



A Community Partner,
Helping People to Help Themselves

TheScoop

Serving Families in Walla Walla and Columbia Counties

July 2006

Walla Walla Housing Authority

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Be Aware of Potential Lead, Asbestos Hazards When Remodeling

With Summer in full swing, many of you may be planning home remodeling projects -- new flooring, counters, or updating appliances. The remodeling industry says it's important to keep potential environmental hazards, including lead and asbestos, in mind when remodeling.

That's especially true with the remodeling of older homes. Steps should be taken to minimize pollution sources, whether it's from new materials or from disturbing existing materials in the home.

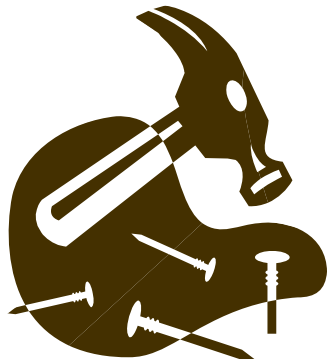
One of the major concerns is lead. The Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) says houses built before 1978 have paint that contains lead. People can get lead poisoning if they put their hands or other objects covered with lead dust in their mouths, eat paint chips or soil that contains lead, or breathe in lead dust (especially renovations that disturb painted surfaces). Lead is even more dangerous to children than adults.

Children with high levels of lead can suffer from damage to the brain and nervous system, hyperactivity, slowed growth, hearing problems, and headaches. Adults also suffer a range of potentially serious problems.

You can get your home checked for lead hazards in one of two ways, or both: A paint inspection tells you the lead content

of every painted surface in your home. It won't tell you whether the paint is a hazard or how you should deal with it. A risk assessment tells you if there are any sources of serious lead exposure (such as peeling paint and lead dust). It also tells you what actions to take to address these hazards.

If not conducted properly, certain types of renovations can release lead from paint and dust into the air.



The CPSC says you should take the following precautions before you begin remodeling or renovations that disturb painted surfaces (such as scraping off paint or tearing out walls):

- Have the area tested for lead-based paint.
- Do not use a dry scraper, belt-sander, propane torch, or heat gun to remove lead-based paint. These actions create large amounts of lead dust and fumes. Lead dust can remain in your home long after the work is done.
- Families (*especially children and pregnant women*) should be temporarily be moved out of the apartment or house until the work is done and the area is properly cleaned. If you can't move the family out, at least completely seal off the work area.
- Follow other safety measures to reduce lead hazards. You can find out about other safety measures by calling 1-800-242-LEAD. Ask for the brochure

AUTOMATIC
Housing Assistance
Payment Deposits
are deposited by the 5th
of each month

Rental Assistance Division

Jason Hahn

Rental Assistance Manager
527-4606

Families participating in
Tenant-Based Rental Assistance

Nina Hill

Rental Specialist
Participant last names A-K
527-4607

David Mitchell

Rental Specialist
Participant last names L-Z
522-7813

David Story

Housing Inspector
526-6277

Gaby Aguilar

Information Coordinator
527-4542 extension 100

Up-coming Office Closures

July 4th
Independence Day

Celebrate Responsibly!

When leasing rental property to a program participant, be sure to inform us of who is authorized to execute legal documents on the owner's behalf, if applicable. Only those **legally authorized** may sign the Housing Assistance Payment Contract, Landlord Certification, owner's lease agreement, etc.





Potential Lead, Asbestos Hazards, *continued*

"Reducing Lead Hazards When Remodeling Your Home". This brochure explains what to do before, during, and after renovations.

Another contaminant to be on the lookout for is asbestos, a mineral fiber that, when breathed in high amounts, can lead to an increased risk of lung cancer. The CPSC says that many building materials made up until the 1970's contained asbestos, including:

- Steam pipes, boilers and furnace ducts insulated with an asbestos blanket or asbestos paper tape. These materials may release asbestos fibers if damaged, repaired, or removed improperly.
- Resilient floor tiles like (vinyl asbestos, asphalt, and rubber), the backing on vinyl sheet flooring and adhesives used for installing floor tile. Sanding or scraping tiles or their backing can release fibers.
- Cement sheet, millboard and paper used as insulation around furnaces and wood-burning stoves. Repairing or removing appliances may release asbestos fibers.

- Soundproofing or decorative material sprayed on walls and ceilings. Loose, crumbly, or water-damaged material may release fibers. So will sanding, drilling, or scraping the material.
- Asbestos cement roofing, shingles, and siding. If sawed or cut, these materials may release asbestos fibers.

As a general rule, if the material is in good condition, it won't release asbestos fibers. You can't tell whether material contains asbestos by looking at it, unless it is labeled. If in doubt, have it sampled and analyzed by a qualified professional.

A professional should take samples for analysis, since a professional knows what to look for, and because there may be an increased health risk if fibers are released. In fact, if done correctly, sampling can be more hazardous than leaving the material alone.

The CPSC says anyone who samples asbestos-containing materials should have as much information as possible on the handling of asbestos before sampling.

Northwest Justice Project Opens New Office in Walla Walla

The Northwest Justice Project (NJP) recently opened a new field office in Walla Walla to provide a variety of high-priority civil legal services to low-income families. Three attorneys are based in Walla Walla and also have a satellite office in Pasco to serve people in Benton and Franklin Counties.

The office works closely with the statewide Coordinated Legal Education, Advice and Referral intake hotline (CLEAR), which can be reached at 1-888-201-1014.

The office looks forward to working with landlords throughout the three county area. For more information, please contact Noah Leavitt, Senior Attorney, at 509-525-9760.

Walla Walla Housing Authority

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The Scoop is written, edited, and published by the Walla Walla Housing Authority Staff

