 2004, ¹ Brown 2002) It is estimated that approximately twenty percent of children with blood lead levels $\geq 20\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$ require an average of three years of special education. (⁴ Schwartz 1994)

Children who have been exposed to lead also have an increased risk of aggressive behavior, greater delinquency, and higher school dropout rates. Some studies indicate that up to ten percent of juvenile delinquency could be attributed to lead exposure. (² Korfmacher 2003)

Lead exposure in adults can cause reproductive and digestive problems, high blood pressure, nerve disorders, memory and concentration problems, and muscle and joint pain.

What Does the CT DPH Recommend To Protect the Safety Of Children and Staff During Maintenance or Renovation Work on Painted Surfaces?

- Identify all lead-based paint (LBP), or assume that all painted surfaces contain LBP, in schools built before 1978. Identify LBP or assume that paint on older playground equipment is lead-based. Use a CT licensed lead consultant contractor that employs CT certified lead inspectors for lead inspection and testing. Develop a LBP management plan so that staff are aware which surfaces should be handled with care.
- Provide staff with the support, tools, and equipment they need to work in a lead-safe manner. Staff involved in renovation, repainting, or maintenance projects that will disturb paint should take a one-day HUD approved Lead-Safe Work Practices training course given by a CT approved training provider.

- Repair any cracked, chipped, or peeling paint using lead-safe work practices*.
- Prohibit tasks that create uncontrolled lead dust, chips, or fumes (e.g., dry sanding, burning, dry scraping, or water blasting).
- Ensure proper containment and cleanup throughout the duration of the project.
- Protect surrounding soil areas from contamination if exterior work is being performed.
- Schedule major renovations and painting projects for summer months or at other times when children and staff will not be present. This will minimize exposure and allow enough time for clean up after completion of the project.
- Perform lead-in-dust sampling upon completion of projects that disturb two square feet or more of painted surfaces to ensure that proper clean up occurred.
- Never allow parents or untrained staff or volunteers to perform any task that might disturb lead painted surfaces.

Does The State of CT Department of Public Health Require Lead-Safe Work Practices or the Use of Licensed/Certified Lead Abatement Workers for Maintenance or Renovation Work on Painted Surfaces in Schools?

Schools do not fall under the requirements of the State of CT DPH Lead Poisoning Prevention and Control Regulations 19a-111-1 through 19a-111-11 or related CT General Statutes, unless the school:

- houses a day-care (preschool and kindergarten classes do not fall under the requirements unless they are a licensed daycare service or center);
- provides residence to children under the age of six; or
- is thought to be a source of exposure to a lead poisoned child as determined by the local Director of Health through an epidemiological investigation.

However, if renovations are being performed at the school, and the school administration desires that the work be conducted as a lead abatement project consistent with lead abatement standards (e.g., so stipulated in Request for Proposal (RFP), scope of work, project design, HUD documents, etc.), then the contractor performing the work must be licensed and employ certified lead abatement workers as required by the State of CT DPH Licensing and Certification Regulations.

Contact the following Federal and State agencies to ensure that your project is in compliance with requirements regarding lead-based paint maintenance and renovation activities. You should also consult with your local building, housing, and health departments regarding local ordinances that may prohibit certain paint removal activities in your area.

- **State of CT Department of Environmental Protection: (860) 424-3023**
- **United States Environmental Protection Agency: (888) 372-7341**
- **State of CT Occupational Safety and Health Administration: (860) 263-6900**
- **United States Occupational Safety and Health Administration: (860) 240-3152**

***To Learn About Lead-Safe Work Practices, Please Visit Our Website:**

**www.dph.state.ct.us/brs/lead/lead_program.htm
(and Select the "Lead-Safe Work Practices" Link)**

For further information, you may also contact our Department at:

410 Capital Avenue, MS# 51 LED

PO Box 340308

Hartford, CT 06134-0308

Telephone: (860) 509-7299/ Facsimile: (860) 509-7295

References:

1. Brown, MJ. (2002). Costs and Benefits of Enforcing Housing policies to Prevent Childhood Lead Poisoning. *Medical Decision Making*, 22 (6):482-92.
2. Korfmacher KS (2003). Long-term costs of lead poisoning: how much can New York save by stopping lead? http://www.afhh.org/aa/aa_state%20local_lead_costs_NYrep.pdf.
3. Needleman, HL (2004). Lead Poisoning, *Annual Review of Medicine* 55: 209-22.
4. Schwartz, J (1994). Societal Benefits of Reducing Lead Exposure, *Environmental Research* 66: 105-124.