



Privott

## EPA issues new lead paint rule for renovation, repair and painting services

Recent federal regulations will require contractors and firms that work on pre-1978 housing and child-occupied facilities to be trained and certified regarding lead-based paint by April 2010.

Make sure you're on top of this new rule that will become mandatory in 2010!

### Lead-based paint hazards caused during renovation, repair and painting activities

Children are exposed to lead primarily through lead-based paint and lead-contaminated dust and soil found in and around homes built before 1978. Common renovation activities like sanding, cutting, painting and demolition can create hazardous lead dust and chips by disturbing lead-based paint, which can be harmful to adults and children.

Without proper precautions, disturbing the lead paint in homes allows dust to settle on toys, windowsills and floors. Children can then easily swallow bits of dust and paint chips.

Today, childhood lead poisoning is considered to be the most preventable environmental disease of young children. Each year, approximately 1,000 children in North Carolina are exposed to dangerous levels of lead in their homes and surrounding environment.

Lead poisoning can affect nearly every system in the body. Lead poisoning often occurs with no obvious symptoms, and it frequently goes unrecognized. The only way to test for lead poisoning is by asking your health care provider for a blood lead test.

To protect against this risk, on March 31, 2008, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued a rule requiring the use of lead-safe work practices and other actions aimed at preventing lead poisoning. Under the rule, beginning in April 2010, firms and their contractors performing renovation, repair and painting projects that disturb lead-based paint in homes, child-occupied facilities and schools built before 1978 must be certified, use trained workers, and must follow specific work practices to prevent lead contamination.

The rule will affect paid renovators

who work in pre-1978 housing and child-occupied facilities, including but not limited to: renovation contractors, maintenance workers in multifamily housing, painters and other specialty trades.

The purpose of these requirements is to prevent the spread of dust from lead-based paint generated during renovation and remodeling jobs. The use of lead-safe work practices to contain lead dust will help ensure a healthy living environment for children and families. This effort will also help ensure a healthy working environment for electricians, plumbers, HVAC workers and other trade workers.

Beginning in December 2008, the rule will require that contractors performing renovation, repair and painting projects that disturb lead-based paint provide the "Renovate Right: Important Lead Hazard Information for Families, Child Care Providers and Schools" pamphlet to owners and occupants of target housing and child-occupied facilities and to parents and guardians of children under age six who attend child-occupied facilities built prior to 1978.

Contractors can read about lead-safe work practices for contractors in the EPA pamphlet "Contractors: Lead Safety During Renovation."

To get a copy of the EPA pamphlets mentioned above, visit the following Web sites:

- N.C. Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health, Health Hazards Control Unit: <http://www.epi.state.nc.us/epi/lead/lhmp.html>
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency: <http://www.epa.gov/oppt/lead/index.html>

**For more information contact the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health, Health Hazards Control Unit, Lead-Based Paint Hazard Management Program.**

Health Hazards Control Unit  
NCDHHS/Public Health  
1912 Mail Service Center  
Raleigh, NC 27699-1912  
Phone: (919) 707-5950  
Fax: (919) 870-4808  
Web site: [www.epi.state.nc.us/lead](http://www.epi.state.nc.us/lead)

### 2009 International Residential Code sprinkler requirement

In an overwhelming 1,283-to-470 vote in September at the International Code Council Final Action Hearings meeting in Minneapolis, Minn., it was mandated that sprinklers be required in all one- and two-family homes and townhouses built to the International Residential Code (not the 2009 North Carolina Residential Code) as of Jan. 1, 2011.

After years of beating back sprinkler advocates, the deck was stacked against builders this time when 900 fire officials showed up unexpectedly to vote for the proposal. As soon as the vote was over, many left the meeting room.

Pinopolis, S.C., builder James Anderson, chairman of the NAHB's Construction, Codes and Standards Committee, had this to say about the vote: "We welcome the insight and experience that fire officials bring to the code-development process because our codes are focused on life-safety issues. However, it seems clear that these particular officials were focused on one issue only without the benefit of perspective regarding how such mandates jive with hundreds of other code proposals considered at this hearing. That's unfortunate, because such reasoned discussion is what the model-code process was designed to accomplish."

In a statement to the media, NAHB president Sandy Dunn, a builder from West Virginia, said her members are not opposed to fire sprinklers per se. Rather, they are rankled by mandates — "because the evidence is clear that (sprinklers) are not the right solution for every home."

"Our members will continue to advocate for cost-effective construction and life-safety measures through the model-code process," Dunn said in her statement.

The sprinkler mandate will first appear in the 2009 International Residential Code (not the 2009 North Carolina Residential Code), which will be published by the end of the year.

At this time, the 2009 North Carolina Residential Code does not contain sprinkler requirements, but a Petition for Rulemaking could be submitted to the Building Code Council at any of its regularly scheduled meetings. 