

Can You Disturb Lead Paint ?



In Rhode Island, not everyone can do work that disturbs lead-based paint. It's the law.

Lead is toxic. Housing built before 1978 is very likely to have lead-based paint. Projects that disturb lead-based paint create dangerous lead dust, so Rhode Island has laws about who can do that work. You may need to hire a licensed professional for some work.

For all housing and child care facilities built before 1978, **all projects disturbing lead-based paint except spot removal must be done by a contractor or Lead Renovator licensed** by the Rhode Island Department of Health, per the Rules and Regulations for Lead Poisoning Prevention [216-RICR-50-15-3].

SPOT REMOVAL EXEMPTION

Training and licensure are not required for spot removal, which includes:

- Disturbing less than 6 square feet of paint per interior room or common area
- Disturbing less than 20 square feet of exterior paint
- Temporary lead hazard control measures provided that no lead paint is disturbed

	Location	Area	Who can do the work in pre-1978 buildings		
			Lead Contractor	Lead Renovation Firm	Unlicensed Persons
Property with RIDOH Notice of Violation	Interior	Spot Removal	✓	No	No
		≥ 6 square feet	✓	No	No
	Exterior	Spot Removal	✓	No	No
		≥ 20 square feet	✓	No	No
Property with Order to Correct Lead Hazards	Interior	Spot Removal	✓	✓	✓
		≥ 6 square feet	✓	✓	No
	Exterior	Spot Removal	✓	✓	✓
		≥ 20 square feet	✓	✓	No
Work for Compensation in Housing Built Before 1978	Interior	Spot Removal	✓	✓	✓
		≥ 20 square feet	✓	✓	No
	Exterior	Spot Removal	✓	✓	✓
		≥ 20 square feet	✓	✓	No
Window Replacement or Demolition	Anywhere	Any Amount	✓	✓	No



Financial Resources: Financial assistance programs are available to help property owners with the cost of correcting lead hazards. Owners may also qualify for a state income tax credit.

Visit health.ri.gov/lead-hazard for more information.

**It's not enough to know who can do the work.
Anyone disturbing lead-based paint must work safely.**

- All lead hazard reduction and lead hazard control activities must be performed per RIDOH Regulations [216-RICR-50-15-12].
- Owners must make all reasonable efforts to ensure that occupants are not present during the work.
- Before starting any work, all furniture and other movable objects must be removed from the area or completely covered with plastic sheeting or other impenetrable material.
- The floor and all openings between the work area and any uncontaminated areas must be covered with plastic sheeting and sealed with duct tape. The area must be wet cleaned of all dust and debris after the work is complete.
- A licensed Lead Inspector must conduct a clearance inspection to determine that lead hazards have been corrected and permissible lead dust levels have been achieved.

Learn about safe work practices at health.ri.gov/rrp

Call 401-222-5960 with questions.

