



HUD Sets New Requirements to Prevent Childhood Lead Poisoning in Housing Assisted or Being Sold by the Federal Government

SUMMARY

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has issued a new regulation to protect young children from lead-based paint hazards in housing that is financially assisted by the federal government or being sold by the government. The regulation, "Requirements for Notification, Evaluation and Reduction of Lead-Based Paint Hazards in Federally Owned Residential Property and Housing Receiving Federal Assistance," was published in the Federal Register on September 15, 1999. The hazard reduction requirements in this regulation are based on scientific research and the practical experience of cities, states, and others who have been controlling lead-based paint hazards in low-income housing through HUD assistance. The requirements apply to housing built before 1978, the year lead-based paint was banned nationwide for consumer use.

The new regulation puts all of the Department's lead-based paint regulations in one part of the Code of Federal Regulations, making it much easier to find HUD policy on the subject. The new requirements will take effect on September 15, 2000, one year after publication, to allow time for housing owners and state and local agencies to prepare for compliance. HUD estimates that about 2.8 million housing units will be affected by the regulation during its first five years.

LEAD POISONING PREVENTION

Lead poisoning can cause permanent damage to the brain and many other organs, and can result in reduced intelligence and behavioral problems. Lead can also harm the fetus. More than 800,000 children younger than 6 years old living in the United States have lead in their blood that is above the level of concern set by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). A large portion of these children are in families of low income and are living in old homes with heavy concentrations of lead-based paint. The most common sources of childhood exposure to lead are deteriorated lead-based paint and lead-contaminated dust and soil in the residential environment.

HUD estimates that the regulation will protect more than two million children from exposure to lead during its first five years. The estimated net benefits (that is, benefits minus costs) from the first five years are \$2 billion, mostly from increased lifetime earnings but also including reductions in medical and special education costs. Additional benefits that have not been estimated in dollar terms include reduced family time, and anxiety involved in caring for lead-poisoned children, increased stature and hearing ability, reduced hypertension in later life, and reduced juvenile delinquency and crime.

The regulation sets hazard reduction requirements that give much greater emphasis...to reducing lead in house dust.



The new regulation puts all of the Department's lead-based paint regulations in one part of the Code of Federal Regulations, making it much easier to find HUD policy on the subject.

LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND

The new regulation is being issued under sections 1012 and 1013 of the Residential Lead-Based Paint Hazard Reduction Act of 1992, which is Title X ("ten") of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1992. Sections 1012 and 1013 of Title X amended the Lead-Based Paint Poisoning Prevention Act of 1971, which is the basic law covering lead-based paint in federally associated housing. The new regulation appears within title 24 of the Code of Federal Regulations as part 35 (24 CFR 35).

WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS?

The regulation sets hazard reduction requirements that give much greater emphasis than existing regulations to reducing lead in house dust. Scientific research has found that exposure to lead in dust is the most common way young children become lead poisoned. Therefore the new regulation requires dust testing after paint is disturbed to make sure the home is lead-safe. Specific requirements depend on whether the housing is being disposed of or assisted by the federal government, and also on the type and amount of financial assistance, the age of the structure, and whether the dwelling is rental or owner-occupied.

A summary of the hazard reduction requirements for the various types of housing programs is attached to the Questions and Answers issued in association with this regulation. More detailed information is available in training and guidance material, in the regulation itself, and in the Department's explanation of the regulation, published in the Federal Register.

TYPES OF HOUSING COVERED

- Federally-owned housing being sold
- Housing receiving a federal subsidy that is associated with the property, rather than with the occupants (project-based assistance)
- Public housing
- Housing occupied by a family receiving a tenant-based subsidy (such as a voucher or certificate)
- Multifamily housing for which mortgage insurance is being sought
- Housing receiving federal assistance for rehabilitation, reducing homelessness, and other special needs

TYPES OF HOUSING NOT COVERED

- Housing built since January 1, 1978, when lead paint was banned for residential use
- Housing exclusively for the elderly or people with disabilities, unless a child under age 6 is expected to reside there
- Zero-bedroom dwellings, including efficiency apartments, single-room occupancy housing, dormitories, or military barracks
- Property that has been found to be free of lead-based paint by a certified lead-based paint inspector
- Property where all lead-based paint has been removed
- Unoccupied housing that will remain vacant until it is demolished
- Non-residential property
- Any rehabilitation or housing improvement that does not disturb a painted surface

FOR MORE INFORMATION

If you want copies of the regulation or have general questions, you can call the National Lead Information Center at (800) 424-LEAD, or TDD (800) 526-5456 for the hearing impaired. You can also download the regulation and other educational materials at www.hud.gov/lea. For further information, you may call HUD at (202) 755-1785, ext. 104, or e-mail HUD at lead_regulations@hud.gov.