

How to Clean Up Lead Dust

Lead Tipsheet #2



While lead paint can be found in houses and buildings built before 1978, most lead paint is found in homes built before 1950. Lead paint that is peeling or chipping can be a hazard. Areas where lead paint rubs, such as door frames, windows, or even floors where you walk, can produce lead dust. Lead dust can also come from home repairs and renovations. If you sand, scrape or disturb lead paint you can make lead dust.

If You Live in an Old Building or Have Sanded or Scraped Lead Paint

Follow these directions to give your home a deep cleaning to remove lead dust. Once you have cleaned in this way, clean your floors, windowsills, door trim and baseboards with a damp rag or mop once a week.

Step 1: Prepare before you clean.

Look around the room. Put on gloves and pick up any paint chips on the floor or around windows. A damp rag, paper towel or baby wipe may help you pick up these pieces. Throw away the chips and dirty rags in a plastic bag. Vacuum the floor - vacuums with HEPA filters work best. "Allergen" vacuum bags are the next best choice if you don't have a HEPA vacuum. Do not use a broom as these will spread lead dust around.



Step 2: Mix your wash water.

Fill a wash bucket half full with warm water. Mix in a household detergent, following the directions on the bottle.



Step 3: Wash the woodwork and floors.

Start by washing the woodwork around windows, doors and baseboards with rags wet with the wash water. Be sure to work from top to bottom. Once a rag is dirty, throw it out. Change the water when it becomes dirty. Dump dirty water into the toilet.



Step 4: Wash the floors.

Using a new mixture of wash water, wash the floors with a mop or clean rags. When finished, discard wash rags and dump the dirty water into the toilet.

Step 5: Rinse and clean up.

Fill a clean bucket with water. Dip clean rags into the water and wipe all the woodwork that you washed. Using new rinse water, mop or wipe the floors. When you are finished, dump the rinse water into the toilet and clean the mop and bucket. Throw away your gloves, rags, and place the garbage bag in the trash.



Protect your family.

- Check this website: maine.gov/healthyhomes
- Call for advice: **866-292-3474** • TTY: **Call Maine Relay 711**

