

## RICOSH Health Alert

### Having Your House Painted This Summer?

If you are going to have your house or rental property painted this summer, remember that improper paint removal (e.g. unshielded power sanding, dry scrapping or blasting) can result in poisoning your kids, your brothers', sisters' or neighbors' kids and contaminating your yard, swings, patio, etc.

**“Improper removal of exterior lead-based paint from siding resulted in severe lead poisoning (requiring immediate hospitalization) of 3 children, ages 1, 2 and 4.”** - *Removal of Lead-Based Paint From Housing: A Case Report. Environmental Health Perspectives 111: 185-186*

Guard against the improper removal of lead paint by making sure any painter you hire is aware of ***and going to follow*** safe paint removal practices. There is a state regulation on hazardous exterior paint removal that *homeowners, landlords, and contractors* must comply with: **DEM Regulation # 24, Removal of Lead Based Paint from Exterior Surfaces**. It spells out work practices and site preparations and specific dust control practices that minimize lead dust exposures; and those *practices that are prohibited because they cause high lead dust exposures*.

If your are going to have a paint job done, here is what you can do:

1) First go on DEM's website and check the list of painting contractors and companies that have enrolled in DEM's Exterior Lead Paint Removal Certification Program. ([www.dem.ri.gov/programs/benviron/assist/extlead](http://www.dem.ri.gov/programs/benviron/assist/extlead)>.)

DEM started this program to enroll and publicize painting contractors who will work to minimize environmental lead exposures. The DEM site also notes some of the unsafe practices and tells you what a contractor should be doing to ensure safe paint removal.

2) When interviewing a contractor ask them if they are involved in the DEM program. If they are enrolled they should provide you with certificates and a project checklist verifying they will follow DEM safe removal rules and practices.

3) Include these very same lead safe work procedures directly in any written contract you may have.

**Fact Sheet Produced By:**

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