CLEAN YOUR HOME LEAD-SAFE.

How to protect your family from invisible lead dust in your home.



LEAD POISONING IS PREVENTABLE. Lead dust is too small to see and can be inside your home from lead-based paint, lead-contaminated soil that has been tracked indoors on shoes, pets, and other belongings, and take-home lead from jobs or hobbies involving lead. **You can protect your family from lead dust in your home through routine cleaning using lead-safe cleaning methods.**

⚠ Some common cleaning methods and supplies are not safe for cleaning homes with lead dust

Dry sweeping, dry dusting, and using a vacuum without a high efficiency particulate air filter (HEPA) can all spread lead dust into the air and onto other surfaces where it can be breathed in or swallowed.

Using reusable cleaning supplies like sponges, scrub brushes, microfiber cleaning cloths, and mop heads can spread lead dust to other surfaces and contaminate buckets with cleaning fluid or rinse water.

To effectively clean a home with lead dust:

USE A VACUUM WITH A HEPA FILTER

Be sure the HEPA filter is designed to trap 99.97% of particulates. If you have soft surfaces like carpets, rugs, or upholstery, make sure that the vacuum also has a beater bar or rotating brush attachment.

USE WET OR DAMP DISPOSABLE MATERIALS

Using disposable cleaning materials like paper towels and disposable mop pads prevents the spread of lead dust to other surfaces. It is important that they are wet or damp so that they can trap lead particles and dirt.

WEAR DISPOSABLE GLOVES

Gloves protect your hands from harmful lead dust. Learn how to safely remove gloves here.

CLEAN YOUR HOME REGULARLY

It is recommended that homes with lead-based paint be cleaned at least weekly. If this isn't possible, frequently clean areas where young children spend time.

LEARN HOW TO CLEAN LEAD-SAFE

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How to Clean with a HEPA Vacuum:

VACUUM ROOMS FROM TOP TO BOTTOM

Start with the highest surfaces in a room like ceiling vents and work down to the floor. Be sure to vacuum surfaces that collect dust like bookshelves, ceiling fans, radiators, and window troughs. Use vacuum attachment tools to reach tight spaces.

USE A BEATER BAR OR ROTATING BRUSH ON CARPET, RUGS, AND UPHOLSTERY

Beater bars and rotating brushes help dislodge and lift deep-seated dirt and dust from fibers that suction alone cannot reach.

VACUUM SLOWLY AND IN TWO DIRECTIONS

To pick up the most dirt, vacuum slowly and in two directions – back and forth and then side-to-side.

EMPTY THE VACUUM CANNISTER OR REMOVE THE BAG OUTDOORS

Wearing disposable gloves, gently empty the vacuum cannister outdoors into the bottom of a mostly closed plastic trash bag to avoid creating a cloud of dust. Vacuum bags should be removed outdoors and placed into a trash bag. Immediately seal and discard the trash bag. Remove gloves and wash your hands.





How to Wet or Damp Clean Surfaces:

FILL A SPRAY BOTTLE WITH CLEANING SOLUTION

Buckets with cleaning fluid can easily become cross-contaminated so spray bottles work better for cleaning areas with lead dust. Fill the bottle with an all-purpose cleaner or a mixture of Dawn dish soap and water. For heavily contaminated areas, consider using a cleaner formulated to remove lead. Avoid using bleach or disinfectant cleaners, which aren't effective at removing lead.

WIPE DOWN ALL HARD SURFACES USING WET OR DAMP DISPOSABLE WIPES

Wipe down one surface at a time using a disposable wipe like a paper towel that is wet or damp with cleaning solution. Use a new paper towel to clean each area and clean until there is no more visible dirt on the paper towel. Immediately discard used paper towels into a plastic trash bag.

MOVE FROM THE CLEANEST TO DIRTIEST AREAS OF THE ROOM

In homes with lead-based paint, windows and floors frequently contain the most lead dust. Clean window trim, sills, and tracks, baseboards and floors last.

MOP FLOORS IN AN S-PATTERN

Clean floors using a mop with disposable cleaning mop pads that are wet with a cleaning solution. Mop floors in an S-pattern in two directions – back and forth and then side-to-side. Replace cleaning pads when visibly dirty. Repeat until there is no visible dirt on the pad.

For more information on how to protect your family from lead, visit leadfreekids.mt.gov.

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