

**WILLIAM H. SORRELL**  
ATTORNEY GENERAL  
**JANET C. MURNANE**  
DEPUTY ATTORNEY GENERAL  
**WILLIAM E. GRIFFIN**  
CHIEF ASST. ATTORNEY  
GENERAL



TEL.: (802) 828-3171  
FAX: (802) 828-2154  
TTY: (802) 828-3665  
CIVIL RIGHTS: (802) 828-3657

<http://www.atg.state.vt.us>

STATE OF VERMONT  
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL  
109 STATE STREET  
MONTPELIER, VT  
05609-1001

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Dear Fellow Vermonter:

I am writing in advance of the painting season in Vermont to remind you of the dangers of lead poisoning to you and to others, and of your obligations under Vermont laws.

Recent medical studies show that lead exposure to adults can result in increased blood pressure, cardiovascular disease, anemia, impaired renal function, thyroid dysfunction, cancer, stillbirths, miscarriages, and decreases in the performance of the nervous system.

Children's exposure to lead results in, among other things, decreases in IQ; decreases in reading and arithmetic skills; problems with attention, social and motor skills; and altered immune system function. High levels of lead can result in hyperirritability, convulsions, coma and even death.

Unfortunately, it takes very little lead to poison a child: Dust equivalent of a few grains of sugar taken over time can cause blood lead levels that are two or more times the Vermont standard for concern. Unsafe work practices put lead into the air and permanently into the soils, and risk exposure to you, others with whom you work, your children, the children and adults in the location you are working on, as well as their neighbors.

Risk of lead poisoning can be minimized by using safe work practices. These practices are required for the handling of paint in pre-1978 rental housing and in child care centers, and are recommended for all pre-1978 work sites. The law applies to any renovation, remodeling, maintenance or repair project that disturbs more than one square foot of a painted surface in and on any pre-1978 rental housing or child care center.

The law requires workers to take all reasonable precautions to avoid creating lead hazards and specifically **prohibits** paint removal by:

- burning
- water blasting
- dry scraping
- power sanding or
- sandblasting.

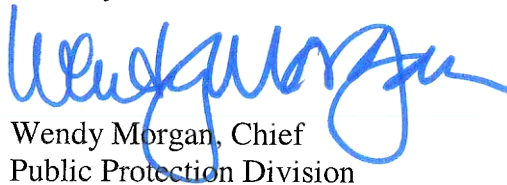
The law also requires the use of good work practices and safety precautions to prevent the spread of lead dust, including:

- limiting access to work areas
- covering work areas with 6 mil polyethylene plastic
- wearing protective work clothing
- protecting belongings of occupants by covering or removing them from the work area
- misting painted surfaces before disturbing the paint
- wetting sweeping debris and
- specialized cleaning at the conclusion of the work.

For further information please check the Lead Resource Guide on the Department of Health website at: [//healthvermont.gov/enviro/lead/lead.aspx](http://healthvermont.gov/enviro/lead/lead.aspx).

A person or company that violates the Vermont's childhood lead poisoning prevention law may be subject to civil penalties of up to \$10,000.00 per violation and other sanctions, under both the state's health laws and the Vermont Consumer Fraud Act, including criminal penalties. However, we trust that painting contractors will strictly follow the applicable requirements without any further involvement by this Office, in order to minimize the risk that Vermont's children and workers are harmed.

Thank you.



Wendy Morgan, Chief  
Public Protection Division