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RESIDENTIAL DELEADING ADVISORY

The process of removing or covering lead paint hazards, commonly called deleading, can be dangerous if it is not done properly. That's why the Lead Law (Massachusetts General Laws chapter 111, sections 189A through 199B), the Regulations for Lead Poisoning Prevention and Control (105 Code of Massachusetts Regulations 460.000) and the Deleading Regulations (454 CMR 22.00) have rules for how deleading is done in homes and apartments. These rules say who can do the work, safety steps that have to be taken while the work is done, how to clean up after the work and how the work is finally approved. These rules are enforced by the Department of Public Health's Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program (CLPPP), the Division of Occupational Safety (DOS) and local boards of health.

Who can do deleading work

Under these laws, only a licensed deleading contractor can do high-risk work, such as scraping or stripping lead paint, repairing more than a small amount of chipping or peeling lead paint so it can be repainted, and demolishing lead-painted building parts. Besides deleaders, property owners and their agents who take a one-day course can do moderate-risk deleading work, such as removing windows, woodwork, and just about any surface of a house, as well as repairing small amounts of chipping and peeling lead paint so it can be repainted. Lead-safe renovators trained and licensed by DOS may also be hired to do moderate-risk deleading work. Finally, low-risk deleading work can be done by all the people who can do high- or moderate-risk deleading work, and also owners and their agents, including contractors, who just complete the CLPPP low-risk booklet (and/or encapsulant booklet). Low-risk deleading means covering surfaces, applying encapsulants, capping baseboards, removing doors, cabinet doors and shutters, and applying exterior siding. Property owners and their agents may also do structural repairs and lead-dust cleaning for interim control.

Staying out of the home or parts of the home during deleading

To protect the people who live in the home or apartment being delead, the law also has rules about making sure they stay out of the home or apartment, or the area being worked on, in these ways:

- All people and pets have to be temporarily moved from the home or apartment for the whole time that high- or moderate-risk deleading work is taking place inside the home or apartment. The owner has to provide residents with a reasonable alternative place to live for this time. Property owners and residents should refer to the CLPPP document, "Notice to Property Owners and Tenants: Tenants' Rights, Responsibilities, and Remedies" for more information on alternative housing during deleading.
- People and pets have to stay out of the work area while most low-risk deleading work,

structural repairs or cleaning of lead dust, is taking place. They also have to stay out of the work area when deleading work of any kind is taking place in common areas outside the home or apartment, as long as they have another regular way (not a fire escape) to go in and out of the building. In these cases, people and pets can use the area once cleanup is completed after all the work in the area is done.

- People and pets have to stay out of the home or apartment for the day during application of encapsulants with an airless sprayer. They also have to stay out for the day during deleading of common areas when they do not have another regular way to go in and out of the building. When people and pets are out of their home or apartment for the day, it means they can come back to the home or apartment after cleanup at the end of the workday, and don't have to be out overnight.

It is very important that people whose home or apartment is being delead think carefully about what they will need during the time they are away from home, and take it with them. No one can return to a home or apartment while deleading that requires them to be out is still taking place, and has not been properly cleaned up. Property owners and residents must take deleading safety rules seriously and cooperate fully to make sure everyone is protected. No one should interfere with the work being done safely.

Getting ready for deleading to begin

People who live in a home or apartment in which any kind of deleading work is going to be taking place have to get written notice at least 10 days before the start of this work. This applies also to other residents of a building, if any deleading work will take place in common areas. Before deleading work begins, all household possessions of every type should be removed or stored in plastic bags in non-work areas. Closets and cabinets to be delead must be emptied. As a last resort, large furniture and belongings not removed from the work area should be put in plastic bags and left in the center of the room, where they will be covered with heavy plastic by the person doing the deleading. The reason for this is to protect everything in the home or apartment from lead dust contamination. Belongings must also be protected before an owner or agent performs low-risk deleading work, or other work that may be required for interim control, but the precautions are not as extensive for this type of work. In general, it is recommended that furniture and belongings be moved outside the work area, or covered with thick plastic and sealed with duct tape, before low-risk deleading begins.

Cleanup after deleading and returning home

A final cleanup will be done at least two hours after all the interior high- or moderate-risk deleading work is done. This delay is to make sure that fine lead dust will settle out of the air and be removed in the final cleanup. People and pets who were temporarily moved to alternative housing can return only after a **lead inspector or risk assessor** says that the home is safe. The inspector decides this after doing a reoccupancy reinspection, which includes an analysis of lead dust levels within the home. Residents should leave a phone number where they can be reached so that the inspector or risk assessor can call them and let them know when it is safe to return home. If the property owner or agent is going to be doing low-risk deleading work or other work for interim control after the residents return home, they will be taking some safety steps for this, as described in the CLPPP low-risk booklet. They will also be doing a cleanup when they are done with the low-risk work. An inspector or risk assessor will return at the completion of all the work and do a reinspection to check the owner's or agent's work.

Temporary ways to protect children from lead poisoning

Children exposed to lead paint hazards are at risk of becoming lead poisoned. This disease can affect every part of a young child's developing body, and in particular, can seriously and permanently hurt the brain, kidneys and nervous system. Even at lower levels of exposure, lead can cause children to have learning and behavioral problems.

The best and only permanent way to protect children from lead poisoning is deleading. But even before that process begins, there are some important steps that can be taken to protect young children from lead poisoning. Your lead inspector's or risk assessor's advice should be carefully followed because he or she knows your child's home.

As part of their normal behavior, young children place things in their mouths, especially toys and their own fingers. If there are lead paint chips and dust in your home, they may be picked up by your child's fingers, as well as by toys, foods and pacifiers that fall on the floor, and end up in your child's mouth. It is especially important to wash your child's toys and to keep your child's hands clean, particularly before meals and at bedtime.

Areas of peeling or chipping lead paint and dust should be cleaned. Wet wiping with paper towels and a general household detergent is best. Do not use your household vacuum cleaner to clean up paint chips, because this will only send fine lead dust into the air. Windows, windowsills and the floors under windows in particular are often areas from which children can get exposed to lead. Sills should be cleaned regularly if paint dust or flakes collect there. If windows are in poor condition, the best thing to do may be to keep the lower sash closed and open only the upper sash for ventilation. (This also protects your child from accidentally falling from the window.) Contact paper may be applied to areas of peeling paint on windowsills, walls or other surfaces as a temporary measure.

Sometimes furniture can be moved to block children from deteriorating paint or plaster. If deteriorating paint or plaster is in the child's bedroom, use another room as the child's room, if possible. Think of those parts of the home where your child spends most of his or her time, and try to keep them as clean as you can before your home is delead.

Lead paint can also get into soil. If the outside of your home has chipping or peeling paint, do not let your child play in the soil closest to the house. Be careful to wipe your shoes off on a mat before walking into your house, so you don't track in soil from these areas. Follow the advice of your lead inspector or risk assessor about soil on the property.

For more information about how the deleading process works, and how to protect your children from lead poisoning, call the toll-free CLPPP information line, at 1(800) 532-9571.