

Lead-Safe Work Practices for Contractors

May 2025

Lead is a highly toxic metal that was commonly used in paint, stain and varnish in homes built before 1978. Disturbing lead-based paint and coatings without proper precautions can put yourself and others at risk of lead poisoning.

Protect your customers, your workers, your family and yourself by using lead-safe work practices and complying with state and federal laws.

If you need help accessing or understanding this information, contact ALRP@vermont.gov.

Assume Paint is Lead-Based



- When working on a building constructed before 1978, you are required by law to presume that all paints and coatings are lead-based.
- The only way to prove paint is not lead-based is to have a Vermont-licensed inspector or risk assessor test the property with an X-Ray Fluorescence (XRF) analyzer, submit the report to the Health Department, and receive a written exemption.
- Vermont does not recognize the use of swab test kits for paint testing.

Always Use Lead-Safe Work Practices



- Prevent unauthorized access to lead work areas.
- Contain the work area with plastic sheeting.
- Wear appropriate protective clothing and equipment.
- Mist or wet down painted surfaces before disturbing paint.
- Follow good hygiene practices before leaving lead work areas to ensure lead is not transported to break areas, public spaces, vehicles or home.
- Use proper cleanup procedures that will leave the lead work area in safe condition for re-occupancy.

Never Use Prohibited Work Practices



- Open flame burning or torching
- Use of heat guns operating at or above 1,100 degrees Fahrenheit
- Dry scraping or dry sanding
- Use of powered tools
- Hydro-blasting or high-pressure washing
- Abrasive blasting or sandblasting
- Chemical stripping



HealthVermont.gov/ALRP
802-863-7220



Comply With State and Federal Laws

Activities where lead-based paint is disturbed may only be performed by individuals who are licensed or certified. Learn more about licensing and certification at www.HealthVermont.gov/LeadLicensing.

Inspection, Repair and Cleaning (IRC) Practices

Owners of pre-1978 rental housing and child care facilities are required to perform IRC Practices every year, which include:

- Inspecting the property inside and outside
- Identifying areas where paint or coatings are in poor condition (chipping or peeling) and ensuring it is promptly fixed in a lead-safe way by workers with Vermont Renovation, Repair, Painting and Maintenance (RRPM) credentials
- Verifying that all pre-1978 wooden windows have window well inserts
- Removing any visible paint chips on the ground outside the building
- Performing specialized cleaning in common areas
- Submitting an annual compliance statement attesting to performing these activities

Renovation, Repair, Painting and Maintenance (RRPM)

The RRPM regulations apply to people disturbing painted surfaces in pre-1978 housing (renter or owner-occupied) and child-occupied facilities. Lead-Safe RRPM credentials are required for work done for compensation that will disturb more than:

- 1 square foot per interior room or 20 square feet per exterior surface in pre-1978 housing or child-occupied facilities

For **rental housing and child care facilities**, Lead-Safe RRPM credentials are required for work that will disturb more than:

- 1 square foot per interior room or 1 square foot per exterior surface

Individuals and companies performing RRPM work must obtain the Lead-Safe RRPM credentials, follow RRPM information distribution requirements before beginning work, and follow lead-safe work practices. Learn more at www.HealthVermont.gov/RRPM.

Lead Abatement

Lead abatement is a set of activities designed to **permanently** eliminate lead-based paint and dust hazards.

- Individuals who perform lead abatement must attend multi-day training to learn how to work safely.
- Individuals performing lead abatement work must be licensed themselves and work for a company with a lead abatement license.
- Each job must be permitted by the Health Department prior to starting work.