

Health Unit Media Release



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Health Unit encourages families to consider safer renovating practices

Spring is here - renovations are in the air!

But what else will be in the air and on the surfaces around you while you renovate?

There are ways to reduce your exposure to toxins and limit what new toxins you bring into your home while renovating.

Why worry about toxins while renovating?

When you renovate, particles are disturbed and moved into the air and on surfaces all over the home. Children and pregnant women are most vulnerable to toxins. The rapid growth and development that is happening in their bodies can be affected by exposure to harmful substances such as lead, arsenic, asbestos and even mildews and moulds. The Canadian Partnership for Children's Health and the Environment states "Lead in paint is not "yesterday's problem." It remains a potentially dangerous source of lead in any home built before 1978 (when the first steps were taken in Canada to regulate the lead content of paint used on indoor surfaces)."

What should I look for when renovating?

There is a lot of information available to use to assess your home's current condition. Older homes tend to have more risks related to lead and asbestos. Newer homes may have furnishings and carpets with volatile organic compounds. Before you purchase new building supplies, consider the long-term environmental exposure to your family.

How do I dispose of the old building materials?

Municipalities have hazardous waste disposal sites available for their residents. Old paint cans, cleaning products and painted wood need careful disposal. Contact your local municipality for their sites and dates for hazardous waste disposal.

Reliable information is available from:

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation
Environmental Choice Program
Children's Environmental Health Network
Health Canada
Canadian Partnership for Children's health and Environment

Visit the Health Unit's website for links to these resources at www.healthunit.org.

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