MNSPECT LLC
HELPING YOU COMPLY WITH THE CODE

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LEAD INFORMATION

When is lead an issue with construction projects?

If the home was constructed before 1978 and one or more of the following applies:

- ✓ The work will disturb 6 or more square feet of interior painted surfaces or 20 or more square feet of exterior painted surfaces. (This includes removal of wood siding.)
- ✓ There are windows being replaced.

If the home meets the above criteria AND the work is being completed by a person performing the work for compensation (contractors, landlords, investors, etc.), that person must be certified by the EPA. A homeowner can check to see if his/her contractor is certified by visiting: http://cfpub.epa.gov/flpp/searchrrp_firm.htm.

EPA lead paint abatement requirements

Effective February 1, 2011, "Lead Certification" will be required for licensed residential contractors, residential roofers and residential siding contractors who apply for building permits for renovations to be performed on existing residential buildings constructed before 1978, and Minnesota Statute 326B.106 requires municipalities to verify that a contractor has this certification prior to issuing building permits for projects that meet this criteria.

Information regarding "Lead Certification" in Minnesota can be found on the Minnesota Department of Health website: http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/lead/prof/forms/index.html.

Minnesota Department of Health information

Each year, approximately 800 children and 400 adults are newly diagnosed with lead poisoning in Minnesota. The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program and county health department officials follow up on cases, inspect homes, and help coordinate repairs with lead hazards. Scientific research indicates that there is no safe level of lead and that there is a need to help children and pregnant women recognize and avoid lead exposure before their level reaches 5 micrograms of lead per deciliter of blood (µg/dL). If you feel that you or your child may be at risk look to the questions below - if you answered yes to any of them - get a lead test. Lead poisoning is preventable.

- ✓ Do you have a child under the age of 6?
- ✓ Do you live in a home built before 1978?
- ✓ Have you scraped, sanded or repaired any painted surfaces in your home?
- ✓ Have you moved from another country or big city in the past year?
- ✓ Does your child have a playmate or sibling that has had lead in his or her blood?

The most important step is to prevent lead exposure before it occurs. However, if you have been exposed to lead, there are steps you can take to reduce the hazard. First, if you had a capillary blood lead test (e.g. fingerstick) it is important to get a venous blood lead test to ensure you have an accurate result. If the venous result is above 5 µg/dL, you should examine your surroundings to identify the source of the lead. Local public health can help with this, and you can find a list of most common sources on our "Common Sources of Lead" web page. If your level is above 15 µg/dL a lead risk assessor will come to your home to help find and eliminate the hazards. Levels above 45 µg/dL should receive medical attention and results above 60 µg/dL are considered emergencies and should receive immediate attention.

United States Environmental Protection Agency Information

What is lead? Lead is a naturally occurring element found in small amounts in the earth's crust. While it has some beneficial uses, it can be toxic to humans and animals, causing health effects.

Where is lead found? Lead can be found in all parts of our environment – the air, the soil, the water, and even inside our homes. Much of our exposure comes from human activities, including the use of fossil fuels (including past use of leaded gasoline), some types of industrial facilities, and past use of lead-based paint in homes. Lead and lead compounds have been used in a wide variety of products found in and around our homes, including paint, ceramics, pipes, plumbing materials, solders, gasoline, batteries, ammunition, and cosmetics.

Lead can also be emitted into the environment from industrial sources and contaminated sites, such as former lead smelters. While natural levels of lead in soil range between 50 and 400 parts per million, mining, smelting, and refining activities have resulted in substantial increases in lead levels in the environment, especially near those sites.

When lead is released to the air from industrial sources or vehicles, it may travel long distances before settling to the ground, where it usually sticks to soil particles. Lead may move from soil into ground water depending on the type of lead compound and the characteristics of the soil.

Who is at risk?

Children: Lead is particularly dangerous to children because their growing bodies absorb more lead than adults do and their brains and nervous systems are more sensitive to the damaging effects of lead. Babies and young children can also be more highly exposed to lead because they often put their hands and other objects that can have lead from dust or soil on them into their mouths. Children may also be exposed to lead by eating and drinking food or water containing lead or from dishes or glasses that contain lead, by inhaling lead dust from lead-based paint or lead-contaminated soil, or from playing with toys with lead paint.

Adults, Including Pregnant Women: Adults may be exposed to lead by eating and drinking food or water containing lead or from dishes or glasses that contain lead. They may also breathe lead dust by spending time in areas where lead-based paint is deteriorating, and during renovation or repair work that disturbs painted surfaces in older homes and buildings. Working in a job or engaging in hobbies where lead is used (such as making stained glass) can increase exposure, as can certain folk remedies containing lead. A pregnant woman's exposure to lead from these sources is of particular concern because it can result in exposure to her developing baby.

How do you lower your chances of exposure to lead?

Simple steps like keeping your home clean and well-maintained will go a long way in preventing lead exposure. You can lower the chances of exposure to lead in your home, both now and in the future, by taking these steps:

- ✓ Inspect and maintain all painted surfaces to prevent paint deterioration.
- ✓ Address water damage quickly and completely.
- ✓ Keep your home clean and dust-free.
- ✓ Clean around painted areas where friction can generate dust, such as doors, windows, and drawers. Wipe these areas with a wet sponge or rag to remove paint chips or dust.
- ✓ Use only cold water to prepare food and drinks.
- ✓ Flush water outlets used for drinking or food preparation.
- ✓ Clean debris out of outlet screens or faucet aerators on a regular basis.
- ✓ Wash children's hands, bottles, pacifiers and toys often.
- ✓ Teach children to wipe and remove their shoes and wash hands after playing outdoors.
- ✓ Ensure that your family members eat well-balanced meals. Children with healthy diets absorb less lead. See "Lead and a Healthy Diet, What You Can Do to Protect Your Child" (www2.epa.gov/lead/learn-about-lead).
- ✓ If you are having home renovation, repairs, or painting done, make sure your contractor is Lead-Safe Certified, and make sure they follow lead safe work practices (www2.epa.gov/lead/learn-about-lead).