



House Cleaning: How can it help keep my children safe?

If you live in a house built before 1950, there is a good chance that lead based paint is somewhere in or outside your home. What does this mean for you and your children? Lead based paint only poses a health risk if it is in poor condition; i.e. chipping or peeling, or if it is disturbed through renovation or repair projects. Even lead paint in good condition can breakdown and cause your home to have lead contaminated dust on windows, floors, carpets and any flat surface. Do you need to abate all lead based paint in your home? No, if you don't have the funding to abate all the lead based paint; encapsulation (covering the paint with oil based paint or sheet rock) is always an option if you are renovating or painting your home. If neither of those activities are in your future, cleaning is the best way to protect your family.

This includes washing floors at least once a week with warm water and a general all-purpose cleaner (Lysol, 409, Spic and Span, etc). The method endorsed by most professionals is to use a 3 bucket approach:

- 1st bucket contains the cleaning agent.
- 2nd bucket contains warm rinse water.
- 3rd bucket contains clean, hot water. After you wash your floors rinse out your mop with hot, clean water and let air dry.

Using this method will greatly reduce any potential lead contaminated dust on floors and provide a safe living area for your children to play on.

Washing walls, window sills, window troughs and any reachable surfaces with warm water, cleaning agent and a sponge or clean rag should be incorporated into your cleaning routine to reduce your children's potential exposure to lead in your home.

HAPPY CLEANING!

Lead Program
P.O. Box 1231
East Helena, MT
59635

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**Frequently Requested Phone #'s
and websites:**

East Helena Lead Program:
406-457-8583

Lewis and Clark Public Health:
406-443-2584

[http://www.lccountymt.gov/
health.html](http://www.lccountymt.gov/health.html)

City of East Helena:
406-227-5321
www.easthelenamt.us

EPA: Betsy Burns is the Project
Manager for the East Helena Super-
fund Site, her number is: 406-457-
5013

MT Dept of Environmental Quality:
Daryl Reed is the Project Manager
for the East Helena Site, his number
is: 406-444-6433
www.deq.mt.gov



Dust Removal in Your Home: Not all vacuum cleaners are the same. Newer models may claim to be High Efficiency Particulate Air (HEPA) that use filters that can trap extremely small particles. However, a true HEPA vacuum contains a filter that can trap 99.97 percent of all airborne particles larger than 0.3 microns. To illustrate how small 0.3 micron is, consider that a human blood cell is usually between 6—8 microns wide. The average non HEPA vacuum releases particles smaller than 50 microns back into the air and are spread throughout the house, which means you and your loved ones are being exposed to potentially harmful dust. Don't rely on vacuuming alone. Wipe the areas that small children can reach with a wet rag or sponge to remove all dust from your child's living area.

Cleaning on a consistent basis will help reduce lead dust in your home.

Furnace Filters—How often should you replace them?

Furnace filters come in a variety of types, the most common being: 1 -inch pleated, which need to be replaced once a month to be effective. Manufacturers of high efficiency furnaces recommend using 3- inch filters, which need to be changed every 3 months. Check your furnace once a month or more and if it is visibly dirty or clogged, change it!! Checking your filters on a regular basis protects your family and ensures your furnace is running safely and efficiently.

With routine furnace maintenance, you'll be rewarded with lower heating bills and better indoor air quality.