

**If you own property
built before 1978, here are**

5 Reasons Why You Need to Hire a Lead-Safe Renovation Contractor



**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Labor
and Workforce Development
Department of Labor Standards**

Prevent the Spread of Lead Dust

Homes and other structures built before 1978 may contain lead paint. If your contractor does not follow lead-safe work practices in carrying out work that disturbs lead paint, lead-containing dust may be produced. Exposure to lead dust has been shown to be a significant health hazard for both children and adults.

In Massachusetts, enforcement of EPA's Renovation Repair and Painting Rule (RRP) has been delegated to the Department of Labor Standards (DLS).

DLS' Lead-Safe Renovation regulations (454 CMR 22.00) apply to anyone who is paid to do work that disturbs more than threshold quantities of paint in or on homes, schools, or childcare facilities.

This group includes:

- Painters
- Renovation and Remodeling contractors
- Electricians
- Plumbers
- Maintenance workers
- Landlords

Under 454 CMR 22.00, contractors performing RRP work must use lead-safe work practices, provide owners and tenants with lead hazard information and be licensed with DLS.

The Division of Occupational Safety (DOS) was renamed the Department of Labor Standards (DLS) in the Spring of 2011.



Prevent Lead Poisoning

**If you own property built before 1978,
Why you need to hire a lead-safe
renovation contractor...**

1. You'll protect your children's health.

The Massachusetts Lead Regulations applying to renovation protect residents, especially young children and unborn children, from lead poisoning. Lead harms a child's developing brain and nervous system. It can cause permanent learning, behavior, and medical problems. For example, lead is associated with lowered IQ, learning disabilities, and problems with attention, memory, growth, and hearing.



2. You'll protect your own health.

Lead can also cause many health problems in adults. It can raise blood pressure (and the risk of a heart attack or stroke). It can decrease brain function (making it more difficult to think, learn, and remember). Lead can also increase the risk of miscarriage, and cause impotence.

3. You'll maintain the safety of your home.

Contractors who are licensed in lead safety by DLS are trained to avoid creating lead hazards in your home. To become licensed, a contractor must take an eight-hour approved course. This course teaches the contractor how to:

- Set up a work space to prevent the spread of lead dust;
- Minimize and contain dust while working;
- Clean up safely after the work is completed;
- Check the work to make sure that no lead dust remains;
- Train others who work for the contractor.

4. A contractor who has made the effort to become licensed by DLS has shown professional responsibility.

A contractor who cares about your family's safety is an asset to any job.

5. It's the law.

A contractor who violates the lead regulations may be fined up to \$5,000 for each violation. Before beginning work, your contractor must give you a pamphlet entitled *Renovate Right*.

What about the cost?

A contractor who works lead-safe may charge a bit more for the job. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates that its lead-safety requirements will add a relatively small amount to the cost of most jobs. The additional costs may cover some materials (such as plastic sheeting to prevent lead dust from spreading) and some extra time to set up, work, and clean up safely. But careful contractors already spend time and money to complete a job safely and well; the lead regulations simply make sure that their methods are lead-safe. **Keep in mind: The cost is truly minor in comparison to the cost and heartache of poisoning a child, a family member, yourself, or even a pet.**



Renovate Right

Before beginning work, your contractor must give you the EPA pamphlet entitled *Renovate Right*.



To make sure that your contractor is trained in lead safety:

- Ask to see his or her DLS license and his/her DLS Certified Training Certificate. The Training Certificate will have his /her photo emblazoned on it.
- Ask your contractor what lead-safe methods will be used to set up and perform the job in your home.
- Share with your contractor the results of any previous lead tests you may have had.

If you think a worker is not following proper procedures, or is doing something that is unsafe, you should:

- Direct the contractor to comply with regulatory and contract requirements.
- Call DLS at 617-626-6960.



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Department of Labor Standards (DLS)
Call: (617) 626-6960

**To find a licensed contractor near
you and to learn more about the
Lead-safe Renovation Rule, visit:**

www.mass.gov/dols or
www.mass.gov/leadsafe

*In partnership with the USEPA Region 1, the New
England Lead Coordinating Committee (NELCC),
and Healthy Environments for Children Initiative,
University of Connecticut*
Part of the *Don't Spread Lead* campaign