



Langlade County Health Department

Langlade County Health Service Center
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Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.
Langlade County Health Department

News Release

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Home Remodeling? Protect Your Family from Lead Exposure

As summer nears and as home remodeling projects are being planned, the Langlade County Health Department wants to remind you of possible exposures to lead. Older homes and buildings built before 1978 may contain lead-based paint. Disturbing lead-based paint during remodeling and repainting can create dangerous lead dust.

Lead poisoning is the buildup of lead in the body. Lead usually enters the body in the form of lead dust that is breathed in or by eating something that has been contaminated with lead. Children under 6 years old take in lead more easily and are more easily harmed by lead.

Lead poisoning can happen slowly over time as lead builds up in the body or can happen suddenly if someone is exposed to a lot of lead at once. Most children who have lead poisoning do not look or act sick. The only way to know if someone has lead poisoning is by getting a blood lead test.

“There is no known “safe” level of lead to have in the body”, said Jean Turunen, PHN at the Langlade County Health Department. “Any measurable amount of lead in the body may have negative health effects and can cause lifelong learning and behavior problems”. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention currently uses a reference level of 3.5 micrograms per deciliter (**3.5mcg/dL**) or higher to identify children who have an elevated blood lead level.

The good news is that lead poisoning is preventable. The key is to prevent lead exposure before your family is poisoned. The following are ways to protect your children from lead poisoning.

- **Wash children's hands and toys frequently.**
- **Paint** - Cover old paint that is chipped, flaky or peeling with contact paper. Remove fallen paint chips immediately. Prevent children from chewing on or picking at windowsills and other painted areas.
- **Dust** - Mop and wipe floors, windowsills and window frames weekly with warm water and a general all-purpose cleaner.
- **Soil** - Do not allow children to play in outdoor areas near a busy street, highway, factory or auto shop. Cover soil around your house with grass, plants, rocks or pavement.
- **Candy** - Avoid giving children imported candies made with turmeric or chili powder.
- **Pottery** - Do not use handmade or imported pottery and highly decorated dishes for cooking and storing food unless you are certain they are lead-free.
- **Home remedies** - Only give children doctor-approved medicines.
- **Nutrition** - Give children a healthy diet with foods rich in iron, calcium and vitamin C. A healthy diet helps prevent lead absorption into the body.



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- **Don't take Lead Home with you!** If you work with lead, wash your hands and change your clothes before coming into contact with your loved ones.

For more information on renovating your home and being lead safe visit: Langlade County Health Department website or <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/lead/index.htm>.

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