



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**I recently purchased a home originally constructed in the late 1960's which has been renovated by its multiple owners over the years. The interior walls, ceilings, baseboards and windows are all painted. The paint appears to be in good condition with little peeling, cracking, etc. I have three young children all under 6 years old should I be concerned about lead poisoning to my children?**

**Answer:** A parent's knowledge and understanding of the potential environmental hazards in their home is always the first step in protecting your children.

### *Five facts about your situation:*

1. The older your home, the more likely lead-based paint (LBP) was originally applied during construction as well as in early renovations. The EPA did not ban the use of LBP until 1978.
2. Past renovations may or may not have addressed LBP applied to building materials. Lead painted surfaces may have been merely painted over.
3. Past renovations rarely address the release and proper cleanup of lead dust created during paint disturbance. It is the lead dust which may be invisible to the naked eye which is the most harmful to your children.
4. Lead dust can also originate from past exterior renovations. High lead dust levels are often found around the home drip edge near the building foundation, and exposed dirt play areas which can result in lead dust being tracked into your home.
5. Children 6 years old and under are the most at risk from exposure to LBP because they crawl on the floor and put their hands and other items that can have LBP dust on them into their mouth. Because their bodies are still growing, children tend to absorb more lead than adults. Lead poisoning is cumulative and builds up over time and the symptoms often go unrecognized.

### *What should You do about possible lead in your home?*

- Keep all painted surfaces in good, intact condition, repair any peeling or deteriorated painted surfaces.
- Treat painted surfaces as lead containing. Do not disturb painted surfaces without testing the lead content in the paint. An inexpensive paint chip can be collected by you and submitted to a licensed laboratory. Make sure you get all paint layers (down to the substrate) in the sample.
- Take surface wipe samples of representative floor, window sills, or other surfaces of concern in your home to evaluate lead dust levels. Again these inexpensive samples can be collected by you and sent to a licensed laboratory. **Contact AET for sampling instructions** as well as to help you interpret your data.
- Regularly clean floors, window sills and other surfaces in your home. Wet cleaning is preferred. Dry sweeping and dusting merely push lead dust into the air which will resettle onto interior surfaces.
- Wash your children's hands, bottles, pacifiers and toys often.
- Make sure your children eat a healthy nutritious diet consistent with the [USDA's Dietary Guideline](#).
- Wipe off shoes before entering your house especially when tracking through exposed dirt areas.
- Use EPA Certified firms for renovations or if you do renovations yourself, use lead-safe work practices (see <http://www.EPA.gov/lead>) for more information.
- A blood test is the only way to find out whether you or your family member already have lead poisoning. Call your doctor or local health department to arrange a blood test.

When you need professional help or advice, email Alan Sutherland, CIH, CHMM at [a.sutherland@aetinc.biz](mailto:a.sutherland@aetinc.biz) or call 610-891-0114. We provide nationwide services; phone consultations are free. Check out the full range of environmental contracting/consulting services we provide at our website [www.aetinc.biz](http://www.aetinc.biz).

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