

# Repainting or Fixing Up Your Older Home?

## Protect Your Family from Lead Poisoning



### Homes built before 1978 may have lead in the paint.

**Do not scrape or sand paint on your home unless you know it does not have lead in it**

#### Scraping and sanding old paint can create dangerous lead dust

Lead in dust is very harmful to young children and can cause lead poisoning. Lead can harm the brain, nerves, and kidneys of a young child. Lead poisoning can make it very hard for a young child to learn, pay attention, and behave.



#### You and your family can swallow or breathe in lead dust

You can breathe in lead dust while dry scraping or sanding. Others nearby can breathe it in too.

Lead dust in the air can fall down into your food and drinks.

Lead dust can get into your child's body when they put things in their mouth that have lead dust on them, like their toys or hands.

#### Have your paint tested for lead

The only way to know if your home has lead in the paint is to have it tested. For information about testing, go to [www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/CLPPB/Pages/LRCHomeLeadTest.aspx](http://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/CLPPB/Pages/LRCHomeLeadTest.aspx).

### Keep your family safe from lead

Hire a CA State Certified lead professional. These contractors are specially trained to test for lead in your home and safely remove it. To find a certified lead professional, go to [www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/CLPPB/Pages/LRCHireProf.aspx](http://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/CLPPB/Pages/LRCHireProf.aspx) or call **1-800-597-LEAD (5323)**.

While only CA State Certified lead professionals can find and remove lead from your home, all contractors hired for home repairs must get U.S. Environmental Protection Agency approved training to keep lead from spreading while they work. To find a contractor with this basic training, go to [http://cfpub.epa.gov/flpp/searchrrp\\_firm.htm](http://cfpub.epa.gov/flpp/searchrrp_firm.htm) or call **1-800-424-LEAD (5323)**.

**If you do not plan to hire a contractor, follow these tips to help contain lead dust while you work:**

#### Before you work

- Remove everything you can from the work area, like rugs, curtains, furniture, toys, clothes, shoes, food, and drinks.
- Tape down heavy plastic sheeting for both inside and outside jobs. Cover the floor, big furniture, play structures, and nearby outside surfaces, like grass or concrete.
- Turn off the heater or air conditioner.
- Tape plastic over vents in the floor, ceiling, or walls.



- Make a curtain by taping plastic sheeting over the doorway to the work area.
- Put on work clothes and keep them separate from all other clothes.

#### While you work

- Keep children and pregnant women away from the work area.
- Use a spray bottle to mist all surfaces with water before and during sanding and scraping.
- Avoid tracking lead dust away from the work area:
  - Do not leave the work area in your work clothes and shoes.



- Take off work clothes and shoes and wash your hands before sitting on furniture, playing with children, or touching toys or other objects.

- Do not eat, drink or smoke in the work area. Take off work clothes and shoes, wash your hands, and leave the work area before eating, drinking, or smoking.

#### After you work

- Clean up the work area daily.
  - Use a spray bottle to mist paint chips. Carefully fold plastic sheeting inward and place in a tightly sealed bag. If your paint has lead in it, take the bag to your local household hazardous

waste program:  
[www.dtsc.ca.gov/hazardouswaste/universalwaste/hhw.cfm](http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/hazardouswaste/universalwaste/hhw.cfm).

- Use water and an all-purpose cleaner to clean the shelves, counters, floors, and other surfaces.

- Remove work clothes and shoes and store them in a bag. Wash work clothes separately from the rest of your family's laundry.
- Shower and wash your hair as soon as you finish working.
- Do not let children or pregnant women into the work area until you have cleaned it up.

**If you think that your child or other family member has been around lead, ask your doctor to test for lead poisoning.**

For more information on childhood lead poisoning, go to [www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/clppb](http://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/clppb) or call **1-510-620-5600**.



**1-800-LA-4-LEAD (524-5323)**

L.A. County Department of Public Health  
Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program

