

## **Preventive Measures That Can Be Performed by Residents**

There are several preventive measures that occupants or residents can take to reduce the likelihood or severity of lead-based paint hazards. The primary exposure risk is from lead dust on surfaces from sources such as lead paint on surfaces that are frequently in motion or bump or rub together (such as window frames, door jambs, etc.), lead paint on surfaces frequently impacted (stair treads, cabinet doors, etc.), deteriorating lead paint on any surface, home repair activities, and tracking lead contaminated soil from the outdoors into the indoor environment.

Even in well-maintained homes, lead dust can form when lead-based paint is scraped, sanded or heated during home repair activities. Lead paint chips and dust can get on surfaces and objects that people touch. Settled lead dust can re-enter the air when the home is vacuumed or swept or people walk through it. To reduce exposure to lead dust, it is especially important to maintain all painted surfaces in good condition, and to clean frequently using wet methods (mopping, spray and wipe, HEPA-filtered vacuuming, etc.), to reduce the likelihood of chips and dust accumulating. Instances of deteriorating paint should be reported to housing management as soon as they are discovered and lead-safe certified renovators should be used to perform renovation, repair and painting jobs to reduce lead-based paint dust hazards.

### **Maintain Your Home's Condition**

It is very important to know the location of and care for the lead-painted surfaces in your home. Lead-based paint that is fully intact and in good condition is usually not harmful. Here are some things that you should do to regularly to reduce risks:

- Regularly check your home for chipping, peeling, or deteriorating paint, and report any damage to housing staff.
- Regularly check all painted areas that rub together or get lots of wear, like windows, doors, and stairways, for any signs of deterioration.
- Regularly check for paint chips or dust – report any damage to housing staff, remove chips carefully with a damp paper towel and discard in the trash, wipe the surface clean with a wet paper towel and wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water.
- Wipe down flat surfaces, like window sills, at least weekly with a damp paper towel and discard in the trash and wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water.
- Mop smooth floors (using a damp mop) at least weekly to control dust, thoroughly rinse standard string mops and sponges or discard disposable mop pads.

Here are more tips to help you reduce or prevent your family's exposure to lead dust. It's best to follow these steps at least weekly.

### **Cleaning Uncarpeted Floors**

#### Do use:

- Damp mopping, with sponge, pad or string type mops and an all-purpose cleaner.
- HEPA-filtered vacuum cleaners

#### Don't use:

- Dry sweeping (brooms) or non-HEPA-filtered vacuums.

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- Mops with a scrubber strip attached
- Powered buffing or polishing machines, or vacuums with beater bars that may wear away the painted surface.

### **Cleaning Carpets and Rugs**

#### Do use:

- Wet scrubbing or steam cleaning methods to remove stains
- HEPA-filtered vacuum cleaners

#### Don't use:

- Dry sweeping (brooms) or non-HEPA-filtered vacuums.
- Shaking or beating of carpets and rugs

### **Cleaning or Dusting Walls and other Painted Surfaces**

#### Do use:

- Soft, dampened, disposable cloths with an all-purpose cleaner

#### Don't use:

- Steel wool, scouring pads, or abrasive cleaners
- Solvent cleaners that may dissolve paint
- Excessive rubbing of spots to remove them

### **Test Your Child**

Lead can cause adverse effects to the brain and nervous system and the best way to protect your child is to prevent exposure. Children less than 6 years old are at an increased risk because their bodies are still developing. Young children also tend to put their hands or other objects that may be contaminated with lead dust into their mouths. Lead poisoning often occurs with no obvious symptoms, therefore it frequently goes unrecognized. Parents of children under seven (7) years occupying a home with damaged lead paint or lead dust concentrations above the EPA Action Levels are encouraged to have them tested. You can test your child's blood lead levels by asking your pediatrician to do a simple blood test. The CDC uses a blood lead reference level of 5.0 micrograms per deciliter of blood to identify children with blood lead levels that are higher than most children. Medical treatment is typically not recommended unless a child's blood lead level exceeds 45 micrograms per deciliter.

Anyone who is pregnant should also be encouraged to have blood lead level screening completed. Talk to your primary care provider regarding blood lead screening.