

Lead Poisoning & Remodeling the Older Home

Carpet Removal

Guidelines

Worried about lead in your home? If you are living in an older establishment you should be informed. Lead can be a serious danger. Through this fact sheet, developed for property owners, renters, and contractors, learn how to safely remove carpet from your home that may be contaminated with lead.

The Dangers of Lead

Lead poisoning is a concern for both children and adults. It can cause:

- Permanent problems with health, learning, and behavior in young children
- High blood pressure, kidney damage, and fertility problems in adults

You can be exposed to lead any time you breathe lead dust, fumes, or swallow anything that contains lead.

About 75% of homes built before 1978 contain some lead-based paint. The older the home the more likely it is to contain lead-based paint. You should assume that any home built before 1978 contains some lead. To be sure make sure to test your home.

Carpeting can be contaminated with lead during remodeling or repair work. Lead paint chips, dust, and soil can be tracked into the home and get into the carpet. This can then be a risk for both children and adults.

You can protect yourself from lead by following the appropriate remodeling safety procedures.

Before You Begin

Use the checklist below to ensure a safe and prepared remodeling experience.

- Remove everything from the work area, including furniture, so these items do not get covered with lead dust.

- Turn off all the heating, air conditioning, and ventilation systems in the home. If the work is being conducted in the winter use caution when turning off the heating so the water pipes don't freeze.
- Close, cover, and seal any registers with one mil polyethylene plastic sheeting to prevent lead dust from settling in the ducts.
- Turn off any window air conditioning units and fans in the work area.
- Cover and seal the window units with plastic sheeting. Remember to uncover them when the job is complete.
- Close, cover, and seal any unused doorways in the work area with a layer of plastic sheeting.
- Cover the doorways you will be using by hanging a layer of plastic sheeting over the doorframe. Seal this plastic sheeting to the doorway with duct tape. Then use a utility knife to cut a six-foot vertical slit in the middle of the plastic sheeting to provide access to the work area.
- Attach a second piece of plastic sheeting to the doorway with duct tape to act as a flap. This will limit the airflow between the work area and the rest of the house.
- Use plastic sheeting to cover any floors you will be walking on when you carry the carpet out of the home. Make sure to seal it to the floor to avoid tripping on it.

Removing the Carpet

1. Mist the carpet with water from a spray bottle. Do not soak the carpet, but make sure the carpet backing and padding are damp enough to keep the dust down.
2. Cut the carpet into four foot by four-foot sections. It will make the job easier if you cut the carpet into pieces that are easy to work with.
3. Pull the carpet loose from the floor very slowly, so you do not spread lead dust.
4. Wrap and seal the pieces of carpet in six-mil polyethylene sheeting to prepare for disposal.

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Carpet Removal: Page 2

Clean-up

Once the carpet is removed, follow the cleaning procedures in the “Lead Waste Cleanup and Disposal” fact sheet.

How Do I Get More Information?

New Jersey Poison Control

New Jersey Poison Information & Education
System (NJPIES)
1-800-222-1222
www.njpies.org

Central Regional CLPP Coalition

Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention (CLPP)
732-431-7456

New Jersey Department of Health

www.state.nj.us/health/fhs/newborn/lead.shtml

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

800-424-LEAD
www.epa.gov/lead

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

Healthy Homes and Lead Hazard Control
http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/healthy_homes

Lead is a risk for both you and your family.
Be informed. Be safe.

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