

Health Beat

Lewis and Clark Board of Health Adopt Soils Regulation for East Helena Superfund Site.

What Are You Required to Do

- Get a permit before you start a project that displaces or disturbs more than 1 cubic yard of soil. The permit is good for 2 years.
- Post the permit at the project site.
- Comply with the permit requirements.
- Meet with staff and receive a brief training on how to safely handle soils. You will receive a certification good for 2 years.

Effective date of regulation:

June 1, 2013.

What is it?

The soils displacement regulation was developed by the Lewis and Clark City-County Health Department to ensure the health of residents living in the East Helena Superfund Site. The regulation is also aimed at protecting the Superfund clean-up work completed in and around East Helena.

How Does the Regulation Affect Me?

Before you begin any project within the Superfund Site that involves displacing one cubic yard or more of soil, you must get a permit from the Lewis and Clark City-County Health Department. This requirement applies to both residences and businesses. There is no cost for a permit.

How Do I Get a Permit?

Applications are available at the East Helena Lead Education and Abatement Program (LEAP), 306 East Main Street, Room 201, East Helena, MT 59635 and online at <http://www.lccountymt.gov/health.html>. After you complete the application, make an appointment to meet with LEAP Staff to discuss the project plan you are submitting for approval.

What Happens Next?

LEAP staff will check their records for soil lead concentrations for your property. If no records are available, soil sampling may be necessary prior to your project. LEAP staff will go over your plan with you and modify it if necessary to ensure that safe practices are used in the excavation, removal and disposal of potentially contaminated soils.

Institutional Controls Program Services

- **Education:** LEAP staff provide information about the location of contaminated soils and gives advice about ways to avoid or minimize exposure.
- **Sampling:** LEAP staff provide direction and assistance for any sampling that is required before permits can be issued.

Contact Debb Tillo or Jan Williams at 457-8583.

Are You Planting a Garden This Spring?



If you are considering putting in a garden this year, here are things to think about while gardening in the East Helena area.

- ◆ **The primary source** of lead exposure in a garden is from eating soil or dust that contain lead. Lead can be found in soil in and around East Helena, the top 3 to 6 inches is usually the depth lead concentrations are the highest. Lead accumulates most often on leafy vegetables (e.g. lettuce, spinach and kale) and on the surface of root crops (e.g. carrots, potatoes, turnips etc)
- ◆ **Wash any produce well.** Discard the outer wrapper of greens before washing. A 1% vinegar solution (2.5 table-spoons per gallon of water) or soapy water is an effective way to remove soil and dust from the vegetables. If you do plant leafy crops, proper washing is especially important.
- ◆ **Peel root crops.** Potatoes, onions, carrots, radishes, turnips, and beets should be peeled to remove any soil from their skins.

To minimize absorption of lead by plants the following control measures may be taken:

- ◆ Keep soil pH level above 6.5. Lead is relatively unavailable to plants when the soil pH is above 6.5 and when the soil has high phosphorus levels.
- ◆ Add organic materials (compost, manure, leaves, grass clippings) to your garden. In soils with higher levels of lead, adding one-third by volume organic matter will significantly reduce lead availability. Organic compounds bind lead and make it less available to plants.
- ◆ Locate your garden as far away from busy streets or highways and older buildings as possible. If someone nearby is removing paint or reroofing their home, cover your entire garden area with canvas to catch paint chips or dust from shingles. Remove the canvas after the work is completed. Keep dust off plants if possible. Wash your hands after working in the dirt.

Frequently Requested Phone Numbers and Websites:

- **East Helena Lead Program:**
406-457-8583
- **Lewis and Clark City-County Health Department and Co-operative Health Center:**
406-443-2584
www.lewisandclarkhealth.org
- **City of East Helena:** 406-227-5321
www.easthelenamt.us
- **EPA:** 406-457-5000
<http://www2.epa.gov/lead>
- **Montana Department of Environmental Quality:**
www.deq.mt.gov
- **Consumer Product Safety Commission:** 800-638-2772
www.cpsc.gov
- **Centers for Disease Control:**
<http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/>

Lead Program
P.O. Box 1231
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