

MASTER BUILDER *Advisor*

New Law Protects Homeowners from Lead Dust

A new Environmental Protection Agency rule requires that contractors follow protective, lead-safe work practices when renovating, repairing, or painting more than six square feet of interior space. The law, which became effective on April 22, protects homeowners from the risk of exposure to harmful lead dust and particles created by common construction activities such as sanding, drilling, and demolition. All contractors must now complete a special training session to become Certified Lead Renovators.

In December, 14 Woodmeister construction employees took part in an eight-hour class at the company's headquarters in Holden, so they could receive their certification by April 22. According to Woodmeister Human Resources Director Jay Scully, who coordinated the training, a cross-section of workers, including lifestyle technicians, painters, carpenters, and site supervisors, are now certified. "I fully anticipate that we will have another round of training soon to certify everyone on staff who is involved in renovation work," he said.

The regulation is really about controlling the clean-up and managing the dust created from renovation work, according to Bill Smith, director of field operations. Responsible for all Woodmeister employees who work on off-site construction projects, Bill explained that the lead paint dust is considered household waste, not hazardous waste. "It can be put in the regular trash

stream provided clean jobsite practices are followed," he said. "But, the dust can be harmful if people, especially young children, put it in their mouths."

The first step is a determination of whether or not the space to be remodeled contains lead paint. That can be done with a simple swab test of painted surfaces. "You really can't take it for granted that the home doesn't have lead paint," Bill explained. "Even a newer house could have older decorative components, such as antique

doors, in it. Anyone from Woodmeister would be able to walk in and make an evaluation about areas of concern."

If lead paint is present, steps are taken to protect the rest of the house and its occupants from the paint dust. They

include containing the dust to within the work area and having workers wear protective coverings to keep dust off their clothing. When the job is finished, every surface in the remodeled rooms is cleaned until it passes a dust test. "We have to make sure the space is clean enough for the homeowner to go back in," Bill explained.

Woodmeister customers won't notice a significant difference in how work is performed in their homes. "Our team has always been laser-focused on the customer," Jay said. "We run the cleanest job sites out there."



Site protection is necessary to avoid paint dust from penetrating the rest of the house.

New EPA Law Ensures Lead Safe Construction Practises, including:

- Protection from exposure to harmful lead dust created by sanding, drilling, and demolition.
- Certification of a cross section of workers - painters, carpenters, site supervisors, and others involved in renovation work.



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