



CONTACT INFORMATION

National Lead Information Center
(NLIC) 1-800-424-LEAD
www.epa.gov/lead/nlic.htm

Home Ownership Institute at the
Department of Housing
410-396-4153

Maryland Department of the
Environment 1-800-633-6101 or
www.mde.state.md.us

Environmental Protection Agency
www.epa.gov/lead

Housing and Urban Development
www.hud.gov/lea

EPA Drinking Water Hotline
1-800-426-4791

Protecting Your Family and Your New Home

From Lead-Based Paint Hazards





The purpose of this brochure is to educate you about the harmful effects of lead-based paint and what you can do to protect yourself, your home and your family. You will learn your rights as a new home buyer/seller, potential costs, and possible financial assistance. It will also tell you where lead is found, how lead-poisoning occurs and its effects, who is most at risk, and who you should contact to have your home tested.

WHY IS LEAD A RISK FOR HOMEOWNERS?

Lead is one of the most significant and wide-spread environmental hazards for children in Maryland. It is a highly toxic metal that was used for years in products in and around our homes, especially in homes built before 1978.

If you are planning on buying a home built before 1978, you should know that federal law requires that individuals receive certain information before buying a pre-1978 home. Sellers have to disclose any known information on lead-based paint and hazards before selling a house. Sales contracts must include a disclosure form about lead-based paint. Buyers have up to 10 days after closing to check for lead hazards. If lead is found within this 10 day period, the contract is voidable.

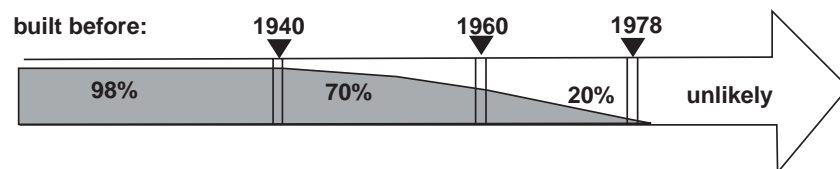
WHERE IS LEAD FOUND?

The federal government banned lead-based paint from housing in 1978. Therefore homes built before then most likely have lead-based paint. In general, the older the home, the more likely it has lead-based paint.

Lead can be found:

- * In homes in the city, country, or suburbs
- * In apartments, townhouses, or single-family homes
- * In both private and public housing
- * Inside and outside the house

Probability of a House Containing Lead



Homes built before 1950 also used paint that had a higher concentration of lead.



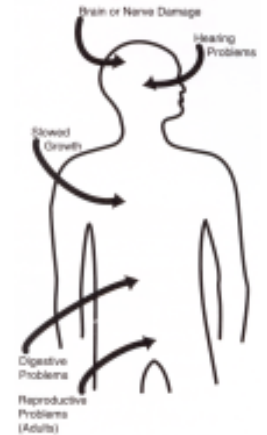
HOW CAN LEAD POISONING OCCUR?

Lead-paint is most likely to be a hazard when it is deteriorating (peeling, chipping, flaking, chalking or cracking) or when maintenance or remodeling work creates lead dust and debris.

Lead-based paint may also be a hazard when found on surfaces that children can chew or that get a lot of use like windows, window sills, doors, door frames, stairs, railings, banisters, porches, and fences. Most childhood exposure occurs through normal hand-to-mouth activity after contact with one of these sources.

WHO IS AT RISK?

Children and adults can both be affected by lead causing a range of health effects. Children, six years and younger (including the unborn fetus) are most at risk because their developing brains and other organs can easily be damaged by lead. It's normal for young children to put everything into their mouths. Anything that contains lead from small dust particles to large paint chips can cause harm. Sustained exposure can cause long-term neurological damage including: learning disabilities, shortened attention spans, irritability, and lowered IQ. And in some cases, long-term exposure has caused death.



HOW CAN MY HOME BE CHECKED FOR LEAD?

You can get your home checked in one of three ways.

- 1) You can hire various lead-based paint inspection services that will tell you the lead content of every different type of paint in your home. But they can't tell you whether the paint is a hazard or how you should deal with any problems.
- 2) You could have a risk assessment performed which will tell you if there are any sources of serious lead exposure in your home such as peeling paint and/or lead dust. It will also tell you what actions you should take to address the hazards.
- 3) You can check for lead yourself with direction from a laboratory. You collect paint scrapings from areas of your home, which you would like to test and send them off to a laboratory service to be tested.



WHO DO I CONTACT?

You can obtain a list of accredited inspection contractors and laboratories from the Maryland Department of the Environment at 1-800-633-6101 or www.mde.state.md.us

WHAT ARE THE COSTS?

You should contact individual contractors to determine specific services and costs. There may be a wide variation in price due to differences in services offered and each company's technical operation procedures. We recommend that you call at least three contractors to compare services and prices before you chose one to inspect and test your home.

IS THERE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE?

Baltimore City's Lead Initiative Program may be able to help you by providing financial assistance for lead-related renovations. To be eligible, the property must be in Baltimore city; be built prior to 1978 and contain lead. Occupants must also meet certain income guidelines.

You may submit an application to the Home Ownership Institute at the Department of Housing. Please call 410-396-4153.