



Utica National Insurance Risk Management Department Bulletin

Be Aware of the EPA's New Lead Renovators Certification Rule

Is your Religious Institution planning renovation, repair or paint work in any of your buildings? Is there a school or child care operation associated with your religious institution? If so, your answers to the following questions may impact how you proceed with your planned projects according to the new Lead Renovators Certification rule:

1. Was the building where the renovation, repair or painting is planned built before 1978?
2. Does the building regularly house children under 6 years of age (a.k.a. a child-occupied facility)?
3. Will the planned project involve the disturbance of lead paint-containing surfaces of 6 sq. ft. or more per room interior, or 20 sq. ft. or more on the exterior of your building?


If you answered "yes" to the questions listed above, be aware that as of April 2010, Federal law requires that **contractors be certified and follow specific work practices** to prevent lead contamination when performing renovation, repair and painting projects which disturb lead-based paint in homes, child care facilities and schools built before 1978 if these buildings are visited regularly by any child under age 6. Therefore, it is paramount that you ask to see your contractor's certification.

Why the concern and new rule? A review of the facts about lead:

- **Lead is especially dangerous** to children under six years of age.
- **Even children who appear healthy** can have dangerous levels of lead in their bodies.
- **Lead can affect children's brains** and developing nervous systems, causing reduced IQ, learning disabilities and behavioral problems.
- **Lead is also harmful to adults.** In adults, low levels of lead can pose many dangers, including high blood pressure and hypertension. Pregnant women exposed to lead can transfer lead to their fetus.
- **Lead gets into the body through swallowing or inhalation.** People, especially children, can swallow lead dust as they eat, play and do other normal hand-to-mouth activities.
- **People can get lead in their bodies** from lead in soil or paint chips. However, lead in dust (which is often invisible) is the most common way people are exposed to it.
- **People (contractors and/or your properly trained and certified facilities/maintenance staff) may breathe in lead** dust or fumes if they disturb lead-based paint. People who sand, scrape, burn, brush or blast, or otherwise disturb lead-based paint risk unsafe exposure to lead.

Projects that disturb lead-based paint can create dust that could endanger your staff, volunteers, and the children that attend and are cared for in your facilities if proper work procedures and clean-up procedures are not followed!

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You are responsible for the safety of employees and children in your care. Ensure the contractor you hire is properly certified and uses lead-safe work practices.

- **Make sure your contractor can clearly explain** the details of the job and how they will minimize lead hazards during the work.
- **Ask if the contractor is trained** to perform lead-safe work practices and to see a copy of their training certificate.
- **Ask what lead-safe methods they will use** to set up and perform the job.
- **Ask if the contractor is aware of lead renovation rules.** For example, contractors are required to provide you with a copy of the US EPA and HUD pamphlet titled *Renovate Right: Important Lead Hazard Information for Families, Child Care Providers and Schools* before beginning work. (It should also be provided to child care facilities and general renovation information given to families whose children attend those facilities, not more than 60 days prior to the renovation, repair or painting. During the renovation, the contractor must post informational signs describing the general nature and locations of the renovation and the anticipated completion date.)
- **Ask for and check references** from at least three recent jobs involving renovation, repair and/or painting where the lead certification rule came into play.

The use of lead-safe work practices – such as containing dust inside the work area, using dust-minimizing work methods and conducting a careful clean-up, as described in the EPA's *Renovate Right* pamphlet – will go a long way toward protecting children in your care as well as your staff. Using a trained and certified contractor will also better ensure that when renovation, repair and/or painting jobs are carried out within your buildings, staff, children and parishioners will be less likely to be exposed to harmful lead dust.

When the final cleaning is done, look around. There should be no dust, paint chips or debris in the work area. If you see any, the area should be re-cleaned. Keep in mind that lead dust is often invisible to the naked eye. It may still be present even if you cannot see it.

**Always consult your state Health or Environmental Protection departments
for any requirements that might be more stringent than the requirements
set forth by this new rule!**

For more information regarding this rule and lead hazards, visit the EPA Web site:
www.epa.gov/lead/pubs/renovation.htm#requirements.

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