

# Keep Lead at Bay

Check & Maintain  
Your Home



## What is lead poisoning?

Lead poisoning is when a person's health or body functions are negatively affected by lead contamination in what they eat, drink, touch, or breathe. There is no safe level of lead a person can have. While there are many sources of lead, lead poisoning is 100% preventable.

## Lead can pose a risk to your family's health.

Homes built before 1978 are more likely to have lead paint. If the paint is in good condition and is not chipping or flaking, then the risk of lead exposure is low. However, once this paint starts to break down, lead dust is released. Lead dust can spread in the air or settle on surfaces in the home. Children are at risk of swallowing house dust or soil contaminated by lead. They are also at risk of swallowing paint chips and flakes.

## Protecting your family starts with maintenance.

With regular maintenance, finding hazards before they become serious, your home can remain a safe place for your family.



***Don't forget about the outside!  
Lead hazards may be in exterior  
paint and the soil.***

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## Lead inside the Home

Common areas where lead hazards are found are:

- **Painted surfaces** – Walls **1** and baseboards. If disturbed, the paint can flake or peel, releasing lead dust.
- **Frequently Used Areas** – Doors, stairs and banisters **2**, and windowsills **3**. Over time, the paint wears down and creates lead dust.
- **Water lines & Plumbing** – Lead may enter the water supply through lead solder, lead plumbing, or fixtures that contain lead **4**.

## Lead outside the Home

Common areas where lead hazards are found are:

- **Exterior paint** – If your home was built before 1978, the exterior paint **6** may contain lead.
- **Soil** – Lead can enter the soil **7** from peeling, exterior lead-based paint.
- **Fences & Porches** – Porches and fences are often painted **5**. Look for chipping and peeling paint on or near the area where children play.
- **Vinyl Mini-Blinds** - Some imported, non-glossy vinyl mini-blinds may contain lead. Over time, sunlight breaks down the plastic and creates lead dust.

## Follow these tips to make sure your home is safe:

- Check for peeling and flaking paint. Use a wet paper towel or rag to remove them.
- Avoid hammering, sanding, or disturbing these areas when cleaning or renovating to minimize lead dust.
- Contact your local water utility for guidance on testing if you think your drinking water may contain lead. Use cold water for all cooking and drinking needs.
- Remove flaking or peeling exterior paint with a wet paper towel or rag. Remove all peeled paint from the ground.
- Cover the ground near the home with a plastic cover or plant bushes to keep children from playing near the area.
- Remove vinyl mini-blinds, if possible. After removal, wash the area with soap and water to remove any traces of lead.