

Post-Disaster Renovations and Lead-Based Paint

Floods are natural disasters that often result in the need for renovations to damaged homes and other structures. When common renovation activities like sanding, cutting, and demolition occur in structures that contain lead-based paint, such activities create lead-based paint hazards, including lead-contaminated dust. Lead dust can be a danger to people who do the clean-up, as well as to the people that live in the home following a renovation. This dust can contaminate an entire home and, if inhaled or ingested, can cause irreversible damage to both adults and children, but particularly pregnant women and children under age six.

To protect against health risks, EPA's Renovation, Repair and Painting (RRP) Rule is designed to minimize exposure to lead-based paint hazards. Under this Rule, contractors performing renovation, repair and painting projects that disturb painted surfaces in homes and child-occupied facilities (including day care centers and schools), built before 1978, must, among other things, be certified and follow lead-safe work practices. For complete information about the RRP Rule and its requirements, go to:

www.epa.gov/getleadsafe, contact the National Lead Information Center, at 1-800-424-LEAD (5323) or call the EPA Region 8 Office in Denver, Colorado at 303-312-6966.



If homeowners hire a contractor to perform renovation, repair or demolition work on their pre-1978 home, they should be aware that, generally, the hired professional must be RRP-certified and observe the requirements of the RRP Rule. The RRP Rule does not impose requirements on a homeowner performing work on an owner-occupied residence. However, EPA encourages homeowners to hire certified professionals that have received required training on lead-safe work practices to prevent lead contamination.

If a homeowner plans on doing their own renovations, here are some steps they should take to protect themselves and their families from exposure to lead:

- Contain the work area so that dust does not escape from the area. Cover floors and furniture that cannot be moved with heavy-duty plastic and tape, and seal off doors and heating and cooling system vents.
- Keep children, pregnant women, and pets out of the work area at all times.
- Minimize dust during the project by using techniques that generate less dust, such as wet sanding or scraping, or using sanders or grinders that have HEPA vacuum attachments which capture the dust that is generated.
- Clean up thoroughly by using a HEPA vacuum and wet wiping to clean up dust and debris on surfaces. Mop floors with plenty of rinse water before removing plastic from doors, windows, and vents.

For more information on how to perform renovation work safely, contact the National Lead Information Center, 1-800-424-LEAD (5323) or go to:

<http://ww2.epa.gov/lead/renovation-repair-and-painting-program-do-it-yourselfers>