



Protect Yourself and Your Family from Lead Used in Your Small Business or Hobby

If you have a small business or a hobby that uses products that contain lead*, switch to products that do not contain lead whenever possible. If you can't do this because the products you need are not made in a non-lead version, you need to protect children and pregnant women, as well as yourself, from coming into contact with lead. Exposure to lead can affect a child's or baby's growing brain and cause learning and behavior problems. Children and developing babies can be harmed by even small amount of lead. Adults can also suffer health effects from exposure to lead. (See the [Adult Lead Poisoning](#) handout)

If you are **pregnant** or may become pregnant and you use leaded products in your business or hobby, you must be especially careful to protect yourself from lead. Lead in your blood can be passed to your unborn baby and affect the baby's development. Lead can also cause you to have a miscarriage, or cause the baby to be stillborn, be born prematurely, or have a low birth weight.

Keep children out of the work/hobby area. This may be hard to do, as children are curious and often like to help out in the family business or with a parent's hobby. Sometimes parents have their children playing or napping at the work/hobby site, so they can keep an eye on them. This is not a safe practice, as it could expose children/babies to any lead dust in the area.

Children should not play in the dirt area right around the work/hobby site, especially if you work out in the open, or in a shed, garage, or building with open windows, Lead dust can settle on the ground around your work/hobby site and children can be exposed to any lead dust that might be in the dirt. Children often put their dirty fingers and hands, or the toys that sat in the dirt into their mouths. Sometimes children eat dirt.

To keep yourself and your family safe from lead, take the following steps:

1. Wear a smock or coveralls over your clothes when you are in your work or hobby area, or have certain clothes that you only use while working or doing your job/hobby. Lead dust can get on to your clothing and then be passed to your children.



2. To protect yourself from breathing in lead dust use a disposable **N-100 mask** or an **NIOSH-certified respirator** equipped with HEPA filters. They can be purchased on the Internet. A simple dust paper mask will not protect you.



3. Cover your work area with plastic or newspaper that can be thrown away when you are finished. It's best to have a floor surface that can be easily mopped, such as, vinyl flooring. Use warm water with detergent for clean-up. When finished mopping, wring out the mop and place the dirty mop head in a plastic bag. The waste water can go down the drain.



4. If you must work in a carpeted room, be sure the floor is covered with disposable plastic drop cloths.



5. Clean your work surface with damp rags or paper towels each day. If using rags, place them in the plastic bag with your mop head. At the end of the job, place your smock or coveralls in the plastic bag too.

6. If you are using paper towels, place them in a plastic trash bag and throw them away so that children can't get them.



7. Keep your work/hobby area locked if possible.

8. Shower in the work/hobby area if possible. Wash your hair and clean under your nails. Change into clean clothes before leaving.

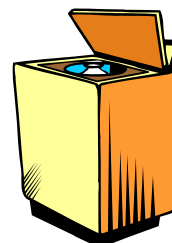


9. If it is not possible to shower in the work/hobby area, remove your smock or coverall and your shoes before leaving your work/hobby area. Use hand wipes before leaving the room. Then, take a shower as soon as possible, especially before picking up your children, sitting on furniture, or preparing food.



10. If you must drive from your work/hobby area to your home while still wearing your work clothes, be sure that you do not get lead dust on your car seats. Cover the seat with disposable plastic.

11. Unload the plastic bag with your work clothes, cleaning rags, and mop head directly into the washing machine. Do not place them on the floor first. Wash these lead-contaminated items separately from the rest of your laundry. **Do not put any other items in this laundry load.**



All of these steps may seem like a lot of work, but it's worth the time and effort to protect yourself and your family. It only takes a very small amount of lead to harm a child or a baby!

*If you are not sure if the products you use contain lead, you can call the supplier or manufacturer of the product and ask for an MSDS (Material Safety Data Sheet). This sheet will tell you what is in the product and what safety measures to take,

**Lead Poisoning Prevention Program
1190 St. Francis Dr. Suite N1320
Santa Fe, NM 87505
505-476-3586 or 505-827-0006**