HOMEOWNER REPAIR GUIDE

CONTROLLING LEAD-BASED PAINT

During your paint repair project – working outside
For do-it-yourself or contracted repairs

WORKING OUTSIDE: SETTING UP

Exterior work often produces dust, paint chips, larger pieces of material, and liquids that contain lead. It is easy to track dust containing lead inside the house, where it can pose a hazard. Lead can also be spread into the soil around the house if construction debris isn't handled properly. To avoid lead contamination of the areas surrounding your house, take the following precautions:

PRECAUTION	HOW
Cover the ground	Cover the ground and any flowers or plants with 6 mil polyethylene plastic sheeting to catch dust and trash. Extend the plastic sheeting beyond the work area far enough to catch all waste materials – at least 10 feet from the base of the house, plus an additional 3 feet for each story.
Secure the sheeting	Use bricks or rocks to hold the edges of the plastic sheeting in place. Place wooden studs under the edges of the sheeting to create a dam to prevent liquid from escaping.
Watch the wind	Avoid working in windy conditions. Strong winds can blow lead dust to areas that are not covered, and contaminate the soil. If the winds are more than 15 mph, or if the chips and dust are blowing off the plastic sheeting, set up vertical shrouds to block the wind or, preferably, do the work another day.
Protect play areas	Cover sandboxes with 6 mil polyethylene plastic sheeting. If possible, move play equipment at least 20 feet away from the work area.
Seal the house	Close and seal all windows and doors.
Protect yourself	If working in the project area, wear a HEPA (**H**igh **E**fficiency **P**articulate **A**ir) cartridge respirator and disposable overalls and shoe coverings. Remove these items before leaving the work area.
Limit access	Limit access to the area to only those doing the work. Limit the tracking of dust and debris to the house and surrounding soil.
Read the handbook	Read and follow the safe work practices *(page 6)* and personal cleanup tips *(page 17)* in the EPA handbook, ***Reducing Lead Hazards When Remodeling Your Home.***

SANDING AND STRIPPING EXTERIOR SURFACES

Preparing exterior surfaces for painting, staining, or repair can create lead exposure risks. With good work practices, the lead exposure is reduced.

AVOID DRY SANDING

Avoid dry-sanding lead-based painted surfaces whenever possible. If you must sand, use a wet-sanding sponge.

(Further information about paint preparation procedures can be found in HRRC's handout, "House Painting – Where Do I Start?")

DAILY CLEANUP OF EXTERIOR WORK SITES

FOR PROJECTS THAT LAST BEYOND ONE DAY

Implement a program of ongoing daily cleanup:

- Place smaller debris in 4 mil plastic refuse bags and seal shut. Larger debris should be placed in a covered container to prevent the wind from blowing the dust around.
- Wet-sweep outside areas with lots of dust and trash by using a garden hose to spray these areas with water. Avoid dry sweeping, since it spreads lead dust. Shovel the trash into heavy-duty plastic bags placed in cardboard boxes for support.
- Clean tools with detergent.
- Wash down the area with TSP (trisodium phosphate) and use a HEPA filter-equipped vacuum cleaner to collect dirt and dust, as well as the wash water, from the ground sheeting. (A wet/dry model is most useful for this purpose.) Dispose of the wash water by flushing down the toilet.

FINAL CLEANUP OF EXTERIOR WORK SITES

TIMING

Do not begin the final cleanup until at least one hour after the repair is finished.

1. Complete the procedures for daily cleanup listed above.
2. Carefully remove any plastic sheeting and/or tarps used to protect surfaces by rolling or folding them inward. Dispose of plastic sheeting in a heavy-duty 4 mil plastic bag.
3. Lay any non-disposable tarps on the driveway and allow them to dry fully. After they have dried, vacuum up all remaining chips with the HEPA vacuum. Bag the chips in a heavy-duty 4 mil plastic bag for safe disposal. Then fold the tarps for re-use.

Home Repair Resource center

Home Repair Resource Center empowers homeowners to maintain their homes for sustainable and diverse communities.

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