

MEDIUM VERSION

Headline:

If You're Not Lead-Safe Certified, Lead Paint Could Cost You Big Time.

Body Copy:

Think lead paint doesn't affect your business? Think again.

A new rule by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) mandates that all renovation and repair contractors working in pre-1978 homes, schools, and day care centers who disrupt more than six square feet of lead paint are required to become EPA Certified in lead-safe work practices. Contractors are required to take a one-day training course and firms must send a short application to the EPA. If not, they could face tens of thousands of dollars in fines in the future.

Steve Owens, Assistant Administrator of the Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, said there is a simple reason for the new rule: protecting people's health, especially children.

"Childhood lead poisoning is a preventable disease, and our goal is to eliminate it," said Steve Owens.

Many contractors think the issue of lead paint poisoning went away years ago, or that they are doing all that needs to be done to avoid it. In fact, new research shows that contractors like plumbers, electricians, painters and window replacement experts can inadvertently expose children to harmful levels of lead from invisible dust disturbed during jobs they perform every day.

Firms must register with the EPA and pay a fee. Individuals must take a one-day training course from an EPA-accredited training provider to become a certified renovator. Certification is good for five years.

Steve Owens said that the EPA is mindful of the small added costs that may result from complying with this important rule. To that end, he said the EPA is launching a consumer campaign designed to raise awareness of the dangers of lead paint poisoning, and encourage consumers to choose only contractors who are Lead-Safe Certified.

For additional information including how your firm can get Lead-Safe Certified and where to find an EPA-accredited trainer in your area, visit epa.gov/getleadsafe or call 800-424-LEAD today.

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