



Managing lead paint on your property; Protecting your tenants from exposure

September 27, 2010 - Green Buildings

Being "green" should start with making your home environmentally safe for you and your family. One of the main hazards that are found in our homes is lead paint. Lead paint was outlawed in the U.S. in 1978 so, many houses and apartments built before 1978 have paint that contain high levels of lead or lead based paint. The paint is usually hidden behind layers of paint but can come to the surface in high use areas such as windows. Once the lead paint is made into dust it can enter into our bodies. Children are susceptible to lead dust because they often crawl on the floor and put toys in their mouth. Because of the risks associated with lead paint the Federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and N.Y.C. have created laws to protect building occupants from lead exposures.

Lead from paint chips and dust can pose serious health hazards if not taken care of properly. Lead can cause severe harm to children under the age of 6 including nervous system and kidney damage, learning disabilities, attention deficit disorders and decreased intelligence, speech language and behavior problems, poor muscle growth and coordination and hearing damage. However, lead paint can also impact adults by causing an increased chance of illness during pregnancy, harm to fetus including damage or death, fertility problems (in men and women), high blood pressure, digestive problems, nerve disorders, memory and concentration problems and muscle and joint pain.

Federal law requires that individuals receive certain information before renting, buying or renovating pre-1978 housing. Landlords and sellers have to disclose known information on lead-based paint and lead-based paint hazards before the lease or the home sale takes effect. Leases and contracts must include disclosure about lead-based paint. If more than 2 s/f of painted surfaces are disturbed during renovations then the contractor must also be informed of the presence of lead based paint and be given the EPA pamphlet discussing lead-based paint.

Lead paint investigations must be performed by a third party EPA certified inspector. The lead paint investigation can be performed by collecting paint chips or with a field portable X-Ray fluorescence (FP-XRF) instrument. The XRF can determine the presence of lead paint in real-time and will therefore offer considerable reductions and cost and time when compared to collecting paint samples.

Lead paint can cause serious health conditions in both children and adults. Therefore, lead paint should always be managed properly. Contact Hydro Tech today to see how we can help you. Rachel Ataman, LEED AP, is VP of technical services for Hydro Tech, Commack, N.Y.

New York Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540