

Massachusetts Authorized to Implement Lead Renovation Program; EPA Provides More Time for Contractors to Obtain Certification and Training

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(Boston, Mass., July 22, 2010) – Massachusetts became the second New England state and ninth nationally, to receive authorization to administer and enforce EPA's Lead Renovation Program (RRP). The program mandates that anyone receiving compensation for renovating, repairing and painting work in homes and child-occupied facilities built before 1978 be trained and certified in lead-safe work practices by the state of Massachusetts.

By taking state-wide authority for administering the national RRP program, Massachusetts will be able to provide greater local oversight. EPA's authorization is based on certifications from both Governor Deval Patrick and Attorney General Martha Coakley, that the Massachusetts program is at least as protective as the EPA RRP program and provides adequate enforcement.

EPA also recently announced that it is providing renovation firms and workers additional time to obtain training and certifications to comply with the new lead rules. EPA will not take enforcement action for violations of the rule's firm certification requirement until October 1, 2010, and will not enforce certification requirements against individual renovation workers if they apply to enroll in certified renovator classes by September 30, 2010 and complete the training by December 31, 2010. EPA is taking this step because of concern that contractors in some areas may be having difficulty accessing training classes.

Even with the additional time to certify firms and obtain training, EPA will enforce against renovation firms and individuals who do not comply with the RRP work practices and associated recordkeeping requirements. The lead-safe work practices include dust control, site clean up and work area containment. It is important that contractors take proactive steps to protect children, families, and themselves while they take the training and file the appropriate paperwork.

Another recent modification to the RRP program is to eliminate a provision from existing regulations that allowed owner-occupants of pre-1978 homes to "opt-out" of having their contractors follow lead-safe work practices if there were no children under six years of age in the home.

The RRP program mandates that contractors, property managers and others working for compensation, in homes and child-occupied facilities built before 1978, must be trained and use lead-safe work practices. They are also required to provide the lead pamphlet "Renovate Right; Important Lead Hazard Information for Families, Child Care Providers and Schools" to owners and occupants before starting renovation work.

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.

At present, almost a million children have elevated blood lead levels as a result of exposure to lead hazards, which can lead to lower intelligence, learning disabilities, and behavior issues. Adults exposed to lead hazards can suffer from high blood pressure and headaches. EPA has eliminated the so-called opt-out provision because improper renovations in older homes can create lead hazards resulting in harmful health effects for residents and visitors in these homes, regardless of age,. The result will better protect children and adult

occupants during and after renovation, repair and painting projects.

The RRP rule requires certification of training providers and lead-safe work practice certification for individuals involved in the construction and remodeling industry. To date, EPA has certified 254 training providers who have conducted more than 16,000 courses and trained an estimated 320,000 renovators in lead-safe work practices.

"Because we have so much older housing stock here in New England, protecting kids from exposure to lead-based paint is one of the most important things we can do," said Curt Spalding, regional administrator for EPA's New England regional office. "Lead exposure is entirely preventable, and can cause permanent, serious, life-long problems. This rule is the next step in EPA's goal to protect children from the hazards of lead-based paint."

More information:

- Protecting your family from lead-based paint and [EPA's lead program](http://www.epa.gov/lead) (<http://www.epa.gov/lead>)
- National Lead Information Center at 800-424-LEAD (5323)
- [Massachusetts' implementation of the RRP program](#), including information on applying for certification or finding training (www.mass.gov/dos) or contact the Massachusetts Division of Occupational Safety at (617) 969-7177

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