



HOW LEAD LOCATORS IS GETTING THE LEAD OUT

In 2009 the EPA announced some major changes for contractors. The new Small Entity Compliance Guide to Renovate Right, EPA's Lead Based Paint Renovation, Repair and Painting (RRP) Program was approved. The first step began over a decade ago. It involved providing clients of pre 1978 homes and tenants with the Renovate Right Booklet and keeping records of that transaction on file. The public knowledge of lead paint dust hazard had been in circulation. However, like asbestos it just was not taken as seriously until now.

The next phase of the regulation became effective on Earth Day, April 22, 2010 and is quite a complicated and involved set of rules and regulations with teeth. The reason for pre 1978 homes is that lead in paint was outlawed in December of 1977. There was still paint left over so that era home should be tested prior to renovation. That being said, not all pre 1978 homes were painted with lead based paint, much of that paint was painted over safely encapsulating the lead. Therefore, the bottom line is testing for lead based paint prior to renovation is the best determining factor.

Many contractors are just discovering the requirement is real and are quickly seeking out certification. Some contractors are resisting or taking a wait and see stance. Others have chosen not to do work on pre 1978 homes. Those that are going to do work on pre 1978 homes must have certification and registration with the EPA before work begins. Those Contractors that choose to ignore getting certification will be subject to enormous fines in the tens of thousands of dollars.

A homeowners "opt out" clause was eliminated the same day the RRP rule went into effect.

While the program is causing some confusion there is a clear mandate to keep all children especially under six years old, pregnant women, pets and everyone else safe from the effects of inhaling or ingesting lead paint dust. Even homes that have no children living there but have children frequent them are subject to this protection. What is important to understand is that Lead is in many things. The EPA is only addressing paint dust inhalation and ingestion at this time. Lead is found in many things like porcelain enamel bathtubs, toys, and herbal remedies as an example. Some of the finest drinking crystal has lead in it. None of these items are being addressed by the EPA's RRP rule. However, in the presence of an elevated blood level they all become suspect, many of them are covered by the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) <http://www.cpsc.gov/>

The big reason for the new rules is that many of the symptoms of lead ingestion and or inhalation mimic various common illnesses. The difference is, they just never go away. They can be minor or severe they are often debilitating, and occasionally lethal. The most amazing part is that even minute exposure has potential effects.

We are proud to announce that owner Joe Levitch CR and Diane Ferguson Project Manager have completed the required course and are EPA Certified Renovators. Through fulfilling these requirements, Levco Builders LLC is now officially a Lead Safe Certified Firm and has received certification from the EPA as required. Joe and Diane are also a certified Lead Inspectors. Levco has purchased a XRF machine that can provide non-destructive lead paint testing on the spot.

Here are some of the most important things to know about the new Lead Regulations:

- Contractors performing renovations, repairs, and painting in pre 1978 homes must now provide the EPA pamphlet "*Renovate Right*" to the owners and/or tenants of the property before beginning work.
- After April 22, 2010 federal law 40 CFR part 745 requires that companies doing work on pre 1978 homes be registered with the EPA and have EPA Certified Renovator employees that use the new lead safe work practices on all projects that are proven by test to contain lead paint in the work area. The contractor may subcontract that work to an EPA Certified firm and EPA Certified Renovator responsible for that project.
- The training for the certification must be done by an EPA accredited instructor. Employees of a certified company may have another in-house certified employee. This EPA Certified Renovator may teach their own employees to follow proper procedures. The employees' education must be recorded, but they are not required to be certified.
- Each target project must have an EPA Certified Renovator on-site to perform all of the critical certified renovator responsibilities. During other phases, the EPA Certified Renovator must be available by phone and within 2 hours of the job site.
- The work that is subject to the new regulations includes remodeling, repair, electrical work, plumbing, painting, carpentry, and window replacement. This includes any activity that disturbs over (2 square feet (per room) of interior on a HUD home) or 6 square feet (per room) in a non HUD residence or 20 square feet of exterior paint in pre 1978 built homes and facilities that contain lead based paint.
- Once the EPA Certified Renovator or a higher authority has verified the site is clean "dust free", the project can continue as a normal remodeling project and should be dust sampled by a Lead Inspector at completion for 3rd party verification of lead free status.

- Plaster and drywall are not currently testable by a certified renovator and must be assumed to contain lead paint. There is a test that can be done by XRF testing. This test must be done by a certified Lead Inspector or Lead Risk Assessor at this time.
- For additional information from the EPA regarding Lead based paint follow this link to their web site <http://www.epa.gov/lead/pubs/leadinfo.htm#facts> or any of my Lead links on our Levcobuilders.com web page under informational articles.



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