



Lead Poisoning Prevention Program

LEAD PAINT CERTIFICATES FOR RENTAL HOUSING

The Maryland Lead Risk Reduction in Housing Law requires inspections to be conducted at various times. A rental property, which was constructed prior to 1950, **must** meet any applicable inspection standards. The owner of a rental property of more recent construction **may** decide to have an inspection conducted if the owner wants limited liability protection for exposure to toxic lead paint in the property. The Maryland Department of the Environment maintains lists of accredited lead paint inspection contractors. Only accredited inspectors are qualified to provide these inspection services.

Maryland law also requires registration, fee payment and distribution of educational materials in addition to the inspection requirements. You may call (410) 537-4199 or (800) 776-2706 for further information about these topics, or log onto the Maryland Department of the Environment's website www.mde.state.md.us/lead.

RISK REDUCTION CERTIFICATIONS

An inspection contractor can issue a certificate, which indicates that there is a reduced risk of lead exposure in a rental unit. A **Full Risk Reduction inspection is generally conducted in a vacant unit prior to occupancy by a new tenant.** Your insurance company may also request a copy of the full risk reduction certificate as a condition for providing lead liability coverage. As of February 24, 2001, all property owners are required to ensure that at least 50% of their properties meet the Full Risk Reduction standard, regardless of change in occupancy. On or after February 24, 2006, an owner of affected properties shall ensure that 100% of the owner's affected properties in which a person at risk resides, and of whom the owner has been notified in writing, have satisfied the Full Risk Reduction standard. On or after February 24, 2006 an owner of affected properties must ensure that 100% of owner's affected properties in which a person at risk does not reside has satisfied the Modified Risk Reduction standard.

A modified risk reduction inspection is generally conducted in an occupied unit in response to either (a) a notice of defective paint or related conditions which may increase the risk of lead exposure or (b) a notice that a child or pregnant woman in the unit has a lead level of 15 micrograms or higher per deciliter of blood. You may meet the requirements for modified risk reduction without an inspection if your tenant signs a written statement that the work has been completed satisfactorily.

Methods of Inspection for Risk Reduction Certification

There are two types of inspection to meet either the Full or Modified Risk Reduction standard.

1. Testing for lead-contaminated dust an inspector must collect dust samples from each room in the unit. Each dust sample must be analyzed by a qualified laboratory, and the results must fall below specified levels. In general, testing for lead-contaminated dust is most likely to be successful in a clean, well-maintained property. Prior to testing for lead dust the inspector must verify that there is no defective paint on the interior or exterior.
2. A visual inspection Prior to the inspection, the property owner should review the lead hazard reduction requirements of the law. All work, including cleaning, performed to meet the lead hazard reduction standards must be conducted by an accredited contractor or supervisor. After all work has been completed, an accredited visual inspector or risk assessor can verify that the necessary work has been satisfactorily completed and can then issue the appropriate certificate.

LEAD-FREE CERTIFICATION

A property which has been certified to be free of lead paint can be exempted from annual registration fees and from further risk reduction requirements. Contact an accredited lead paint inspection contractor who has been approved by MDE to conduct lead paint surveys. An accredited inspector or risk assessor who is employed by that contractor will perform a detailed survey of all painted surfaces to determine whether there is lead paint.

If the lead paint survey determines that lead paint is present, an accredited abatement supervisor or contractor can fully abate that paint. An inspector can issue a lead-free certificate following a determination that the abatement has been satisfactorily completed. There is, however, no obligation under the law to fully remove or otherwise permanently abate all of the lead paint in a rental property.

A property which has no lead paint on interior surfaces but does have lead paint on exterior surfaces may qualify for a limited lead-free certificate. The inspector must determine that there is no chipping, peeling or flaking paint on the exterior surfaces. The limited lead-free certificate must be renewed every two years following an inspector's determination that there is no chipping, peeling or flaking exterior paint. Note: Limited Lead Free does not meet the Federal Lead Free standard.

For additional information contact the Maryland Department of the Environment,
Environmental Lead Division
(410) 537-3825

