

HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF WILLIAMSON, WEST VIRGINIA

Dear Tenant:

The Department of Housing and Urban Development requires that this Lead-Based Paint Notification is given to all tenants of HUD housing constructed prior to 1978.

Victoria Court and Williamson Terrace were built in the 1940's and lead-based paints could have been used at first. Our records do not show if lead-based paint was used and we have never had a case of lead-paint poisoning. The apartments have been remodeled a number of times and I would assume that if any walls were painted with lead-based paint it has been removed or covered up. The Authority has also taken steps to have our apartments tested for lead paint just to make sure. However, you should read this notice and follow its recommendations. Should you have questions please contact the office at 235-3270.

HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF  
WILLIAMSON, WEST VIRGINIA

## **WATCH OUT FOR LEAD – BASED PAINT POISONING**

### **NOTIFICATION**

TO: TENANTS OF HOUSING CONSTRUCTED BEFORE 1978

This building was constructed before 1978. There is a possibility that it may contain lead-based paint.

#### **PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION CONCERNING LEAD PAINT POISONING**

The interiors of older homes and apartments often have layers of lead-based paint on the walls, ceilings, window sills and door frames. Lead-based paint and primers may also have been used on outside porches, railings, garages, fire escapes and lamp posts. When the paint chips, flakes or peels off, there may be a real danger for babies and young children.

Children may eat paint chips or chew on painted railings, window sills or other items when parents are not around. Children can also ingest lead even if they do not specifically eat paint chips. For example, when children play in an area where there are loose paint or dust particles containing lead, they may get these particles on their hands, put their hands into their mouths, and ingest a dangerous amount of lead.

Has your child been especially cranky or irritable? Is he or she eating normally? Does your child have stomachaches and vomiting? Does he or she complain about headaches? Is your child unwilling to play? These may be signs of lead poisoning, although many times there are no symptoms at all. Lead poisoning can eventually cause mental retardation, blindness and even death.

If you suspect that your child has eaten chips of paint or someone told you this, you should take your child to the doctor or clinic for testing. If the test shows that your child has an elevated blood lead level, treatment is available. Contact your doctor or local health department for help or more information. Lead screening and treatment are available through the Medicaid Program for those who are eligible.

Inform other family members and babysitters of the dangers of lead-poisoning. You can safeguard your child from lead-poisoning by preventing him or her from eating paint that may contain lead.

Look at your walls, ceilings, door frames, window sills. Are there places where the paint is peeling, flaking or chipping? If so, there are some things you can do immediately to protect your child:

- (1) Cover all furniture and appliances;

- (2) Get a broom or stiff brush and remove all loose pieces of paint from walls, woodwork and ceilings;
- (3) Sweep up all pieces of paint and plaster and put them in a paper bag or wrap them in newspaper. Put these packages in the trash can. **DO NOT BURN THEM;**
- (4) Do not leave paint chips on the floor. Damp mop floors in and around the work area to remove all dust and paint particles. Keeping the floor clear of paint chips, dust and dirt is easy and very important;
- (5) Do not allow loose paint to remain within your children's reach since children may pick loose paint off the lower part of the walls.

You should notify the Management Office immediately if the unit in which you live has flaking, chipping or peeling paint, water leaks from faulty plumbing, or defective roofs. You should cooperate with the management office's efforts to repair any deficiencies and keep your unit in good shape. When lead-based paint is removed by scraping or sanding, a hazardous dust is created which can enter the body either by breathing or swallowing the dust. The use of heat or paint removers could create a vapor or fume which may cause poisoning if inhaled over a long period of time. Whenever possible, the removal of lead-based paint should take place when there are no children or pregnant women on the premises.

Remember that you as a parent play a major role in the prevention of lead poisoning. Your actions and awareness about the lead problem can make a big difference.

## THE DANGER OF LEAD POISONING TO RENTERS

This housing or apartment was built before 1978. There is a possibility that it may contain lead paint. Lead paint is poisonous if eaten. Many children do eat paint flakes and frequently become very sick. You as a parent are in the best position to safeguard your child's health by preventing him or her from eating paint or paint chips. This notice will answer some of your questions about how to know if your child has been eating lead paint and what to do about it.

Lead poisoning is a serious health problem in this country. Each year thousands of children under seven years of age are poisoned when they eat bits of paint containing lead. Children who eat lead can become mentally retarded, blind, paralyzed, or even die. You can safeguard your child's health by preventing him from eating paint chips which may contain lead. The Department of Housing and Urban Development has prepared this notice to make you aware of the problem of lead paint poisoning in the home.

