

City of Pomona- Lead Education Awareness and Control Program (LEAC)

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: I live in an older home. Are my children in danger from lead poisoning?

A: In general, the older the home, the more likely lead paint was used on and in it. This is especially true for homes built prior to 1950, but lead-based paints were widely used up to the time they were banned for residential purposes in 1978. Also, the presence of lead paint does not necessarily mean that it presents a hazard. **To present a health threat, it must somehow enter the body. Paint that is well cared for generally does not pose a danger. However, even in well-maintained homes, friction and impact surfaces, such as door jambs or sliding windows, can create fine lead dust that can be inhaled or swallowed.**

Q: How can I tell if the lead is a hazard in my home?

A: The surest method is to use the services of a certified lead-based paint inspector or a risk assessor. An inspector can tell you if there is lead in the home; a risk assessor can tell you the extent of the hazard.

Q: What about lead home-testing kits?

A: The City of Pomona Lead Education Awareness and Control Program neither recommends nor endorses any lead home-testing kits. The best that a high-quality kit can tell you is that lead is present on a surface. It cannot tell you how much lead there is, the extent of the hazard, what needs to be done to deal with it, etc. The best use for such a kit is as a screening device. If the screening is positive or if there is still concern, you should follow up with an inspection by a **Lead Certified** professional.

Q: How can I tell if my child has been exposed to lead?

A: The fact is that many children who have been exposed to lead do not act or appear sick. The best method is to have the child's blood tested for lead. The most reliable method is a blood test drawn from a vein as opposed to a test drawn from a capillary (finger). This test can be performed by a health care professional or at a public health clinic.

Q: Testing shows that my child has too much lead in his/her body. What can I do?

A: Locate the source of the lead and control the hazard as soon as possible. Use recommended hygiene and dietary practices. Work with your health practitioner for medical follow-up.

Q: Someone is painting an old house next door to me. They are sanding the outside of the house and all this junk is flying around and getting in the flower bed, my kids' play area and blowing in through our windows. What can I do

A:The Department of Health Services (DHS) regulates individuals participating in this kind of activity. Any individual removing or stabilizing (painting/remodeling) lead-based paint must: (1) use lead-safe work practices and (2) post a sign visible from 30 feet, warning the public of possible lead-based paint hazards. To report unsafe lead work practices call (323) 896-7068.

Q: I just rented an old house and moved in last week. I have little kids. The landlord had me sign a paper saying that there is no lead in the house, but I took one of those lead checks and tested a wall and it turned pink!! What do I do?

A. Very likely the paper the landlord asked you to sign was a standard Disclosure Form, as required under Federal law. The landlord was also required to give you a pamphlet entitled "Protect Your Family from Lead in Your Home".

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According to the Federal law, the landlord is only required to disclose to you any knowledge that he or she has of lead-based paint (LBP) in the house. If he/she has no knowledge of LBP, he/she is not required to conduct an inspection or make a special effort to find out if lead based paint is present. The only obligation is to disclose current knowledge.

The lead-check tester is only a crude screening device. It doesn't tell you what kind of concentration the lead paint is present in, nor how extensive it is. If you want to know these things for sure, you can hire a **certified lead** inspector or risk assessor and DHS can provide you with a list of these professionals.

All things being equal, you probably have lead paint in the house. The older the dwelling is the greater the likelihood that it contains lead-based paint. Houses built before 1950 generally were painted with lead based paints. However, lead based paint that is in good condition -- is not peeling, cracking, chalking, etc. -- is typically not a hazard. It is important, however, to watch friction and impact surfaces -- such as windows, doors, porches, stair treads. These have a tendency to create lead dust.

Types of Housing Units Not Covered under the Lead-Based Paint Hazard Control Program

- ∪ Housing built after 1977 (Congress chose not to cover post-1977 housing because the CPSC banned the use of lead-based paint for residential use in 1978).
- ∪ Zero-bedroom units, such as efficiencies, lofts, and dormitories.
- ∪ Leases for less than 100 days, such as vacation houses or short-term rentals.
- ∪ Housing for the elderly (unless children live there).
- ∪ Housing for the handicapped (unless children live there).

You can help reduce whatever hazards might be present by doing the following:

1. Keeping paint in good condition through regular maintenance.
2. Use a sponge, cloth, or paper towel to wet wipe the areas where dust might be accumulating (window sills, traffic areas from the outside, door jambs, etc.) Remember to wash the cloth separately from household items; use the same sponge only for lead cleaning.
3. Clean or remove shoes before entering your home.
4. Keep an eye on the exterior. It might have lead paint on it and the elements could be weathering lead dust and paint chips into the soil. You can have soil tested. If necessary, bark dust, plants, or gravel can be placed over contaminate soil to limit access to it.
5. Wash hands of child often - especially young children who put hands in their mouth.
6. Make sure there is plenty of iron and calcium in the children's diet and that they snack often. Lead is absorbed into the body better through an empty stomach.
7. If your children are at risk, have their blood lead level tested.

For Information on how to have your home or rental units lead tested through Pomona's Lead Education Awareness and Control Program (LEAC), please call (909) 620-3761 or (909) 620-3630.

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