



GET THE LEAD
OUT

Renovation

How to
safely remove
old paint

Lead-based paint danger

Many Oklahoma homes built before 1978 were painted with lead-based paint. Remodeling a house covered in lead paint will create dust and paint chips that can cause lead poisoning if inhaled or ingested.

Childhood lead poisoning usually occurs when a child eats lead paint chips or dust, or breathes in leaded dust. Lead poisoning is a very serious child health problem! All children are at risk, whether they live in large cities or in the country. Sources of lead can be found everywhere.

Children who are 6 months to 6 years of age are at greatest risk for lead poisoning. Young children put many items in their mouths, and some of these things could contain lead. Lead is especially bad for infants and children because their bodies absorb lead so easily. Lead poisoning can slow a child's development and cause learning and behavior problems. Lead can also harm pregnant women and their unborn children.

If you plan to remodel or renovate your home, take precautions to work "lead safe" if your house was built before 1978.

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How to lower blood lead levels in children
Renovation

The only way to find out for sure if your home contains lead paint is to have an inspection. For a list of certified lead inspectors in your area, contact the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality's Lead Based Paint Program at 405.702-4100.

Be alert to the dangers of removing old paint

To protect your family from lead during remodeling:

- DO NOT REMAIN AT HOME DURING THE RENOVATION. It is especially important that children and pregnant women leave the house during renovation. When work is complete, do not go back into the house and work area until it has been completely and correctly cleaned.
- Only properly protected workers should enter the work area.
- If you hire contractors, make sure that they understand the causes of lead poisoning and how to stay safe.
- If you must do the work yourself, follow the safety tips outlined in this brochure. For additional guidance contact the Oklahoma State Department of Health's Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program 1.800.766.2223 for information on how to safely remove lead paint.

Safety tips

- Protect all of your food appliances (like toasters), cooking and eating utensils (like forks and spoons), furniture, bedding, toys, and clothes from the lead dust. Take these things out of the work area, or cover them in plastic and seal them up tightly.
- Do not eat or smoke in the work area. Lead dust could get on your hands and clothes, then in your mouth.
- Place a damp floor mat outside the work area to collect dust and paint chips from the bottom of shoes.
- Removing wallpaper or loose plaster can create lead dust. To clean up, use a clean cloth or mop dampened with an all-purpose cleaner or a cleaner made specifically for lead. Do not sweep loose paint chips or dust with a broom. Either wet mop or use a vacuum with a true HEPA filter.
- Wash work clothes and clean-up rags separately from your other laundry.
- Hang plastic sheeting in doorways to work areas to keep lead dust contained.

Remodeling the outside of your house

- When removing paint from the outside of your house, seal the windows and vents so dust cannot get inside the house.
- Remove shoes before going into the house.
- Do not walk around clean areas of the house in dirty work clothes.
- To remove paint chips and dust from around the outside of the house, dampen porches, sidewalks and driveways with water then sweep debris into a plastic bag. Dampen the sides of buildings and scrub with a stiff brush. **DO NOT POWER WASH.** Collect paint chips in a plastic bag and tie it before disposing of the bag. Use disposable gloves to pick up and get rid of paint chips.

