



St. Lawrence County Public Health Department

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Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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St. Lawrence County Public Health Tips for DIY Lead-Safe Renovations

Looking into home renovations this summer? Whether you are doing the work yourself or hiring a contractor, it's a good idea to be mindful of lead hazards. Here in St. Lawrence County, the majority of our housing stock contains lead paint and even minor home renovations can create lead dust with devastating consequences.

Lead is a neurotoxin that can cause brain damage, slowed growth and development, and low IQ. It is especially harmful to young children and pregnant women. Currently, there are approximately 80 active cases of children with elevated blood lead levels within our county. In the majority of these cases lead hazards were found within the home.

Federal Law requires contractors that disturb painted surfaces built before 1978 be certified and follow specific work practices to prevent lead contamination. If you are doing the work yourself, you have the ultimate responsibility to ensure the safety of your family.

Lead-Safe Practices for DIY home renovators:

- Seal off work areas with plastic sheeting to prevent dust from spreading
- Cover floors, furniture, and vents
- Mist materials to prevent dust (never dry sand or scrape)
- Only use sanders or grinders with HEPA filters or hand scrape
- Do not allow others back into the room until the renovation is completed and the space has been properly cleaned
- Wet cleaning is the best way to clean up after a renovation
- For more detailed guidance refer to the EPA's Renovate Right Guide:
[The Lead-Safe Certified Guide to Renovate Right \(epa.gov\)](https://www.epa.gov/lead-safety/lead-safe-certified-guide-to-renovate-right)

Lead Hazard Reduction Funding is Available:

HUD Lead Hazard Reduction Grant Funding is available for privately-owned housing units built before 1978 that contain lead. For questions about the program or the grant process, please call the North Country Housing Council at 315-386-8576.

What to do if you think your child has been exposed to lead:

Contact their pediatrician or call the St. Lawrence County Lead Poisoning Prevention Program at 315-386-2325

A list of EPA Certified Renovation/Abatement Firms can be found at [EPA.gov/lead](https://www.epa.gov/lead)

For Further Information:

[Locate Certified Renovation and Lead Dust Sampling Technician Firms | Lead | US EPA](#)

[Renovation, Repair and Painting Program: Work Practices | US EPA](#)

<https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2020-09/documents/renovaterightbrochurecolor.pdf>

[Protect Your Family from Sources of Lead | US EPA](#)

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