



## WATCH OUT FOR LEAD PAINT POISONING

There is a possibility that housing constructed before 1978 may contain lead paint.

Children get lead poisoning when they eat bits of paint that contain lead. If a child eats enough lead paint, his brain will be damaged. The child may become mentally retarded or even die.

- If your child is under 6 years of age and you live in a house built prior to 1978, we strongly recommend that you contact a doctor or local health clinic to have your child screened for lead in the blood.
- If your child is under 6 and has been found to have an elevated blood level, you should notify the LYNN HOUSING AUTHORITY & NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT (LHAND) at once, so your unit may be tested for lead-based paint.
- If the unit you live in or want to live in was built before 1978, ask the landlord if it has been tested for lead paint.

Older houses and apartments often have layers of lead paint on the walls, ceilings and woodwork. Outdoors, lead paints and primers may have been used in many places, such as walls, fences, porches and fire escapes. When the paint chips off or when the plaster breaks, there is real danger for babies and young children.

If you have seen your child putting pieces of paint or plaster in his/her mouth, you should take him/her to a doctor, clinic, or hospital as soon as you can. In the beginning stages of lead poisoning, a child may not seem really sick. Do not wait for signs of poisoning.

Of course, a child might eat paint chips or chew on painted railings or windowsills while parents aren't around. Has your child been especially cranky? Is he/she eating very little? Does he/she throw up or have stomachaches often? These could be signs of lead poisoning. Take him/her to a doctor's office or to a clinic.

Be sure to tell the rest of your family and people who baby-sit for you about the danger of lead poisoning.

Look at your walls and ceilings and woodwork. Are there places where the paint is peeling? If so, notify the LHAND so that an inspection can be scheduled. Do not try to remove the paint from the walls, ceilings, and woodwork.

### **IF YOUR UNIT WAS BUILT PRIOR TO 1978 AND IS OCCUPIED BY A CHILD UNDER THE AGE OF SIX:**

The Housing Quality Inspector (HQS) must inspect your unit for defective paint surfaces. (Interior and exterior surfaces which are cracking, scaling, peeling, chipping, or loose) If any defective areas are found, the owner will be instructed to treat the area.

### **IF YOUR UNIT WAS BUILT PRIOR TO 1978 AND A CHILD UNDER THE AGE OF SIX LIVING IN THE UNIT IS CONFIRMED TO HAVE AN ELEVATED BLOOD LEVEL (EBL):**

Your unit must be tested for lead-based paint.

### **IF THE TEST REVEALS LEAD-BASED PAINT IN THE UNIT IS ABOVE ACCEPTABLE LEVELS:**

The owner must comply with the Department of Public Health regulations governing Lead Paint removal.

If you want to know more about how to keep your child safe from lead poisoning talk to your doctor, public health nurse, or social worker at the clinic or health department.