



Lead-Safe FAQs for DIYers

Q: Does EPA's RRP rule apply to DIYers?

A: EPA's RRP rule states that any contractor or maintenance staff—including plumbers, electricians and painters—who disturbs more than six square feet of paint, replaces windows, or does demolition work in pre-1978 homes, preschools or child care centers must be certified and trained in lead-safe work practices.

Generally speaking, the RRP rule does not apply to homeowners doing RRP projects in their own home. However, it does apply to homeowners if they rent all or part of their home, operate a child care center in their home or if they buy, renovate and sell homes for profit (i.e., a house flipper).

Q: What are lead-safe work practices?

A: Lead-safe work practices are techniques used to prevent lead exposure during renovation, repair and painting activities. When used correctly, they make the work area safer for workers and the home safer for residents when the renovation is complete.

If you hire a lead-safe certified contractor, they have been trained to keep you and your family lead-safe during and after the renovation. If you are planning a DIY renovation, be sure to use simple and effective DIY lead-safe work practices, which include setting up safely, protecting yourself, minimizing the dust, leaving your work area clean, controlling the waste and cleaning a final time after the work is complete.

[Locate lead-safe certified contractors here](#) and learn more about lead-safe work practices for DIYers on EPA's [Lead-Safe Renovations for DIYers](#) page.

Q: I'm not remodeling, I'm just doing a small project. Do I need to worry about lead-based paint and lead dust?

A: Yes. Renovation and repair activities in pre-1978 homes that disturb lead-based paint can create dangerous lead dust even if the paint is covered by layers of newer paint. These activities include remodeling, maintenance, electrical work, plumbing, painting preparation, carpentry, window replacement, sanding, scraping and demolition.



If you have or think you may have lead-based paint in your home, it is best to hire a lead-safe certified contractor to perform any renovation work since these contractors have been trained and certified in lead-safe work practices. To learn more about lead-safe work practices for DIYers, visit [epa.gov/lead/rrp-diyers](https://www.epa.gov/lead/rrp-diyers) and to find a lead-safe certified contractor in your area, visit [epa.gov/lead/findacontractor](https://www.epa.gov/lead/findacontractor).

Q: Is it safe for kids and pets to be in or near the work area?

A: No. Be sure to keep kids, pets and anyone not working out of the work area during a renovation. Even low levels of lead in children can result in long-lasting health effects like lower IQ, slowed or stunted growth and hearing problems. Block off or seal rooms or areas where work is being done with plastic sheeting to contain any dust that is generated. You may need a separate place for pets because they can be harmed by lead and can spread lead dust into other areas of the home.

Q: Do I need to worry about lead-based paint if I do not live in a pre-1978 home?

A: It is unlikely you need to be concerned about lead-based paint if your home was built in 1978 or later. However, in some instances, lead-based paint may have been purchased before it was banned and used years later. Prior to any home renovation, repair or painting activities, verify the year your home was built. If you are unsure about the age of your home or the presence of lead-based paint, it is best to hire a certified lead inspector to check for lead-based paint in the work area of your home. If lead-based paint is present, consider hiring a lead-safe certified contractor to perform the renovation work. You can find a lead-safe certified contractor near you by visiting [epa.gov/lead/findacontractor](https://www.epa.gov/lead/findacontractor).

Q: How do I find out which year my home was built?

A: If you own your home, consult your ownership documents. You can also check your county recorder's office for property records or tax assessments or hire a building inspector to assess your house and give an age estimation.

Q: How can I know if my older home has lead-based paint?

A: A certified lead inspector can conduct an inspection and tell you whether your home, or a portion of your home, has lead-based paint and, if so, where it is located. A professional lead risk assessor can assess if your home has any lead hazards from lead in paint, dust or soil and what actions you can take to address those hazards. For help finding a certified lead risk assessor or inspector, call the National Lead Information Center at 1-800-424-LEAD (5323).

Q: How much does a lead-based paint inspection or lead-based paint risk assessment cost?

A: The cost for a lead-based inspection and/or a lead-based paint risk assessment varies depending on your location. To get a quote, search for a certified lead-based paint inspector or risk assessor at [epa.gov/lead/findaprofessional](https://www.epa.gov/lead/findaprofessional).

