

# TIPS FOR CONTRACTORS



Your customers might ask about lead paint hazards during a renovation project. Even if they don't ask, your knowledge of this important health issue makes a great impression. Take the lead test.

## 1. True or False?

A home has to be really old (built in the early 1900s or 1800s) for there to be lead in it.

## 2. True or False?

Lead paint isn't really a problem, because the only children who get lead poisoned are the ones who eat paint chips.

## 3. True or False?

Dealing with lead as a small contractor is too expensive and too inconvenient.

The Answers

1. False! Any home built before 1978 could have lead. The older it is, the more lead it can have. More than 80% of homes in NYS were built before lead levels in paint were reduced and may have lead-based paint.

2. False! Kids don't only get lead in their body by eating paint chips. Even more often, kids get lead in their bodies by putting their dirty, dusty hands in their mouths. They can also breathe in lead dust. Lead dust comes from scraping or sanding lead-based paint or from general wear and tear of paint.

3. False! A few simple steps can make a difference in keeping lead dust down, which protects you and your clients.

When it comes to lead, you can **WORK WET**, **WORK CLEAN** and **WORK SMART** without much cost or effort. Here's how to keep lead dust and fumes to a minimum:

1. Prepare the work area. Use plastic sheeting to cover floors, furnishings and other items that may collect lead dust. Sheeting isn't expensive, and should be disposed of after the job.
2. Think about methods that won't create a lot of dust or fumes. For example, use a spray bottle filled with water to soak any surface to be scraped, sanded or otherwise disturbed.
3. When cleaning up, use a wet mop with a detachable head. Throw out the mop head after you're done cleaning. Shop vacs are not good for cleanup since they wind up spreading around lead dust.



**REMEMBER!** It's easier than you may think for lead to become an "on-the-job" problem. But it's also easy to take some basic steps that prevent trouble – for you and your clients.

## FIX LEAD HAZARDS SAFELY

If you work on pre-1978 homes and child-occupied facilities where lead-based paint is disturbed (including certain repairs, maintenance and painting activities), you must be trained in **lead-safe work practices**. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) requires that if you disturb more than 6 square feet of interior surface or 20 square feet of exterior surface, you must be certified in **Renovation, Repair and Painting (RRP Rule)**.

For more information, visit [www.epa.gov/lead](http://www.epa.gov/lead) or contact the National Lead Information Center at 1-800-424-LEAD (5323).

**LEARN MORE:** [www.health.ny.gov/lead](http://www.health.ny.gov/lead)

**CONTACT US:** [LPPP@health.ny.gov](mailto:LPPP@health.ny.gov)