



Historic Hawai'i Foundation  
Preservation Brief No. 6

## **HAZARDOUS MATERIAL ABATEMENT IN HISTORIC BUILDINGS** **EPA Renovation, Repair, and Painting Rule**

### ***How to Address Hazardous Materials in Historic Structures***

Many homes and other buildings built prior to our current understanding of hazardous materials contain lead base paint and asbestos. Once the presence of a hazardous material is identified, it has to be determined if removal is the best available option. If possible, the best way to deal with these materials is to encapsulate them and leave them alone, as they only become dangerous once they are disturbed. Lead paint, for example, can be encapsulated by painting over it and effectively sealing it off, which is much safer and cheaper than removing it.

Additionally, asbestos is only dangerous when it is being destroyed. If your asbestos tiles are chipping, it may be a good idea to have them removed following proper standards for disposing of hazardous materials, but if they are intact and in good condition, the safest thing to do is to leave them in place.

You should consult with a professional to determine the best course of action for dealing with the hazardous materials in your historic home, as the location of the materials and their condition will determine what the best solution is for you.

### ***Procedures for Lead Based Paint Removal***

Lead paint is a serious health and safety issue. New regulations – known as the [renovation, repair, and painting rule](#) – were officially adopted by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and went into effect on April 22, 2010. The stated goal of the new regulations is to protect children from lead-based paint problems by focusing on places built prior to 1978 where children are most likely to be, including housing, schools, and childcare facilities.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation recognizes the concerns that lead paint presents and encourages lead-safe work practices. Properly addressing lead paint, however, does not translate to tearing out older painted windows, doors, woodwork, and siding. Through inexpensive materials and lead-safe renovation techniques, historic buildings can be made lead safe while preserving their architectural features. The National Park Service Technical Preservation Brief #37 provides guidelines on how to identify and determine the best methods for addresses the abatement of lead based paint in historic structures.

The new EPA rule requires the following:

- Renovation firms must be certified.
- Renovators and dust sampling technicians must be trained and certified.
- Non-certified workers must work under and be trained on the job by a certified renovator.

#### **Historic Hawai'i Foundation**

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Historic Hawai'i Foundation was established in 1974 to encourage the preservation of historic buildings, sites and communities on all the islands of Hawai'i. As the statewide leader for historic preservation, HHH works to preserve Hawai'i's unique architectural and cultural heritage and believes that historic preservation is an important element in the present and future quality of life, environmental sustainability and economic viability of the state.

- Work practices must be followed for renovations covered by the rule.
- Renovators must educate owners and/or occupants.
- Training providers must be accredited.

The renovation, repair, and painting rule does not apply to:

- Minor repair and maintenance activities that disrupt six square feet or less of painted surface per room for interior projects, and 20 square feet or less of painted surface for exterior projects.
- Renovations where it is determined the renovation will not involve lead-based paint. The determination that the components affected by the renovation are free of lead-based paint can be made by a certified inspector, risk assessor, or certified renovator using an Environmental Protect Agency recognized test kit.
- Owner-occupied housing where the owner is performing his/her own renovation work.

### **Resources and More Information**

National Park Service Technical Preservation Brief No. 37

<http://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/37-lead-paint-hazards.htm>

Check out Historic Hawai'i Foundation's Resource Center for more information!

<http://historichawaii.org/resource-center-2/>

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