

# Wisconsin is first state with lead-based paint renovation, repair, and painting program

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(CHICAGO - Nov. 12, 2009) U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 5 has announced that two of Wisconsin's lead-based paint programs have been federally authorized. They are the Lead-based Paint Renovation, Repair, and Painting program, and the Pre-Renovation Education program.

Wisconsin is the first state authorized to administer and enforce the Renovation, Repair, and Painting rule, which mandates training and licensing in lead-safe work practices for construction contractors, property managers and others that work in homes and child-occupied facilities built before 1978. Gov. James E. Doyle has certified that the Wisconsin programs, to be administered by the division of public health, are at least as protective as EPA's and provide adequate enforcement.

The Lead-based Paint Pre-Renovation Education program requires construction contractors, property managers and others that perform renovations for compensation to distribute the lead pamphlet "Renovate Right; Important Lead Hazard Information for Families, Child Care Providers and Schools" to owners and occupants before starting renovation work.

"We commend Wisconsin for taking the initiative to prevent further lead poisoning by ensuring that work that disturbs paint is done in a lead-safe manner," said Bharat Mathur, acting administrator for EPA Region 5.

"We are very pleased to be implementing these lead-safe renovation programs in Wisconsin," said Karen Timberlake, Wisconsin Department of Public Health secretary. "Renovators and rental property owners play a big part in protecting children from lead-based paint hazards in their homes. With the training and lead-safe work practices implemented with these programs, they will make even more, older Wisconsin homes safe for children."

Lead contaminated dust is the most significant source of lead exposure for children. Common renovation activities like sanding, cutting and demolition can create hazardous lead dust and chips by disturbing lead-based paint, which can be harmful to adults and children. Lead-based paint was used in more than 38 million homes until it was banned for residential use in 1978.

Lead exposure can cause reduced IQ, learning disabilities, development delays, and behavioral problems in young children.

You can learn more about protecting your family from lead-based paint and EPA's lead program at <http://www.epa.gov/lead> or by contacting the National Lead Information Center at 800-424-LEAD (5323).

For more information about Wisconsin's new program, including information on applying for certification or locating training, contact the Wisconsin Lead Program at 608-261-6876, or visit the state Web site at <http://dhs.wisconsin.gov/lead>.