Screening for lead poisoning

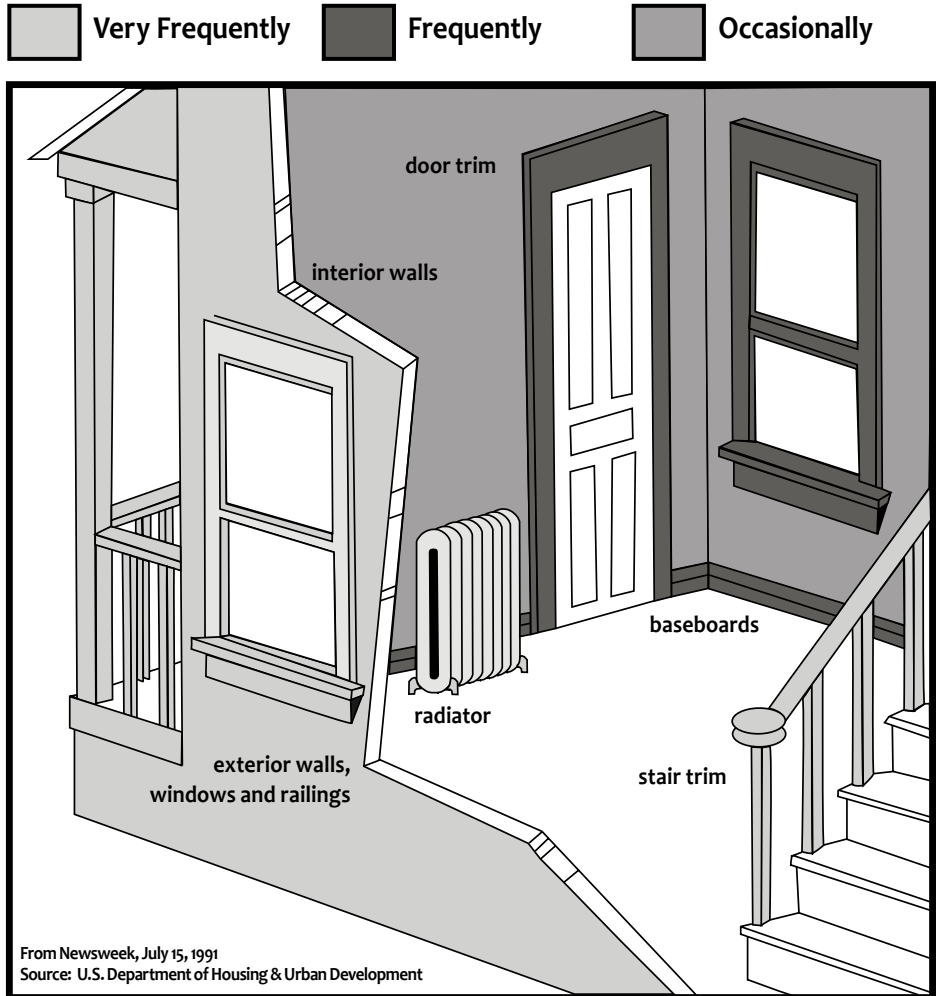
Have family members, especially pregnant women and children 6 months to 6 years of age, tested for lead poisoning by your doctor or clinic.

A child may have lead poisoning but not look or act sick, OR a child may have symptoms like those of a cold or the flu. The only way to find lead poisoning early is to take your child to your local clinic or to your doctor and have a simple blood test.

For more information contact the Oklahoma State Department of Health's Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program 1.800.766.2223 or the National Lead Information Center Hotline 1.800.424.5323.

Where lead is found

Lead paint can be a serious threat to your family's health. It may be found on both the inside and outside of your home. The friction of opening and closing windows and doors covered in leaded paint can create lead dust. This can be breathed in or get on a person's hands, then into the mouth and be swallowed. If the paint is not peeling or flaking, large surfaces like walls and ceilings pose less danger. The picture on this page shows you where leaded paint may be located in your home.





If your child has a high blood lead level

Make sure that you go to all of the appointments that the doctor schedules for your child. At each visit, the doctor will do a blood test to see if the lead level has changed. At your clinic or doctor's office, you can learn about ways to make your child feel better. Feeding your child healthy foods (especially those high in calcium and iron) and keeping your home very clean are two important ways that you can help your child's blood lead level go down. It will be extremely important to keep your child away from the source(s) of lead.

Have your child tested for lead poisoning

Lead is found everywhere—in cities and in rural areas. Small children are at risk if they breathe in lead dust or eat lead paint chips and dust.

For more information, contact: your doctor; local county health department; the Oklahoma State Department of Health's Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program 1.800.766.2223; or the National Lead Information Center Hotline 1.800.424.5323 for information on having your home inspected for lead and/or removing lead hazards safely.

How high is high?

Your doctor will discuss with you the blood lead level and let you know if your child's blood level is of concern. Blood lead levels are measured in micrograms per deciliter. The lower the level, the better. The higher the lead level gets, the worse the effects on your child's body can be. There is no "normal" level of lead in the blood, but if the lead level gets very high your child may need medical treatment. It will be important that your child receive a blood lead test about every three months to make sure that the lead level is decreasing.

All children 6 months to 6 years of age should be assessed for lead poisoning at least once a year. Check with your doctor to make an appointment.

For more information, contact: your doctor; local county health department; the Oklahoma State Department of Health's Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program 1.800.766.2223; or the National Lead Information Center Hotline 1.800.424.5323.

This brochure provides information on lead poisoning and describes steps you can take to reduce your child's exposure to lead.



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AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

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