



United States  
Environmental Protection Agency  
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# Contractors Lead Safety During Renovations

## Visual inspection for exterior renovations:

A certified renovator must perform a visual inspection to determine whether dust, debris or residue is still present on surfaces in and below the work area, including windowsills and the ground. If dust, debris or residue is present, these conditions must be eliminated and another visual inspection must be performed.

When the area passes the visual inspection, remove the warning signs. Dust clearance testing (performed by certified lead professional) is an alternative to cleaning verification to determine if the work area is ready for re-occupancy.

These simple practices ensure that your jobs are better, cleaner, and safer. Your customers will notice the difference.

## Lead-Safety Shopping List

- EPA's pamphlet, "Renovate Right: Important Lead Hazard Information for Families, Child Care Providers and Schools." (Download it on our website at [epa.gov/lead](http://epa.gov/lead).)
- Barriers and signs
- Tape
- Stapler
- Heavy plastic sheeting
- Utility knife or scissors
- Heavy-duty plastic bags
- HEPA vacuum cleaner
- Paper towels or disposable wipes
- Mop and disposable mop heads
- General-purpose cleaner
- Buckets
- Shovel and rake



**WARNING**  
LEAD WORK AREA  
POISON  
NO SMOKING  
OR EATING



To learn more about working safely with lead, contact the National Lead Information Center at **1-800-424-LEAD (5323)** Or visit EPA's website at [epa.gov/lead](http://epa.gov/lead)





**As a contractor, you play an important role in protecting public health by helping to prevent lead exposure. Ordinary renovation and maintenance activities can create dust that contains lead—even small amounts of lead can harm children and adults.**



## Rules for Contractors

Federal law requires that contractors performing renovation, repair or painting work that disturbs lead-based paint in homes, child care facilities, and schools built before 1978 follow special requirements:

- Firms must be lead-safe certified.
- Employees must be trained (either as a certified renovator or on-the-job by a certified renovator) in the use of lead-safe work practices.
- Workers must use lead-safe work practices that minimize occupants' exposure to lead hazards.

## Talk to the Residents

When working in homes, child care facilities and schools built before 1978, you must:

- Provide EPA's pamphlet, "Renovate Right: Important Lead Hazard Information for Families, Child Care Providers and Schools" to residents or the facility operator before the job begins. (Download at [epa.gov/lead](http://epa.gov/lead)).
- You must also provide information to families whose children attend the child care facility or school.
- Post signs clearly defining the work area and warning occupants and others not involved in the renovation to stay outside of the work area.

The work area must be contained so that no dust or debris leaves the work area.

## What to Do When Working on Interior Jobs

- Remove furniture and belongings, or cover them securely with heavy plastic sheeting with all seams sealed.
- Close and cover all ducts in the work area with taped down plastic sheeting.
- Close windows and doors in the work area.
- Cover doors with plastic sheeting unless used as a work area entrance. If used as an entrance the door must be covered with plastic sheeting in a manner that allows workers to pass through while confining dust and debris to the work area.

- Use plastic sheeting to cover floors, including installed carpet, a minimum of 6 feet beyond the perimeter of the surfaces being renovated or a sufficient distance to contain dust, whichever is greater.
- Use precautions to ensure that all personnel, tools and other items are free of dust and debris before leaving the work area.

## What to Do When Working on Exterior Jobs

- Close all doors and windows within 20 feet of the renovation. On multi-story buildings, also close doors and windows below the renovation.
- Ensure doors within the work area that are to be used are covered with plastic sheeting in a manner that allows workers to pass while confining dust and debris to the work area.
- Cover the ground with plastic sheeting 10 feet beyond the perimeter of the renovation or a sufficient distance to collect falling paint debris, whichever is greater.
- If the renovation affects surfaces within 10 feet of a property line, erect vertical containment to ensure dust and debris doesn't leave the work area. Vertical containment may also be necessary in other situations.

## Do Not Use These Dangerous and Prohibited Practices When Working with Lead-Based Paint

- Open flame burning or torching.
- Sanding, grinding, planing, needle gunning, or blasting with power tools unless they have a shroud or containment system and are equipped with a HEPA vacuum attachment. Machines must be operated so that no dust is visible outside the shroud or containment system.
- Using a heat gun at temperatures greater than 1100°F.

## Waste

- Waste from renovation activities must be contained to prevent releases of dust and debris before the waste is removed from the work area for storage or disposal.
- At the end of each work day and at the end of the renovation, collected waste must be stored so that it prevents release of dust and debris.
- When the firm transports waste from renovation activities, the firm must contain the waste to prevent release of dust and debris.

## Leave the Work Area Clean

**When the job is complete, you must:**

- Collect all paint chips and debris, and seal this material in a heavy-duty bag. Dispose of the bag as waste.
- Remove the protective sheeting. Mist the sheeting before folding it, fold the dirty side inward, and either tape shut to seal or seal in heavy-duty bags. Sheeting used to isolate rooms must remain in place until after removal of other sheeting. Dispose of the sheeting as waste.

## Additional cleaning for interior renovations:

Clean all objects and surfaces in the work area and within 2 feet of the work area in the following manner, cleaning from higher to lower:

- Clean walls either vacuuming with a HEPA vacuum or wiping with a damp cloth.
- Thoroughly vacuum all remaining surfaces and objects in the work area, with a HEPA vacuum. The HEPA vacuum must be equipped with a beater bar when vacuuming carpets and rugs.
- Wipe all remaining surfaces and objects in the work area, except for carpeted or upholstered surfaces, with a damp cloth. Mop uncarpeted floors thoroughly.
- A certified renovator must perform a visual inspection to determine whether dust, debris or residue is still present. If dust, debris or residue is present, these conditions must be removed by re-cleaning and another visual inspection must be performed.
- Perform a final clean-up check. Use disposable cleaning cloths to wipe floors, counter tops and windowsills in the work area and compare them to a cleaning verification card to determine if the work area was adequately cleaned.
- When the work area passes the post-renovation cleaning verification, remove the warning signs.
- To order a cleaning verification card and detailed instructions, visit our website at [www.epa.gov/lead](http://www.epa.gov/lead) or contact the National Lead Information Center at **1-800-424-LEAD (5323)**.