

Vermont Housing & Conservation Board Lead Based Paint Hazard Reduction Program

Cleaning and Final Clearance Guidance

1. All interior work including subcontracted work and punch list items must be completed before final clearance testing.
2. Final clearance testing is the last step before re-occupancy of a housing unit where abatement or interim control activity of lead-based paint (LBP) has occurred; or in certain instances may be required after renovation activities have occurred in housing receiving federally funded assistance.
3. Clearance testing may not occur sooner than 1 hour after final cleaning to allow airborne dust particles to settle.
4. Only properly trained and certified individuals may conduct clearance testing and all samples must be submitted to properly licensed laboratories. Clearance sampling should be conducted by an independent 3rd party not associated with the hazard control work
5. Clearance cleaning may start only after a passing Visual Inspection.
6. Starting with upper areas and working to lower areas, all critical barriers (plastic sheeting) must be HEPA vacuumed, misted with water and wiped with disposable towels.
7. Plastic sheets must be carefully folded up bringing the edges to the middle to trap any remaining dust. Plastic on floors should be removed last.
8. Tri-sodium phosphate (TSP) solution and phosphate containing detergents have been shown to be effective at cleaning lead dust, however recent research has shown that non-phosphate detergents may work just as well.
9. Effective cleaning practices and methods should include but are not limited to:
 - a. Using only HEPA filtered vacuums.
 - b. Using disposable towels for wiping surfaces.
 - c. Dipping towels in the cleaning solution only once or applying the cleaning solution with a sprayer or mister.
 - d. Changing mop water and mop heads frequently.
 - e. Using a 2 or 3 bucket system when mopping so that a dirty mop is not wrung into the cleaning solution.

10. Starting from upper areas and working to lower areas, all surfaces must receive a thorough HEPA vacuum and wet wash cycle. This includes all flat surfaces where dust may collect such as the top surfaces of baseboard and trim or the tops of cabinets, shelves, wall fixtures, light fixtures and similar areas. A 2nd HEPA vacuum cycle may be added after the first two steps if necessary.
11. Cleaning should proceed room by room from the areas farthest from the exit to the areas closest to the exit. Areas cleaned should not be re-entered to prevent the spread of contamination.
12. Heating vanes of baseboard heat systems must be vacuumed along with interior surfaces of cast-iron radiators and forced air heat ducts and registers.
13. All window surfaces including the area between the sash and storm window and the window wells must be cleaned.
14. Carpets will typically require several passes with a HEPA vacuum that has a vibrating beater-bar carpet head attached. Vacuuming with non-vibrating attachments will only remove the surface dust from the carpet.
15. Smooth non-porous floors should be HEPA vacuumed, and wet mopped with TSP solution, followed by wiping with disposable towels. The cleaning solution and mop head should be changed for each room. Dirty floors may require an additional mop and wipe and rinse cycle.
16. Porous surfaces such as unfinished wood floors may still fail a dust clearance after cleaning. For these types of floors it is appropriate to apply a sealer such as wax, urethane, or paint. However, permission to apply any sealer must be approved by the owner and VHCB staff.
17. In units where the containment did not include the entire unit or in multi-unit housing where there is a common area adjacent to the containment, clearance cleaning and sampling shall be conducted in the adjacent room or common area.
18. Inspectors may not collect clearance samples from any unit that has visible dust or debris.