Disclaimer

This pamphlet's sole use is to provide insight into possible home health hazards. This pamphlet is in no way to be used as a homebuyer's guide, substitution for medical advice, remediation technique, or supercede additional or more recent information. If you have concerns, please contact the groups or organizations listed within this literature. In addition, you can contact the local Health Department on many of the issues discussed here within.

You may also email us at batco@batco.com if you are considering having a certified professional onsite.

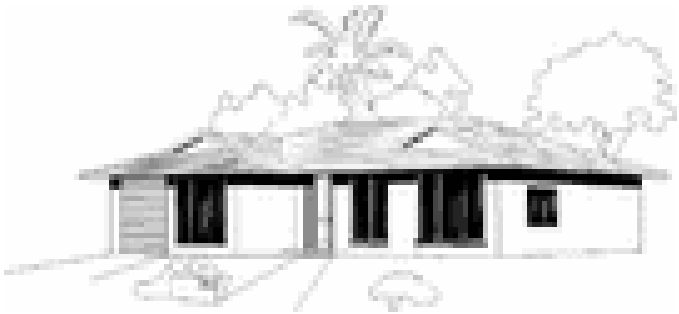
Protecting

Your Family

From Home

Health Hazards

Lead Base Paint



Is Your home at risk?

Many homes and apartments built before 1978 have paint that contains high levels of lead. Paint, chips, and dust containing lead can pose health hazards if not handled in the correct manner.

Where can Lead be found?

In homes in the city, country, or suburbs.

In apartments and both private and public housing.

Inside and outside of the house.

In soil around a home. (Soil can pick up lead from exterior paint or other sources such as past use of leaded gas in cars.)

How can Lead get into the body?

- ✓ Put hands or other objects covered with lead dust in their mouths.
- ✓ Consume paint chips or soil that contains lead.

- ✓ Inhalation of lead dust.

What Are the Health Risks?

In adults, lead can cause:

- ✓ Increased chance of illness during pregnancy.
- ✓ Harm to a fetus, including brain damage or death.
- ✓ Fertility problems.
- ✓ High blood pressure.
- ✓ Digestive problems.
- ✓ Nerve disorders.
- ✓ Memory and concentration problems.
- ✓ Muscle and joint pain.

Children under the age of 6:

Lead is an extreme health risk to children under the age of six!

- ✓ Decreased muscle and bone growth.
- ✓ ADD and learning disabilities,
- ✓ Hearing damage.
- ✓ Nervous system and kidney damage.
- ✓ Speech, language, and behavior problems.

How can I check my home for Lead Hazards?

There are some over the counter test materials for painted surfaces. Keep in mind that they are not all accurate and can not identify all problematic concerns.

- ✓ A paint **inspection** tells you whether your home has lead-based paint and where it is located. It won't tell you whether or not your home currently has lead hazards.

- ✓ A **risk assessment** tells you if your home currently has any lead hazards from lead in paint, dust, or soil. It also tells you what actions to take to address any hazards.

These should be performed by a certified professional.

How Can I Protect My Family?

If you suspect that your house has lead hazards, you can take some immediate steps to **reduce** your family's risk:

- ✓ Clean up paint chips immediately.
- ✓ Clean floors, window frames, windowsills, and other surfaces weekly.
- ✓ Thoroughly rinse sponges and mop heads after cleaning dirty or dusty areas.
- ✓ Wash children's hands often, especially before they eat and before nap time and bed time.
- ✓ Keep play areas clean.
- ✓ Keep children from chewing window sills or other painted surfaces.
- ✓ Clean or remove shoes before entering your home to avoid tracking in lead from soil.
- ✓ Make sure children eat nutritious, low-fat meals.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

The National Lead Information Center

Call **1-800-424-LEAD (424-5323)** to learn how to protect children from lead poisoning and for other information on lead hazards.

To access lead information via the web, visit **www.epa.gov/lead** and **www.hud.gov/offices/lead/.**

Indoor Biological Contaminants

Is my home at risk?

Any home can be at risk. Much of the reason revolves around the initial construction of the home. In addition, poor air circulation, dirty HAVCs and pets.

What are the health risks?

Allergic reactions are the most common health problems associated with biological pollutants.

- ✓ Watery eyes
- ✓ Runny nose, sneezing and nasal congestion
- ✓ Coughing, wheezing and difficulty breathing
- ✓ Headache, dizziness and fatigue.
- ✓ Skin itching

Dust mites have been identified as the single most important trigger for asthma attacks.

Where can biological contaminants be found?

High humidity areas are ideal for molds and dust mites.

Mold grows on organic materials such as paper, textiles, grease, dirt and soap scum. Mold spores float throughout the house, forming new colonies where they land.

Dust mites live and breed on dead human skin cells and in textiles such as bedding, carpeting and upholstery. When these are disturbed, the dust particles become airborne.

Pets or open windows and doors may allow outdoor contaminants such as pollen and other allergenic plant material indoors.

How can I check my home for Biological Contaminants?

There are no over-the-counter tests for biological contaminants. You can sometimes see and smell mold colonies growing on surfaces. Mold growth should be suspected wherever there are water stains, standing water or moist surfaces.

How can I protect my family?

