

Who can I contact for more information on lead?

Oregon Lead Poisoning  
Prevention Program

971-673-0440

[www.healthoregon.org/lead](http://www.healthoregon.org/lead)

To request this document in an alternate format  
call 971-673-0440

Oregon  
Health  
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# Protecting kids from Lead Paint:

## A guide for Child Care Providers



Find the answers to these questions:

- Does my home or child care center have lead paint if it was built before 1978?
- When is lead paint a hazard?
- What should I do if I think I have lead paint?
- How can I maintain my home or center and keep it lead-safe?



## Why should I be concerned about lead in my home or center?

Children can get lead in their bodies by breathing in or swallowing dust that contains lead. Even very small amounts of lead can affect a child's

health and cause reading and learning problems, lowered intelligence, behavior disorders and slowed growth.

Lead was used in household paint until 1978. If the child care center or home was built before 1978 assume it has lead paint unless the building has been tested and found not to have lead paint. If you don't know the year your home or center was built, you can contact your county tax office for this information.

Lead paint in good condition is not usually a problem except in places where painted surfaces rub against each other and create dust, such as where windows open and close. Chipping, peeling or deteriorated lead paint is a common source of lead dust and is a hazard. Unsafe remodeling also creates and spreads large amounts of lead paint dust and debris. By keeping paint in good condition and working lead-safe when making repairs or remodeling, you can protect the children in your care.



## How can I keep my yard lead-safe?

- Check to see that outdoor play areas, including neighborhood playgrounds, are free of paint chips.
- Use gloves to pick up paint chips and throw them away in a thick garbage bag twisted at the top and sealed with duct tape.
- Have children play on grass or provide a sandbox with lead-free sand. Bare soil can also be covered with woodchips, mulch, or clean soil or sand.
- Take off shoes when you enter the home or center.
- Keep floor mats outside and inside the front and rear entrances. Clean them monthly.

## How can I maintain my home or center and keep it lead-safe?

- Check monthly for peeling or chipping paint. Also look for areas where painted surfaces are creating lead dust such as, doors, windows and cabinets.
- Clean up paint chips immediately and keep paint in good condition.
- Fix problems while they are small. Repair small areas of damaged paint as soon as possible.
- Follow safe work practices.
- Know when to call in the professionals.
- In rooms children spend time in, clean painted surfaces and floors with a wet cloth, sponge or mop.

## How can I clean my home to remove lead dust?

- Clean areas where children play. Regularly wet-wipe window wells and sills and other painted surfaces to remove lead dust. Clean top-to-bottom and mop floors last.
- Use a HEPA vacuum. High-Efficiency Particulate Air (HEPA) vacuums remove very small particles, including lead dust.

## When is lead paint a hazard?

- Deteriorated paint (peeling, chipping, flaking paint)
- Paint is most likely to deteriorate on surfaces:
  - Subject to rubbing or impact (doors, windows, trim, stairs, floors)
  - Where moisture collects (walls, floors, or ceilings damaged by leaks)
- Typical methods of remodeling, paint preparation and repair also create and spread large amounts of lead dust and debris.

## How can I check for lead hazards?

- Check for holes, peeling paint, paint chips or dust on floors, walls, windows, baseboards, ceiling and trim.
- Check for flaking or peeling paint on any exterior surface, including buildings, porches, fences and playground equipment.
- Keep all painted surfaces on outdoor buildings and playground equipment in good repair.
- Check to see that outdoor play areas, including neighborhood playgrounds, are free of paint chips.
- You can hire a risk assessor who will inspect the painted surfaces in your home or center and collect dust and soil samples. A risk assessor will also identify and suggest ways to reduce lead paint hazards.
- Follow the recommendations for cleaning and repair in HUD's *Lead Paint Safety*

## What should I do if I think I have lead paint?

If you live in a home built before 1978 assume it has lead paint. Completely eliminating lead paint is difficult and expensive. However, you can control the dangers of lead paint by following these steps. (You should hire a trained lead contractor to do this work. But if you decide to do it yourself, you should always use lead-safe work methods):

- Clean up paint chips immediately and keep paint in good condition.
- Repair flaking, peeling or deteriorated paint using safe methods.
- Repair or replace abrasion or impact surfaces like painted doors, windows and trim to stop dust creation (the constant open-and-closing friction creates paint dust).
- If repairs are needed, remember to “work wet, work clean, work safe”.

## How can I safely make repairs, paint or remodel my home?

- Hire a trained professional to work on your home. Visit our Web site at [www.healthoregon.org/lead](http://www.healthoregon.org/lead) for a list of trained professionals and follow the guidelines in our brochure *Finding a Lead-Safe Contractor*.
- Take a Lead-Safe Work Practices Training class or follow the instructions in HUD's *Lead Paint Safety*
- All belongings should be out of the work area or covered in plastic before work starts.
- Children, pregnant women, and pets should be kept out of the work area until the work is done and cleaned-up. Clean up is especially important.
- Have a certified professional perform a clearance test after painting or remodeling work. A clearance test is a method of determining if a work area has been properly cleaned up and hazardous amounts of lead have not been left behind.

## Are some paint-removal or repair methods dangerous?

**The following are unsafe work methods:**

- DO NOT dry-sand or dry-scrape paint.
- DO NOT use power sanders without vacuum attachments.
- DO NOT use open flame burning or torches.
- DO NOT power wash unless paint debris can be contained.