

There is no safe level of lead in the body. Lead can harm anyone, but babies, young children and pregnant women are at special risk.

The Vermont Lead Law requires owners of rental properties built before 1978 to perform Essential Maintenance Practices (EMPs) to help prevent lead poisoning.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, your landlord or property owner will not be performing an indoor inspection of your home at this time. For your health and safety, we want you to know how to protect yourself and your family from lead poisoning.



## Lead in Paint or Stain

Before 1978, lead was common in paint and stain. If you live in a building that was built before 1978, you should assume that all painted and stained surfaces contain lead. You cannot tell if a paint, stain or sealer is lead-free unless it has been tested by a licensed lead inspector.

Over time, lead paint or stain on surfaces crumbles into invisible dust—especially from opening and closing doors and windows—that contaminates homes and soil. Even if the home has been repainted since 1978, the opening and closing of doors and windows can release lead dust from the original lead-based paint or stain.

It takes only a small amount of paint or stain chips or dust to cause lead poisoning. That is why it is important to **keep all painted and stained surfaces in good condition and to frequently clean areas where lead dust can accumulate.**



## Deterioration of Painted or Stained Surfaces

Deterioration is when the paint or stain on surfaces chips, peels, flakes, cracks, or is otherwise damaged. Simply put, if the paint or stain does not appear smooth and firmly attached to the surface it is on, it needs to be repaired.

Be sure to carefully look in all hard-to-see places. Let your landlord or property owner know if you notice any deterioration. The law only requires your landlord or property owner to make any repairs in a room if the total area of deterioration equals one square foot or more. The Health Department recommends that landlords or property owners repair any deterioration no matter how small.



## How to Keep Your Home Safe from Lead Hazards

Contact your landlord or property manager if you find deterioration of painted or stained surfaces. Send them pictures of the problem area(s) if possible.

- Use plastic sheeting to block off any areas where you see deteriorated paint or stain.
  1. Keep children and pregnant women away.
  2. Secure the sheeting on all sides with tape.
  3. Use soap and a wet disposable cloth to clean up any paint chips or dust.
- Clean window wells routinely and other high friction areas, such as door frames, using soap and a wet disposable cloth.



## Questions?

If you have questions, please email the Asbestos and Lead Regulatory Program at [ahs.vdhalrpgeneral@vermont.gov](mailto:ahs.vdhalrpgeneral@vermont.gov) or visit [healthvermont.gov/EMP](http://healthvermont.gov/EMP).

To learn more about lead hazards and how to prevent lead poisoning, visit [healthvermont.gov/lead](http://healthvermont.gov/lead).