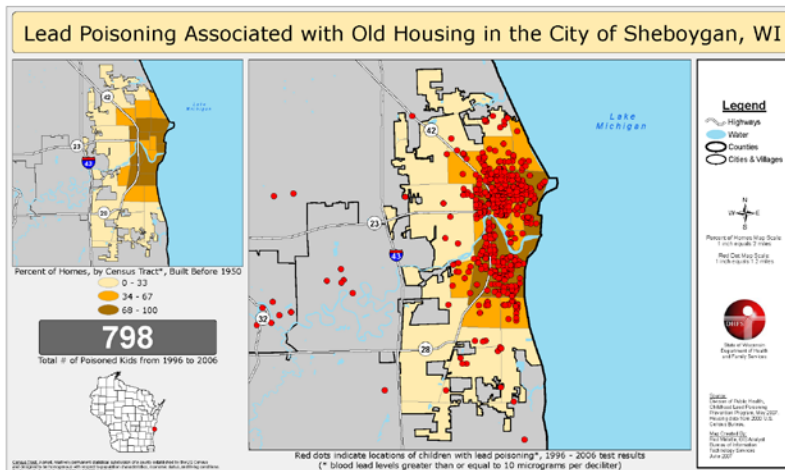


Wisconsin Enacts New Rule to Protect Children During Renovation

Reghan Walsh, Department of Health Services & Sue Kaiser, Cardinal Environmental, Inc.

In April, Department of Health Secretary Karen Timberlake announced a new Wisconsin rule that complies with the federal *Renovation, Repair & Painting (RR&P)* rule. “The Department’s mission is to protect the health and safety of people,” said Secretary Timberlake. “Wisconsin enacted the Lead-Safe Renovation rule to protect young children who are particularly vulnerable to the effects of lead.”

The Environmental Protection Agency enacted the RR&P rule to protect young children during renovation activity in homes, child care facilities and schools built before 1978. Lead was not banned from paint until 1978 so disturbing paint during renovation activity in housing built before 1978 can create dust that contains lead. Lead-tainted dust is a serious health hazard for workers, occupants and their families, especially young children.



This map demonstrates that lead poisoned children are clustered in areas in the city of Sheboygan where more than 67% of the houses were built before 1950 when paint contained a higher concentration of lead.

Lead interferes with the normal development of a young child’s brain, resulting in lowered IQ, attention disorders, developmental delays and aggressive behavior problems. Children who are lead poisoned go on to have higher rates of high school dropout, teen pregnancy, juvenile delinquency and violent crime as young adults. They are also more likely to suffer as adults from kidney disease, diabetes, cognitive deficits such as memory loss and Alzheimer’s, and early death from high blood pressure, stroke and heart attack.



The new rule requires that renovation contractors who disturb lead-based paint must be lead-safe certified and follow specific work practices to prevent lead contamination. Contractors must provide a pamphlet called *Renovate Right* to the occupants of the housing. Also, they must inform the occupants about how the work areas will be set up, what work practices will be used to minimize dust and debris, how work areas will be cleaned, and what is to be expected after the work is completed.

Child care providers and school personnel must inform parents of children under the age of 6 about upcoming renovation if the facility was built before 1978. “To prepare for future renovation activity, an assessment of the facility, completed by trained, certified lead risk assessors, should be done in advance,” said Scott Hanson of Cardinal Environmental, Incorporated, “to determine areas in the facility that contain lead-based paint and those that don’t. People should also watch that the renovation activity will not disturb asbestos or areas with mold as well. These contaminants can be problematic when released into the air.”

For more information on the new rule and preventing childhood lead poisoning go to the Lead-Safe Wisconsin website (dhs.wi.gov/lead).