Protect yourself and your family from lead exposure by being aware of potential hazards during home renovation projects.

If your home was built before 1978, a home renovation project can easily create dangerous lead dust. This is one of the most common ways children are exposed to lead. Even low levels of lead in children’s blood have been shown to affect a child's intellect, concentration, and academic achievement.

EPA encourages anyone pursuing renovations in a pre-1978 home to use a lead-safe certified contractor. However, if you plan to do-it-yourself (DIY), there are simple, important steps you should take to keep yourself and others safe during and after the renovation.

~34.6 MILLION HOMES in the U.S. have lead-based paint somewhere in the building*  


Considering a home renovation project?  
This chart can help you stay lead-safe while you renovate:

Set Up Safely

- Keep dust in and family members and other nonworkers out.
- Carefully tape off your work area and use plastic sheeting to cover objects you can’t remove.

Protect Yourself

- Avoid inhaling or ingesting lead dust, and wear protective clothing like disposable coveralls, shoe covers and an N-100 certified respirator mask to avoid carrying lead dust out of the work area.

Minimize Dust

- Use the right equipment to minimize dust while you work. Plastic sheeting, masking tape, heavy-duty plastic bags, and a misting bottle will help you collect and dispose of all dust.

Leave the Work Area Clean

- Clean up your work area as you go by vacuuming with a HEPA vacuum cleaner frequently and cleaning your tools daily.
- Leave your work area clean at the end of each day.

Control Your Waste

- Bag and seal waste from DIY renovation projects.
- Most waste generated during these activities should be taken to a licensed solid waste landfill.

Clean One More Time

- After completing your DIY project and before letting people back in the work area, clean all surfaces with damp disposable cloths.
- Consider having the area tested for lead dust hazards by a certified firm.

This document presents an overview of lead-safe work practices. For detailed information about lead-safe work practices, please visit epa.gov/lead/rrp-divers.