

Lead Waste Cleanup and Disposal

Guidelines

Worried about lead in your home? If you are living in an older structure you should be informed. Through this fact sheet, developed for property owners, renters, and contractors, learn how to safely cleanup and dispose of lead waste created during the renovation or remodeling of an older home.

The Dangers of Lead

Lead poisoning is a concern for both children and adults. It can cause:

- Permanent problems with health, learning, and behavior in young children
- High blood pressure, kidney damage, and fertility problems in adults

You can be exposed to lead any time you breathe lead dust, fumes, or swallow anything that contains lead.

About 75% of homes built before 1978 contain some lead-based paint. The older the home the more likely it is to contain lead-based paint. You should assume that any home built before 1978 contains some lead. To be sure make sure to test your home.

You can protect yourself from lead by following the appropriate remodeling safety procedures.

Cleanup

Renovation/Remodeling Waste

1. Place any used rags, paper towels, mops, disposable clothing and shoe covers from the project in a heavy-duty garbage bag and seal.
2. Roll up the polyethylene (poly) sheeting to catch the debris and paint chips. Start at the corner and roll the material inward to capture all of the dust and debris, and tape the poly shut with duct tape.
3. Wash the entire work area with a cleaning solution according to the directions on the container. You may wish to wear waterproof rubber gloves when you wash the area. Also,

- daily washing will remove harmful lead dust while you complete the remodeling project.
4. Use a wet/dry vacuum to collect the cleaning solution. Be sure to keep about two inches of water in the bottom of the canister. The water will help to hold the lead dust in. The wet/dry vacuum should be used only to collect the wash or rinse water, not to pick up dry dust and paint chips. **IMPORTANT:** Do not use your household vacuum to clean up lead dust and paint chips! The filter in the household vacuum is not designed to pick up and hold the fine lead dust - it will just spread the lead dust throughout the house.
 5. Rinse the area with clean water. Be sure to use two separate buckets, one for the cleaning solution used earlier, and one for the clean rinse water. Also, use two separate sets of disposable rags, one for the washing step and one for the rinse step.
 6. Filter the rinse water.
 7. Let the debris in the filter dry out and dispose of it as household hazardous waste.
 8. Put the rags, paper towels, and mops used during the cleanup in a garbage bag and seal.
 9. Vacuum the work area again with the wet/dry vacuum.
 10. Wait one hour and repeat the cleanup process. This will allow for the cleanup of any lead dust that may have settled.

Important Tip:

Clean up the work area each day. Cleaning up paint chips, dust, and debris will help protect the people working with lead during the remodeling or repair work and the people living in the home.

Contaminated Soil

1. Do not sweep patios, decks and driveways with a dry broom; it can scatter lead-contaminated soil. Use a wet/dry vacuum to remove soil and lead.
2. Rake or pick up any large paint chips from the soil.
3. Put them in a heavy-duty garbage bag and seal for disposal.



Indoor Environments and Radiation Section
625 Robert Street North, PO Box 64975
St. Paul, MN 55164-0975
651-201-4620
www.health.state.mn.us

4. Keep contaminated soil away from people and pets while you are waiting to dispose of it.
5. Wrap the contaminated soil in a tarp or sheet of poly, seal the poly with duct tape and store it in an area where children and pets cannot get to it.

Important Tip:

Once the worksite cleanup is finished, don't forget to clean yourself up! Thoroughly wash your hands, face and hair. Make sure that your work clothes are washed separately from any other clothing.

Disposal

Renovation/Remodeling Waste

If you have been remodeling a home built before 1978, the following lead-contaminated items may be generated by your projects activities:

- Paint chips
- Clean up debris: such as paper towels, sponges, filters, poly and duct tape
- Bulk materials: such as doorframes, windows and carpet
- Chemical strippers containing lead paint
- Cleanup wastewater
- Contaminated soil

The person who creates the lead waste is responsible for its disposal. Contractors cannot leave lead-contaminated materials with the property owner for disposal. The United States Environmental Protection Agency allows contractors to dispose of residential lead-based paint waste, such as doors, windows, frames, etc., at construction and demolition landfills. Other materials generated from the remodeling activities, such as towels, mop-heads, plastic sheeting, sponges, etc., must be disposed of at a municipal solid waste landfill.

Minnesota law allows property owners to put lead waste in the trash. However, there are a few things to consider. Does your county burn trash after pickup? If so, harmful lead fumes may be released into the

air. Call your county offices to find out if they burn trash. If your trash is burned, the MDH recommends that you dispose of lead paint chips at your local household hazardous waste collection site. Other materials should be taken to a mixed municipal solid waste landfill for disposal. Contact your county environmental health staff for the location of a mixed municipal solid waste landfill near you.

Contaminated Soil

Property owners are allowed to bury lead-contaminated soil on site. Be sure to contact your local utility company before digging, to find out if any electrical lines may be buried in your yard. Dig a trench and bury the old soil deep enough so that small children and pets cannot dig it back up. Cover it with uncontaminated soil and some type of ground cover.

Taking the lead-contaminated soil to an approved disposal facility is also an option. However, it can be expensive, and soil can be difficult to move. If you attempt to transport soil, be sure to dampen it and bag it, so it won't blow away. In some counties, the household hazardous waste collection program may be willing to accept lead-contaminated soil. Soil may also be taken to a lined municipal landfill for disposal. Call your county environmental health staff for information on these collection sites. Be sure to call these collection sites to find out if they will accept lead-contaminated soil.

How Do I Get More Information?

For more information about lead please contact the Lead Program at the Minnesota Department of Health. You can call us at 651-201-4620, visit our Web site at www.health.state.mn.us/lead, or write us at the address listed on the front of this fact sheet.

Lead is a risk for both you and your family. Be informed. Be safe.

This handout was developed as a summary of the MDH lead regulations. It does not cover all situations or conditions and is not to be used as a substitute for the Minnesota Statutes and Rules. Additional federal, state and local regulations may apply.

If you require this document in another format, such as large print, Braille or cassette tape, call 651-201-4620 • 800-657-3908 • MDH TTY 651-201-5797