- ✓ Air conditioning condensing units and humidifiers should be regularly cleaned with a disinfectant such as, chlorine bleach or UV lights.
- ✓ Clean surfaces with disinfectant that have mold on them. If carpeting or furnishings become wet, they must be quickly and thoroughly dried or discarded.
- ✓ Keep basements, bathrooms and other rooms clean and dry.
- ✓ Make sure there is plenty of ventilation. Keep the humidity levels less than 50 percent.
- ✓ People allergic to dust mites may need to replace carpeting in their homes with hard surfaced flooring.
- ✓ Vacuums with HEPA filters can help reduce the airborne dust generated by vacuuming.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information on mold related issues including mold cleanup and moisture ontrol/condensation/humidity issues, you can call the EPA Indoor Air Quality Information Clearinghouse at **1-800-438-4318**.

Or visit:
www.epa.gov/iaq/molds

Asbestos

Is my home at risk?

Most homes built before 1980 are likely to have asbestos.

What is asbestos?

Asbestos is made of certain minerals found in mother nature. Common forms found in the Southern United States are Chrysotile and Amosite.

Asbestos was used as an insulator, both thermal and electrical. It was used in nearly every facet of home design.

The use and manufacturing of asbestos in now prohibited in the United States.

What are the health risks?

Asbestos is not known to cause any immediate medical problem. Although long time exposure can result in asbestosis, lung cancer, and mesothelioma. There are other cancers and digestive tract problems also associated to exposure to asbestos. These illnesses may not appear until 20 to 40 years after exposure.

No "safe" exposure threshold for asbestos has been established, but the risk of disease generally increases with the length and amount of exposure.

Where can asbestos be found?

Asbestos can be found but not limited to following materials.

Paint
Floor tiles and mastic
Pipe insulation
Electrical insulation
Fireproofing
Siding
Sheet Rock
Roofing Material

How can I check my home for asbestos?

There are no non-professional identification tests for asbestos. Asbestos is identification by viewing the material with a polarized microscope.

If there is a concern, a certified asbestos inspector should be contact to come out properly survey and sample.

How can I protect my family?

As long as the asbestos containing material is in good condition, the surface is not broken or disturbed, it is not considered a health hazard. Painting over the material is recommended.

It is considered more hazardous to remove then contain!

If the material is deteriorated, broken or crumbling and must be removed, a certified asbestos contractor should be employed for the job.

There are no federal regulations covering removal of asbestos from a private residence; however, your state may have regulations which you would be required to follow if you chose to remove material containing asbestos from your home. Contact your state environmental agency. Federal regulations do require that any material removed from a private residence be packaged in a specific manner and disposed of in an approved hazardous waste landfill.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact your Department of Environmental Quality, your area Environmental Protection Agency office for a list of certified inspectors, laboratories and contractors.

Mississippi State Department of Environmental Quality
P.O. Box 20305
Jackson, MS 39289-1305
Telephone
Main Switchboard 1-601-961-5171
Toll Free 1-800-786-0661
Web Site
www.deq.state.ms.us

Carbon Monoxide

Is my home at risk?

Any home having a fireplace or gas stove, ovens, space heaters, water heaters or furnace without proper ventilation can be sources of carbon monoxide.

What is carbon monoxide?

Carbon monoxide is a gas byproduct of burning fossil fuels having no odor or color.

What are the health risks?

Carbon monoxide poisoning can be difficult to detect because the symptoms are similar to the flu and allergies. One way of detection can be if you feel bad only when in a specific area and once you leave that place the symptoms gradually go away. It is also identifiable if more than one person is experiencing similar illnesses.

- ✓ Low level exposure can cause nausea, dizziness, weakness and muscle ache.
- ✓ Higher doses can impair judgement, cause paralysis or coma and even death.

Where can carbon monoxide come from?

Carbon monoxide can be generated in several ways.

- ✓ Poor ventilation when using fuel-burning space heaters, ovens, ranges or grills inside.
- ✓ Appliances and other home furnishings, using fuel to operate, are not working properly. A fuel-burning furnace in poor condition having a cracked or rusted heat exchanger.
- ✓ An in-closed garage while leaving a vehicle running.
- ✓ Exhaust form flues or chimneys being restricted from venting to the outside.

Where can carbon monoxide be found?

Carbon monoxide can be found in any place of the home where there is poor ventilation.

How can I check my home for carbon monoxide?

There are carbon monoxide alarms you can buy and easily install in your home. These alarms are similar to smoke alarms and will alert you to dangerous levels of carbon monoxide. Be sure to install and maintain the alarms as prescribed in the directions.

How can I protect my family?

- ✓ It is recommended that a trained or certified expert inspect fuel burning appliances and equipment annually.
- ✓ These inspections should include checks of the following:
  - ➢ Heat exchangers showing rust or cracks.
  - ➢ Flue pipes which maybe cracked or disconnected.
  - ➢ Testing your home thoroughly with a carbon monoxide testing meter.
  - ➢ Checking for soot around openings in your furnace or boiler.
  - ➢ Restriction to the openings to flues an chimneys.

- ✓ Always operate fuel-burning equipment for its intended use and make sure it has been installed correctly.
- ✓ Never use un-vented fuel-burning appliances indoors.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact your local State Health Department.

Mississippi State Department of Health
570 East Woodrow Wilson Drive.
Jackson, MS 39216
Telephone
601-576-7400
Website

www.msdh.state.ms.us