

## **KNOW YOUR RIGHTS:**

**According to federal law**, if you're about to buy or rent a home (house or apartment) that was built before 1978, the Seller/Landlord must provide you with a form entitled "Disclosure of Information on Lead-Based Paint and/or Lead-Based Paint Hazards" and must provide you with a pamphlet, "Protect Your Family from Lead in Your Home." You can also obtain this pamphlet by calling (800) 424-LEAD or at [www.epa.gov/lead](http://www.epa.gov/lead).

**If you rented a home** before the law became effective (in late 1996), and the home was built prior to 1978, the Landlord must tell you any information known to him/her regarding the presence of lead-based paint on the premises. You can ask the landlord for this information at any time.

**If you're purchasing a home**, the purchase contract must give you 10 days to inspect for lead-based paint. Carefully choose a contractor to inspect for lead hazards. Inspect both inside and outside the home. Look for peeling or cracking paint and dust at moving surfaces such as window frames and interior doors. Soil contaminated by old exterior lead-based paint can also cause problems. If any repair work or removal is needed, choose only an EPA certified contractor. You can obtain a list of certified lead testing and abatement professionals at [http://cfpub.epa.gov/flpp/search.cfm?Applicant\\_Type=firm](http://cfpub.epa.gov/flpp/search.cfm?Applicant_Type=firm). You may also be able to get listings of local certified contractors from your local health department or telephone directory.

**If you are paying somebody** to renovate your pre-1978 home, the renovator must provide you with the "Protect Your Family from Lead in Your Home" pamphlet. In addition, the person doing the renovations is required to notify you prior to beginning any renovations at your home.

**If you rent an apartment** in a New York City building with three or more apartments and built before 1960, your landlord must ask you if a child under six years of age lives in your home when you first sign or renew a lease. The landlord must ask again, in writing, once a year if a child under six years of age lives in your home. If you tell your landlord that a child under six years of age does live in your home, your landlord is required to perform a visual lead inspection of your dwelling annually and must correct any lead paint hazards.

**Lead poisoning is the number one environmental health threat to children in the U.S. Nationwide, one in every 11 children between the ages of 1 and 5 has an elevated blood level for lead.**

If needed repairs are not made, call the New York City Department of Housing, Preservation and Development's Central Complaint Bureau at (212)-824-4328 to report peeling lead paint in a dwelling in which a child under the age of six lives. The Department should inspect the apartment, and if a violation is found, should issue a notice of violation to the owner. If the owner fails to correct the violation by the date specified by the Department, the Department should then correct the violation within sixty days.

## **KNOW HOW TO REDUCE YOUR EXPOSURE TO LEAD:**

Look carefully at the condition of *all* painted surfaces in the home, checking to see whether the paint or underlying plaster or wood is loose or chipping. Lead paint that is chipping, flaking, blistering, peeling or chalking presents an obvious, serious risk of lead poisoning, because children may eat the pieces of paint that chip off, and the deteriorated paint will produce highly contaminated dust.

Plumbing leaks -- even if as simple as a leaking radiator or a sink or tub that overflows -- can quickly cause paint to blister, peel and then chip. If this happens, keep children away from the area, and clean up all chips and flakes. If you rent a home, notify your landlord to have the leak repaired.

## **IF YOU'RE CONCERNED ABOUT THE PRESENCE OF LEAD IN YOUR HOME:**

**Have your children screened** for the presence of lead. New York State law requires that all children get a blood test for lead when they're 1 year and 2 years old. Ask your doctor or call your local health department to find out where to have the test done. Medicaid covers testing for children between 6 months and 6 years old.

**Most children being exposed to dangerous levels of lead have no obvious symptoms. The only way to be sure that your children don't have lead poisoning is to get them tested.**



**Learn about lead.** You can consult the following sources of additional information to learn about lead paint hazards, repair and removal:

The National Lead Information Hotline and Clearinghouse has information regarding lead poisoning and prevention. They can be reached by calling (800) 424-LEAD. The TDD number for hearing-impaired persons is (800) 526-5456. You can consult their website at <http://www.epa.gov/lead/pubs/nlic.htm>.

If you live in New York City, contact the New York City Department of Health at <http://home2.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/lead/lead.shtml>, or call (212) BAN-LEAD to learn about the New York City Department of Health lead paint abatement regulations.

If you live elsewhere in New York State, call (800) 458-1158 or (518) 473-4602 to speak with professionals at the New York State Department of Health, or visit <http://www.health.state.ny.us/environmental/lead/index.htm>.

You may contact my Environmental Protection Bureau at (800) 771-7755 or at [www.ag.ny.gov](http://www.ag.ny.gov) to receive copies of the following free publications:

*Look out for Lead! A Guide to Tenants with Preschool-Age Children*

*Protecting Children from Lead Poisoning*

*Lead Paint: Your Rights and Responsibilities*

**Dear Fellow New Yorker:**

Many older homes in New York State were painted with lead-based paint. This paint can be poisonous. Lead is a toxic metal that attacks the central nervous system when inhaled or ingested. It can cause learning disabilities, growth impairment and kidney damage. It is particularly dangerous to young children, infants and the unborn whose bodies are growing and changing.

Sellers, brokers and landlords must provide information to buyers and renters of homes built before 1978 regarding the presence of lead-based paint. In New York City, landlords must perform inspections and provide information about the presence of lead-based paint to tenants in multiple unit dwellings built before 1960.

This pamphlet can help you learn how to protect your rights and minimize your family's exposure to lead-based paint. If you would like more information, please contact my Environmental Protection Bureau at 1-800-771-7755 or [www.ag.ny.gov](http://www.ag.ny.gov)

Sincerely,

Eric T. Schneiderman

## Lead Paint In Your Home?

### Know Your Rights!



**Environmental Protection Bureau**

**Social Justice Division**

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Attorney General

