



The single largest cause of childhood lead poisoning is from exposure to lead from deteriorated or disturbed lead paint. Millions of people, especially those living in communities with environmental justice concerns, continue to be exposed to lead at home and in other buildings where lead-based paint is found in deteriorating condition (peeling, chipping, cracking, or damaged). Nearly thirty percent of homes in the United States, mostly those built before 1978, have lead-based paint. This fact sheet highlights how the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) enforces lead-based paint laws and what you can do to protect yourself and your family.

## What Does the EPA Do?

The EPA makes sure that:

- Renovation and lead paint abatements in pre-1978 properties are done properly and safely.
- Homebuyers and tenants receive information about lead paint before renovations and before buying or leasing a property built before 1978.

The EPA inspects worksites and records of construction firms, property managers, landlords, and real estate agents for compliance with the lead-based paint rules. If an EPA inspector finds violations, the EPA may pursue enforcement actions to correct the problem. When a company violates the law, the EPA can require the company to pay a penalty and comply with the law.

## Know Your Rights Before You Buy, Rent, or Renovate a Pre-1978 Home

When you buy or rent a home or apartment built before 1978, you should receive the Protect Your Family from Lead in Your Home brochure, available at [epa.gov/lead/protect](https://epa.gov/lead/protect). You should also sign a disclosure about lead hazards. If renovations are being done, make sure that the contractor provides you with a Renovate Right brochure, available at [epa.gov/lead/renovateright](https://epa.gov/lead/renovateright), which includes information about lead hazards during renovation. Make sure the contractor is trained and certified to work on pre-1978 residences by checking online at [epa.gov/lead/findacontractor](https://epa.gov/lead/findacontractor). If you don't receive information about lead paint or a contractor leaves behind lead waste, lead dust, or paint chips, these may be signs of violations of lead-based paint rules.

## Report a Violation

Calling the National Lead Information Center or submitting information online at [epa.gov/lead/complaints](https://epa.gov/lead/complaints) helps the EPA's enforcement work. Information reported to us will be referred to the EPA's environmental enforcement staff or to the appropriate government agency that can best address your concerns.

Providing as much information as possible, including copies of documents, like your lease or contract and photographs, helps the EPA investigate, but you may also report violations anonymously.

## More Information about Lead

- There are actions you can take to protect you and your family from exposure to lead-based paint, such as hiring certified lead professionals, getting your child's blood lead level tested, keeping your home clean and dust free, and eating a diet high in iron, calcium, and vitamin C. Find out more at [epa.gov/lead/actions](https://epa.gov/lead/actions).
- Learn about real estate disclosure requirement if you rent or own a pre-1978 home at <https://www.epa.gov/lead/disclosure>.
- The Environmental Justice Toolkit for Lead Paint Enforcement Programs provides enforcement strategies and best practices provides information for federal, state, local, and tribal enforcement officials, and agencies. You can find the Toolkit at <https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2023-07/ejleadpainttoolkit.pdf>.
- Learn more about the EPA's actions to address violations of lead-based paint renovation rules at <https://www.epa.gov/enforcement/enforcing-lead-laws-and-regulations#actions>. You can also learn more about submitting environmental project ideas at [epa.gov/enforcement/supplemental-environmental-projects-seps#sepideas](https://epa.gov/enforcement/supplemental-environmental-projects-seps#sepideas).

**What you can do if you suspect a problem:**

**Call 1 800 424 LEAD (5323) or report a violation online at <https://www.epa.gov/lead/violation>**