

# Protect Your Children from Lead Poisoning

## The risk to children's health:

- Eating and breathing dust that contains lead can contribute to poor health, especially in young children
- Lead is linked to developmental disabilities in children; at greatest risk are children under the age of 6
- Long-term effects on children exposed to high levels of lead can include learning disabilities, reduced IQs, decreased muscle and bone growth, hyperactivity, impaired hearing, and brain damage
- In children, lead can cause nervous system and kidney damage, speech/language/behavior problems, and poor muscle coordination



## Ways to be exposed to lead:

- Lead dust can be inhaled into the lungs
- Lead is ingested by eating or drinking contaminated food or water
- Soils and dust containing lead are carried into homes on shoes, clothing, and pets, and then settle onto various surfaces in the home
- Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway (BNSF) Company site in Hillyard: The site is located between the 4800 and 5300 blocks of North Ferrall St., bordered on the south by Wellesley and across the street from the Hillyard Dross Landfill site. The BNSF site is a large open field containing high lead levels. Children have been observed playing and riding bikes on-site. Clean-up is planned for the site in the near future.
- Recreating at the Spokane River: Frequent contact with shoreline soils along the Spokane River from State Line to Planters Ferry Park may be unsafe, particularly for young children. Follow these steps to limit your exposure to lead in these soils.
  - Avoid muddy soil that might cling to clothing, toys, hands or feet.
  - Wash your hands and face, especially before eating.
  - Avoid dry, loose, or dusty soils that you might breathe.
  - Wash anything that has come into contact with shoreline soils before entering your home.
- Ingestion of cracking, chipping, or peeling lead-based paint in the home
- Ingestion of lead-based paint from contaminated toys
- Ingestion of lead in drinking water from contaminated pipes
- Residual deposits from past use of lead arsenate pesticides and leaded gasoline

## Protect children from lead poisoning:

- Get kids tested for lead by their doctor or health care provider, even if they seem healthy
- Test your home for lead paint hazards if it was built before 1978, and have hazards (peeling & deteriorating paint) fixed ASAP
- Wash children's hands before they eat; wash bottles, pacifiers, and toys frequently
- Thoroughly rinse sponges and mop heads after cleaning dirty and dusty areas
- Wash floors and windowsills with a damp cloth to protect kids from peeling paint and dust contaminated with lead, especially in older homes
- Don't try and remove lead paint yourself, have a professional do so
- Make sure your child does not chew on anything covered with lead paint, such as windowsills, playpens, cribs, and toys
- Run the cold water for at least 30 seconds to flush lead from pipes
- Limit contact with dust and dirt in areas containing high levels of lead
- Remove shoes before going inside, and clean off pets before they enter your home
- If pregnant, avoid exposure to lead – lead can pass through your body to your baby
- Make sure your children are getting plenty of iron and calcium; eating iron- and calcium-rich foods like broccoli, spinach, and dairy products can help decrease absorption of lead



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For a packet of materials or questions about lead, call the National Lead Information Center at 1-800-424-LEAD.