

How Does the EPA's New Lead Paint Policy Affect Me?

As of April 22, 2010, if your home was built before 1978 you will be required by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to hire a certified renovator for your remodeling, repair or painting projects. Repairs include interior work affecting six square feet or more, and exterior work affecting twenty square feet or more. Fines for non-compliant renovators will be as high as \$32,500 per offense with possible jail time. A homeowner can choose to have a lead test performed in order to determine whether the rule applies to them, but if a test is not performed they must assume lead is present. The likelihood as to whether your home contains lead based paint breaks down as follows:

- Built before 1940 86%
- Built between 1940-1959 66%
- Built between 1960-1978 25%
- All Housing 35%

While lead paint dust is hazardous to all who come in contact with it, children are at the highest risk. Breathing in or ingesting even small amounts can result in lead poisoning. Therefore, it is important to contain and clean up all debris, paint chips and dust caused when disturbing lead paint. The training associated with the EPA's renovator certification provides the required ways to perform containment and clean up. The other requirements of certification include customer education and proper record keeping. The EPA has a publication called "Renovate Right – Important Lead Hazard Information for Families, Child Care Providers and Schools" which certified renovators are required to provide to their customers. It can be downloaded from the EPA's website at the following address:

<http://www.epa.gov/lead/pubs/renovaterightbrochure.pdf>.