



At a Glance

Why We Did This Project

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Office of Inspector General (OIG) conducted this audit to determine whether the EPA has an effective strategy to implement and enforce the lead-based paint rule.

The EPA's Lead Renovation, Repair and Painting (RRP) Rule is intended to protect the public by addressing hazards associated with renovation, repair and painting activities that disturb lead-based paint in specific housing and child-occupied facilities. Lead-based paint was used in an estimated 38 million homes prior to its ban for residential use in 1978. Renovation, repair and painting activities that disturb lead-based paint can create hazardous exposures to lead. In children, exposure to lead can cause health problems, including the potential for slower growth, lower IQ and behavioral problems.

This report addresses the following:

- *Ensuring the safety of chemicals.*

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List of [OIG reports](#).

EPA Not Effectively Implementing the Lead-Based Paint Renovation, Repair and Painting Rule

What We Found

The EPA does not have an effective strategy to implement and enforce the lead-based paint rule. Specifically:

- The EPA does not have sufficient controls to assess RRP program effectiveness and progress toward goals. The agency does not review regional targeting strategies, track RRP resources and outreach activities, review inspections, or evaluate progress toward reducing disparities in blood lead levels among children.
- There is insufficient coordination and communication between the two EPA program offices primarily responsible for the RRP program—the Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention and the Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance.
- EPA regions could benefit from sharing regionally developed tools, ideas and approaches.

Effective oversight and enforcement are needed to further reduce lead exposures from renovation, repair and painting activities.

The issues noted above occurred because program guidance does not sufficiently define RRP program objectives, goals and measurable outcomes to track progress and determine accountability.

Without an effective strategy for the RRP program, the EPA cannot determine whether the program is achieving its intended purpose to protect the public, particularly related to specific housing and child-occupied facilities.

Recommendations and Agency Response

We recommend that the EPA identify the regulated universe for the RRP program; update current program guidance; establish management oversight controls as well as objectives, goals and measurable outcomes; and establish a forum to share best practices and innovations. We consider two of our six recommendations resolved with corrective actions pending, while four recommendations are unresolved.