As a parent, you need to know what to do to prevent the sickness lead paint can cause. You need to know what to do if your child has lead poisoning.

Your child can get lead poisoning by eating paint, dirt, dust, newspaper, or other non-food items containing lead. The most common cause of lead poisoning is lead-based paint. Children can get dangerous amounts of lead from eating even very small amounts of such paint. Unfortunately, usually there are no obvious signs of lead poisoning. Often lead poisoning can seem like a number of other childhood diseases, but if your child has stomach aches and vomiting, has headaches, a loss of appetite, is cranky, or frequently is too tired to play, he may have lead poisoning. Any or all of these symptoms can be signs of lead poisoning. Often, there are no symptoms at all. If anyone tells you that your child has eaten paint chips or plaster, or if you see any of these signs in your child, he should be tested for lead in his blood as soon as possible. Do not wait too long! Your doctor, local clinic, hospital, or public health department can test your child for lead poisoning. Blood samples can be taken and tested to tell if your child has eaten enough lead to be harmful. In many communities there are blood screening programs operated by local health departments, but screening is usually conducted in older areas of cities where lead-based paint and poisoning is most common. Testing for lead takes only a matter of minutes.

Blood screening programs are usually free and will test children for lead even if they show no symptoms of poisoning and have not been seen eating paint. A number of blood screening programs are supported by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, and local health departments. If you are unaware of a screening program in your area, call your public health nurse or social worker at the local health department. If there are no screening programs in your city and you cannot afford testing, the Medicaid program may pay for screening of children both below six years of age and above the age of six if a doctor says that testing is necessary.

If tests show that your child has a high level of lead in his blood he will need medical supervision and possibly treatment. If treatment is necessary, your doctor, a local clinic, or hospital will be able to remove the lead in your child's blood. Such treatments may be paid for by Medicaid or your local health department. If testing shows that your child has a lot of lead in his blood, your local health department may send someone to measure the lead paint in your home,

and may require treatment by the owner of the unit of the lead paint hazards on walls and woodwork. Such work is often messy and inconvenient, but it is necessary to prevent the possibility of further sickness from lead. Cooperate with any workmen who are sent to correct the lead condition in your home.

Lead paint is not the only cause of lead poisoning. Your child can be poisoned by eating paint, dirt, or other non-food substances containing lead. Young children put many things besides food in their mouths, but if those objects contain lead, poisoning is possible. A child can get lead poisoning from eating or chewing on non-food items which contain lead, including dirt, newspaper and even some pottery and furniture. Even common household dust sometimes contains high levels of lead. Lead paint which has weathered and fallen to the ground can collect in dust and soil. Exhaust from automobiles which use leaded gasoline also contains lead which can collect in dust and soil. Children should be discouraged from playing in dust and dirt near busy streets where the lead content in soil is likely to be heaviest.

You should stop your child from eating or chewing paint and other objects that may contain lead. Warn your child of the dangers of eating anything other than food if he is old enough to understand. Make sure that the rest of your family and anyone who babysits for you is aware of the lead paint problem and will prevent your child from eating paint. Often children will eat things if they are bored or hungry. Children are safer if they have activities or toys to keep them busy. If your child is not eating properly, you may want to take him to a doctor.

The best way to prevent lead paint poisoning is to keep your home in good shape. The primary source of lead paint hazards is peeling and flaking paint. Water leaks from faulty plumbing or defective roofs often cause paint to peel or flake from walls and ceilings. Repair of such leaks can prevent future peeling or flaking. If you have such leaks, or if you have peeling, flaking paint in your apartment, notify the management.

To prevent peeling paint, most apartments should be repainted every three to five years. It is important to cooperate with the management office when repainting time comes. If your apartment has not been repainted within this period of time, inform the management office.

You may have a lead paint hazard now if your walls are cracking or peeling. If you have small children, there are some things you should do immediately to protect them. (1) Notify the management office immediately; (2) get a broom or stiff brush and remove all loose pieces of paint from walls, woodwork, and ceilings; (3) sweep up all the pieces of paint and plaster; (4) put the sweepings in a paper bag or wrap them in newspaper and put these in a trash can; (5) be careful not to leave paint chips on the floor, and keep children away from the dust. Always keep the floor clear of loose bits of paint and plaster. Sweeping the floors clean of paint chips is simple, but it is important. Children can pick loose paint off walls, so be extra careful about keeping the loose paint from the lower part of walls where your child can reach. As an emergency measure, you might also move heavy furniture against walls with peeling paint.

Remember that you play a major role as a parent in the prevention of lead poisoning. Your actions and awareness about the lead problem can make a big difference.