



Connecticut Department of Public Health

Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention and Control Program

Connecticut Department of Public Health

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In partnership with the

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Part of the

Don't Spread Lead campaign

Prevent lead poisoning



If you own property built before 1978, here are

5 reasons you should hire a lead-safe contractor

Homes and other structures built before 1978 may contain lead paint. If your contractor does not follow lead-safe work practices, your renovation, repair, or painting project may create dangerous lead dust.

As of April 22, 2010, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is requiring that contractors who work on homes, schools, and childcare facilities built before 1978 must be **certified in using lead-safe work practices**. The goal is to prevent lead poisoning.

EPA's new Renovation, Repair, and Painting (RRP) Rule applies to anyone who is paid to do work that disturbs a painted surface. This group includes

- Painters
- Renovation and remodeling contractors
- Electricians
- Plumbers
- Maintenance workers
- Landlords

If you own property built before 1978

Why should you hire a lead-safe contractor?

1. You'll protect your children's health.

The rule protects residents, especially young children and unborn children, from lead poisoning. Lead harms a child's developing brain and nervous system. It can cause permanent learning, behavior, and medical problems. For example, lead is associated with lowered IQ, learning disabilities, and problems with attention, memory, growth, and hearing.

2. You'll protect your own health.

Lead can also cause many health problems in adults. It can raise blood pressure (and the risk of a heart attack or stroke). It can decrease brain function (making it more difficult to think, learn, and remember). Lead can also increase the risk of miscarriage and cause impotence.

3. You'll maintain the safety of your home.

Contractors who are certified in lead safety by EPA are trained to avoid creating lead hazards in your home. To become certified, a contractor must take an eight-hour approved course. This course teaches the contractor how to

- Set up a work space to prevent the spread of lead dust
- Minimize and contain dust while working
- Clean up safely after the work is completed
- Check the work to make sure that no lead dust remains
- Train others who work for the contractor

4. A contractor who has made the effort to become certified by EPA has shown professional responsibility.

A contractor who cares about your family's safety is an asset to any job.

5. It's the law.

A contractor who violates the rule may be fined up to \$37,500 for each violation.

What about the cost?

A contractor who works lead-safe may charge a bit more for the job. EPA estimates that its lead-safety requirements will add a relatively small amount to most jobs. The additional costs may cover some materials (such as plastic sheeting to prevent lead dust from spreading) and some extra time to set up, work, and clean up safely. But careful contractors already spend time and money to complete a job safely and well. The rule simply makes sure that their methods are lead-safe.

Keep in mind: The cost is truly minor in comparison with the cost and heartache of poisoning a child.

Before beginning work, your contractor must give you a pamphlet entitled *Renovate Right*.



To make sure that your contractor is certified in lead safety, ask to see his or her EPA certificate.

To find a certified contractor near you and learn more about the rule, visit www.epa.gov/lead.