

How to Clean Take-home Lead from your Home and Vehicle

If you think your vehicle or home may be contaminated with lead:

- Have your family tested for lead in their blood.
- Consider hiring a lead removal professional. They can ensure your home is clean and safe.
- Call the SHARP Adult Blood Lead Epidemiology Surveillance (ABLES) program at 1-888-667-4277 or the Department of Health Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention (CLPP) at 1-800-909-9898.

General lead cleaning guidelines

- Pregnant women should not clean lead dust because it is especially harmful to unborn babies.
- Remove children and pets from the area while cleaning.
- Protect yourself: Wear a NIOSH-Approved N100 Particulate Filtering Facepiece Respirator and rubber (dishwashing) gloves.
- Do not re-contaminate clean areas: Clean the highest surface first and work down. Clean floors last. Clean the farthest corner first and work towards the door.
- Be careful! The goal is to remove the lead, not move it around.

How to clean lead from hard surfaces

- All hard-surface should be cleaned with wet methods. Dry sweeping mixes dust back in the air.
- “Lead-specific”, trisodium phosphate (TSP), or all-purpose cleaning detergents can be used to remove lead. Harsh cleaners like bleach should be avoided. NEVER mix cleaners.
- For small surfaces (including window sills, counter tops, shelves, etc.):
 - Use disposable microfiber, paper, shop towels, 1 bucket of water with detergent, 1 bucket of rinse water, and trash bags. Never contaminate rinse water with a dirty towel. Contaminated towels should be disposed of after a few wipes. Reusable sponges and cloths should not be used.



- Frequently refill buckets and pour waste water into household drains rather than outside where it may collect in soil.
- Avoid using electrostatic cloths (e.g. Dry Swiffer®) and pre-wetted wipes.
- Large, uncarpeted floors:
 - Follow directions for small surfaces. If using a mop, replace the trash can from above with an empty bucket to collect the contaminated cleaning and rinsing water from the mop(s).
 - Use a mop that can clean curves and corners (e.g. a string-style mop). Dispose of the waste water and used mop.

How to clean lead from carpets

- First, only use a vacuum with a “HEPA” or “allergy” filter bag. Not all dry vacuums will work. Do not use bag-less vacuums, canister vacuums without bags or filters, or car wash vacuums.
- Vacuum slowly and thoroughly. Vacuum the room in one direction, and then repeat in the other direction. An 8 foot x 10 foot room should take a minimum of 1 hour to dry vacuum. Dispose of the vacuum bag or filter.
- After dry vacuuming, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recommends steam cleaning with a product containing sodium hexametaphosphate (e.g. Calgon®) to help remove lead from the carpet.
- Area rugs can be cleaned with the same methods or machine washed separately. Clean both sides and under rugs.

How to launder clothes and other soft items

- Curtains, clothing, bedding, toys, and couch cushion covers should be machine washed separately from non-lead contaminated items. Use standard all-purpose detergent. Add an extra rinse cycle before drying.
- Heavily contaminated furniture, mattresses, and other soft items will need to be replaced.
- If a dry cleaner or home cleaning service is used, alert the cleaner that the items are lead contaminated.

Cleaning Checklist

- Floors & Walls
- Counter tops
- Window sills
- Tables
- Handles, knobs
- Curtains
- Rugs
- Couches & Chairs
- Beds
- Toys (hard and soft)
- Dishes
- Clothing
- Car mats and rugs
- Car/child safety seats
- Pets

Be sure to check surfaces after cleaning to make sure lead contamination was completely removed.

Heavily contaminated homes and cars require professional lead removal cleaning service.