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NEW NORTH CAROLINA REGULATION ADDRESSES LEAD-BASED PAINT HAZARDS CREATED DURING RENOVATION, REPAIR AND PAINTING ACTIVITIES IN HOUSING AND CHILD-OCCUPIED FACILITIES

Approximately 250,000 children in the United States have potentially harmful levels of lead in their bloodstream. Lead poisoning can affect nearly every system in the body, but it often occurs with no obvious symptoms. Lead poisoning in children can cause learning disabilities, behavioral problems, and at very high levels, seizures, coma, and even death. And yet, lead poisoning is widely considered to be the most preventable environmental disease of young children. Asking your health care provider to perform a blood lead test is the only sure way to determine if a child has been exposed to lead.

Children are exposed to lead primarily through lead-based paint in poor condition and lead-contaminated dust and soil found in facilities built before 1978. Common renovation activities that disturb lead-based paint and coatings may create lead dust and paint chips which can be harmful to children and adults.

To protect against this risk, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued the Lead; Renovation, Repair and Painting Program (RRP) Rule on April 22, 2008, requiring the use of lead-safe work practices and other actions aimed at preventing lead poisoning when disturbing lead-based paint during renovation and remodeling work. On January 21, 2010, the State of North Carolina gained authorization for the Lead-Based Paint Hazard Management Program for Renovation, Repair and Painting. This authorization enables the State of North Carolina to administer the Renovation, Repair and Painting (RRP) Program in North Carolina in lieu of EPA.

North Carolina legislation (N.C. Gen. Stat. § 130A-453.12 – 453.21) was adopted in August 2009, creating the North Carolina Lead-Based Paint Hazard Management Program for Renovation, Repair and Painting (LHMP-RRP). This legislation, and the Rules adopted to implement it (10A N.C.A.C. 41C .0900) became effective January 1, 2010. The rules require the use of lead-safe work practices and other actions aimed at preventing lead poisoning when disturbing lead-based paint during renovation and remodeling work.

The use of lead-safe work practices to contain lead dust will help ensure a healthier living environment for children and families. It will also help ensure a healthier working environment for painters, carpenters, and other trades workers.

The North Carolina LHMP-RRP Rules affects renovators who receive compensation for work performed in single and multi-family housing and in child-occupied facilities built before 1978. Child-occupied facilities may include, but are not limited to, day care centers, preschools, and kindergarten classrooms.

For housing and child-occupied facilities built before 1978, prior to beginning renovation projects, renovation firms must provide the lead hazard information pamphlet "Renovate Right: Important Lead Hazard Information for Families, Child Care Providers, and Schools" to owners and occupants of housing or owners of child-occupied facilities and to the parents of children under age six who attend child-occupied facilities.

The North Carolina LHMP-RRP program mandates that **firms** performing renovation, repair, or painting become certified. Additionally, the firms must ensure that **individuals** such as renovators, contractors, property managers, and others performing renovations for compensation, in homes and child-occupied facilities built before 1978, must also be certified, use trained workers, and use lead-safe work practices. To verify that a renovation firm and the assigned renovator are properly certified by the state of North Carolina, ask to see the renovation firm certification and certified renovator documents issued by the NC DHHS, Division of Public Health, Health Hazards Control Unit (HHCU) before beginning the project. Verification of the renovation firm and assigned renovator certifications can also be done by visiting the HHCU website.

For more information about the NC LHMP-RRP Renovation, Repair and Painting Rules, call the NC DHHS, Division of Public Health, HHCU at (919) 707-5950 or visit our website at <http://www.epi.state.nc.us/epi/lead/lhmp.html> .