

Lead in Paint

KIDS NEED LEAD SAFE HOMES

Lead-based paint was used in many house as late as 1978. 90% of houses built before 1940, 80% of houses built between 1940-1960, and 60% of houses built between 1960-1979 may still have lead based paint in them. It is buried in the deeper levels of paint. Lead becomes a problem when the paint chips, flakes, wears away or powders with age. Lead is also released when old paint is scraped, sanded, sawed or otherwise disturbed. Lead from these sources gets into the house dust and soil near the house.

WHY LEAD PAINT IS A PROBLEM

Lead can cause health problems for adults and animals, but is most dangerous for young children. It takes less lead to harm children because they are small, their bodies are still growing and they put their fingers and other things in their mouths. Children get their hands dirty in the house dust and soil which contain lead. The lead gets into their bodies and causes lead poisoning.

WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT

- ⇒ Test paint in your home for lead. Do-it-yourself kits are available at hardware stores or department stores. Keep in mind that these tests only check for lead on the surface. If you are planning to remodel, you need information about the paint deeper down. Contact your health department or housing agency for more information.
- ⇒ Most children younger than six should have their blood tested for lead. This is especially true if they spend time in buildings built before 1960.
- ⇒ Windows, doors, stairs and porches are the most likely places to have deteriorating paint. These areas should be smooth and easy to clean. Damp mop or damp dust using paper towels. Occasionally use a cleaning solution that contain phosphates. Mix one gallon of hot water with 2 tablespoons of TSP, Spic and Span or powdered dishwasher soap that has at least 5% phosphates in it. Avoid vacuuming. If you vacuum, do so before you damp clean, since the vacuum cleaner will spread dust around.
- ⇒ When you remodel, do it safely. Incorrect methods can increase the lead hazards. Call the National Lead Information Center at 1-800-LEAD-FYI (532-3394) for a copy of the US EPA's book *"Reducing Lead Hazards When Remodeling Your Home."*
- ⇒ Do not let children play in bare soil near buildings. Plant or mulch to keep the soil covered. Give them safe, clean places to play.
- ⇒ Keep children away from chipping or peeling paint. Frequently wash their hands, toys, pacifiers and other things that they put in their mouths.

**Lead
Safe
Homes**

Huron County Public Health

180 Milan Avenue, Suite 8
Norwalk, OH 44857

Phone: 419-668-1652
Toll Free: 1-888-694-2443
Fax: 419-668-5423
www.huroncohealth.com



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180 Milan Avenue, Suite 8
Norwalk, OH 44857

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