



## Lead Poisoning Prevention Week

National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week is October 19-25, 2008. The theme for this year is "Let's Wipe Out Lead Poisoning – Renovate Right."

Is your home, child care facility, or school with children under the age of six being renovated, repaired or painted? Were these buildings built before 1978? If so, here are some things you need to know.



### Some Facts About Lead:

Lead can affect children's brains and nervous systems. Lead also harms adults.

Renovating, repairing, or painting a home /building with lead

based paint can create dust that may harm those that live, visit, or work there.

Lead gets into the body by breathing the lead dust/fumes or swallowing lead dust. Peeling, chipping paint and dust generated from the deteriorated paint and outside dirt where the deteriorated paint has settled, are the two main sources of lead poisoning. The only way to know if someone has lead poisoning is by a blood test. Call your doctor to arrange for a blood test.

**Nearly 75% of homes in Berrien County were built before 1979, the year after lead paint was banned.**

Beginning April 2010, federal law will require that contractors that renovate, repair, and paint homes, child care facilities and schools with children under the six and built before 1978 and in which lead-based paint is disturbed must be certified and they must follow specific work practices. This law does not apply to do-it-yourselfers.

### So what can you do now?

Before any renovations are done, you may want to have the building/home tested for lead. If the building or home was built before 1978, you may decide to assume that it contains lead. Twenty four percent of homes built between 1960-1978, sixty nine percent of homes built between 1940-1960, and eighty seven percent of homes built before 1940 most likely contain lead based paint

If you do not want to assume, you can hire a professional to test the home or you can purchase an EPA – approved test kit at a hardware store.

The Health Department may be able to test paint in homes where children with high blood lead levels are living. Please call 926-7121- ext. 5212 – Nursing or 927-5623 – Environmental Health.

During Lead Awareness Week, the Berrien County Health Department will be conducting blood lead testing. Information and prizes will be given away.

## Renovate Right

While the work is being done, some simple steps should be followed:

- Contain the work area: cover floors and furniture, seal off doors and air vents
- Minimize dust: Do not use open flame burning or torching, do not use a heat gun greater than 1100 degrees Fahrenheit, do not sand, grind, or blast without using a HEPA vacuum attachment and

- shroud
- Clean the work area thoroughly: wet mop with plenty of clean rinse water and use a HEPA vacuum
- You may even want to move



- out of your home while the work is being done. Schools and child care facilities may want to use alternative accommodations.
- When the work is done, make sure the work area has been properly cleaned.

For additional information, call the The National Lead Information Center at 1-800-424-5323 or [www.epa.gov/lead/nlic.htm](http://www.epa.gov/lead/nlic.htm)

*Special thanks to Barbara Carter for her help with this article!*

**The Berrien County Health Department has four locations to serve you:**

### Benton Harbor

769 Pipestone  
P.O. Box 706  
926-7121

M-139 Office  
2106 S. M-139  
927-5623

### Niles

1205 N. Front St.  
684-2800

### Three Oaks

21 N. Elm  
756-2008

Or visit us on the web at [www.bchdmi.org](http://www.bchdmi.org)

### Berrien County Health

**Department:**  
Preventing Disease,  
Prolonging Life and  
Protecting the  
Health of the  
Community.



### October is Cancer Prevention Month

October is Cancer Prevention month, so the Health Department will provide information about Breast Cancer, Cervical Cancer, Prevention/Screening and WISEWOMAN, as well as information about Lead Poisoning prevention, and Influenza and Pneumonia prevention. For more information about any of these topics, **please call the health department at 926-7121.**

### Lead Testing Event Thursday, October 23rd!

Please contact Carla at 927-5638 for an appointment. Testing will be done for children ages 12 months to 6 years. There is no charge if you bring your Medicaid card, \$15 without Medicaid. No child will be denied testing for inability to pay.

Testing will be done in Niles on Thursday, Oct. 23th from 1:00-4:00pm. There will be a Halloween theme, with candy and pumpkins for kids who get testing. Please come!



For more information, call the health Department at:

**926-7121**

This page is  
sponsored by the  
Berrien County  
Health Department

