

What Is Lead-Based Paint?

- **Federal standards define lead-based paint as:**
 - Any paint or surface coatings that contain lead equal to or in excess of 1.0 milligram per square centimeter or more than 0.5 percent by weight.
 - Some states and localities regulate paint with lower concentrations of lead.
 - It is the primary source of lead-contaminated dust in housing.
- **Why was lead used in paint?**
 - Lead was added for color and durability.
- **Lead-based paint was banned in 1978.**

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Federal standards define lead-based paint.

- Lead-based paint is any paint or surface coatings that contain lead equal to or in excess of 1.0 milligram per square centimeter or more than 0.5 percent by weight.
- Paint with concentrations of lead lower than the definition above can still cause health problems. Even paint with a small amount of lead can account for a lot of lead in airborne or settled dust.
- Information on how to determine if a property contains lead-based paint is provided in Module 3.

Some states and localities regulate paint with lower concentrations of lead.

- You should check with your state and local health departments to see if they have requirements that are more stringent than the Federal requirements.

Why was lead added to paint?

- Lead was added for color and durability.
- Lead was also added to some other surface coatings, such as varnishes and stains.

Lead-based paint was banned from residential use in 1978

- In 1978, the Consumer Products Safety Commission banned the sale of lead-based paint for residential use. In practice, this means that homes built in 1978 could still have used lead-based paint, because existing supplies of paint containing lead would still have been available.
- This is why the year of construction is such an important consideration.