

# Lead-Safe Cleaning



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## Overview

Lead-safe cleaning is a method of cleaning to decrease or eliminate lead dust when a hazard has been identified, in a manner safe to humans and animals. Lead is a heavy metal that is toxic to humans and is most commonly ingested by children in the form of dust or paint chips. When a lead hazard is identified, it is important to clean in a way that will limit the spread of lead dust in the air and on surfaces. To get started with lead-safe cleaning, one should:

1. Identify the locations to be cleaned and gather proper supplies.
2. Remove children and pregnant women from the locations.
3. Vacuum any loose paint chips or debris on horizontal surfaces.
4. Dampen and wipe any area that is being cleaned to reduce airborne dust.
5. Frequently change disposable cleaning supplies and dispose of them in a trash bag.
6. Wash hands and clothing thoroughly following cleanup.

## Flooring

### Carpeted Floors

**Discard the carpeted flooring if possible.**

If carpeted flooring cannot be discarded:

1. Use a wet sponge or rag to remove any stains.
2. Vacuum floors using a HEPA-certified vacuum. These vacuums contain a special filter to help clean up lead dust. Vacuum **slowly** starting at the farthest point away from the door and vacuum towards the door. Switch directions after your first pass of vacuuming a room, so that you vacuum at a 90 degree angle for the second pass of the room.
3. Discard used vacuum filter in a trash bag. Complete this step outside.



### Uncarpeted Floors

1. Use a HEPA-certified vacuum for any visible dust. Do **not** sweep with a broom — sweeping can redistribute lead dust into the air and on other surfaces.
2. Use a damp paper towel or wet mop with a disposable head to clean your floors. Do not use a traditional mop head and bucket.
3. Mop small areas of the floor at a time using an all-purpose cleaner. Change paper towels and wet mop pads frequently.
4. Discard used paper towels and wet mop pads in a trash bag.



## Window Sills, Troughs and Frames

1. Use HEPA-certified vacuum or damp paper towels to clean any visible dust, debris or paint chips.
2. Spray all components (frames, sill, apron, trough, blinds) of the window with cleaner and wipe off slowly with paper towel. Change paper towels frequently.
3. Discard used paper towels and wipes in a trash bag.



## Doors, Door Frames and Baseboards

1. Use HEPA-certified vacuum or damp paper towels to clean any visible dust, debris or paint chips.
2. Spray all components (doors, frames, grooves, decorative features, tops of doors and frames, baseboards) with cleaner and wipe off slowly with paper towel. Change paper towels frequently.
3. Discard used paper towels and wipes in a trash bag.



## Toys, Dishes and Clothing

Toys and dishes that may be contaminated with lead dust should be washed in warm, soapy water and then rinsed with clean water.

**If the item was identified as having lead based paint, it should be discarded or placed out of reach of children.**

Clothing or fabric that may be contaminated with lead dust should be washed separate from the rest of the laundry to prevent the spread of lead dust. After washing, run the washing machine while empty to ensure any remaining lead is washed away.

## Waste Disposal

**Solid Waste:** In residential locations, solid lead waste can be disposed of in the regular garbage. Ensure the garbage bag is firmly closed and tied off, then discard in the trash bin.

**Liquid Waste:** Any water used during cleaning should be discarded in the toilet. Pouring contaminated water into the sink can cause contamination of food and dishes.



For additional information contact:  
[in.gov/health/lead-and-healthy-homes-division/home/](http://in.gov/health/lead-and-healthy-homes-division/home/)