

EPA's Rule on Lead Safe Abatement

As of August 1st, 2011, when issuing permits in compliance with the State Building Code to a residential building contractor, remodeler, roofer, or manufactured home installer, municipalities must verify lead certification qualifications of the licensee for renovations performed on residential property constructed prior to 1978.

The City is required to verify contractors' lead safe practices certification. It is the homeowner's responsibility to ensure that your contractor is practicing lead safe abatement. The following information is taken from the MN Department of Labor and Industry's web site:

Information about the EPA's lead paint rule

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

In order to minimize potential lead hazards from renovation or repair activities, Federal law requires a two-step process.

The first step is that contractors must provide lead information to residents before renovating or repairing pre-1978 housing. This is known as the Pre-Renovation Education (PRE) Program. It requires contractors to give property owners and tenants a pamphlet titled, "Renovate Right" (<http://www.epa.gov/lead/pubs/renovaterightbrochure.pdf>) before starting work.

The second step is known as the Renovation, Repair, and Painting Rule. This rule requires contractors be certified and follow lead-safe work practices.

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. It also means ensuring the contractor uses lead-safe work practices.

Federal law requires that contractors performing renovation, repair and painting projects that disturb painted surfaces in homes, child care facilities, and schools built before 1978 be certified and follow specific work practices to prevent lead contamination.

Make sure your contractor is certified, and can explain clearly the details of the job and how the contractor will minimize lead hazards during the work.

- You can verify that a contractor is certified by checking EPA's website at epa.gov/getleadsafe or by calling the National Lead Information Center at 1-800-424-LEAD (5323). You can also ask to see a copy of the contractor's firm certification.
- 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 for references from at least three recent jobs involving homes built before 1978, and speak to each personally.

- Share the results of any previous lead tests with the contractor.
- Always make sure the contract is clear about how the work will be set up, performed, and cleaned.
- The contract should specify which parts of your home is part of the work area and specify which lead-safe work practices will 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 will clean the work area, verify that it was cleaned adequately, and re-clean it if necessary.

If you think a worker is not doing what he is supposed to do or is doing something that is unsafe, you should:

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

If your property receives housing assistance from HUD (or a state or local agency that uses HUD funds), you must follow the requirements of HUD's Lead-Safe Housing Rule.

If you have any questions, please contact Building Inspections at (763) 367-7856.