



## Kia ora, and welcome to Week 5 of our Schools Newsletter

We are now at our second to last newsletter in our series aimed at raising awareness of common hazards found in our schools, and providing you with useful information and resources to help you better identify and manage these issues with little or no disruption to your school. According to this [Stuff article, published in 2020](#), lead contamination is down 90% in 36 years. However, it is still out there, in older buildings & homes, so this week we're looking at lead-based paints.

You can find the previous newsletters [here](#).

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### Lead Paint: The hazards.

Although lead-based paints were banned in New Zealand in 1979, if your structure was built in the 1980's or earlier, it may still contain this harmful substance in earlier layers, even if it has been more recently repainted.

According to [Health New Zealand : Te Whatu Ora](#), it is best to assume any building built in or before the 1980's was painted with lead-based paint and treat it accordingly.

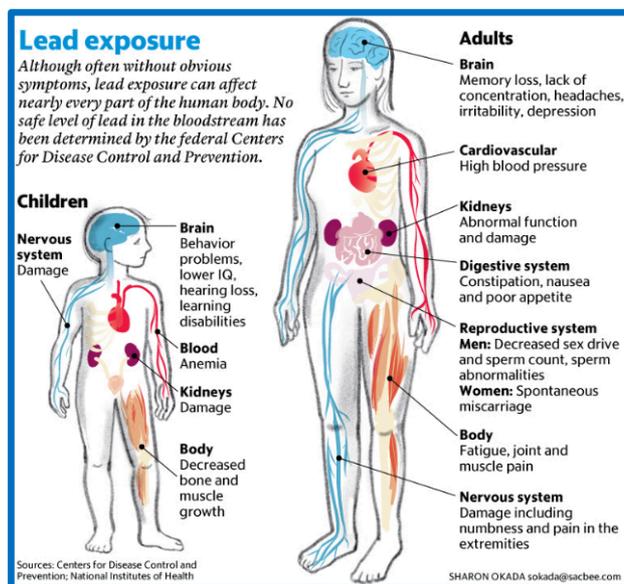
The Ministry of Education has also listed lead-based paints as one of the common hazardous substances on school sites ([see here](#)) and provides this [Guidance for Safety in New Zealand Schools](#) pdf that looks in depth at safety guidelines & associated regulations that need to be adhered to ensure the safety of our schools; staff and children.



Any instance of lead-based paint in your school should be noted in your risk register and monitored regularly for deterioration. If you observe peeling, flaking, chalking or bubbling you need to act as soon as possible to mitigate the danger to your staff and students. If you have areas of concern in your school but are unsure whether lead is present, carry out testing using a DIY Lead Testing kit or contact a lead testing company in your area.

## Lead Paint: The health risks.

- **Children and Infants:** Are highly vulnerable to irreversible neurological damage, developmental delays, and behavioural problems.
- **Adults:** Chronic exposure can lead to high blood pressure, heart disease, kidney damage, reduced fertility, and neurological issues.
- **Pregnancy:** Exposure can lead to a higher risk of miscarriage, stillbirth, premature birth, and low birth weight.



## Safety Guidelines for DIY removal of lead-based paint.

Although HealthEd.govt does provide safety tips (see link below) for this process, we recommend contacting a professional lead decontamination company to ensure NZ safety guidelines are followed whilst minimising any risk to the health of your staff or tamariki.

[HealthEd.govt - Safely removing lead-based paint.](#)

- Wear the correct PPE (personal protective equipment) as recommended by [WorkSafeNZ](#). This includes gloves, coveralls, eye protection and respirator.
- Clear the area of all furniture, equipment etc. If indoors, seal/contain the area to prevent spread of contaminants to catch paint flakes & dust. If outdoors, close off the area & cover plants & high use areas.
- Within the containment area use a wet cloth to clean dust, paint chips and paint flakes and dispose of it appropriately. Use a spray bottle with water to dampen area and suppress dust.
- Use a dual system for removal: a mechanical paint shaving process & chemical stripping (DO NOT use any product containing methylene chloride AKA dichloromethane).
- Use a commercial vacuum cleaner fitted with a HEPA filter to clean the area, DO NOT use a vacuum cleaner without a HEPA filter.
- Wrap and bag waste and rubbish for disposal. Small amounts of paint waste can generally be disposed of with your household refuse, but for large amounts of waste, please check your local council for the best method of safe disposal. DO NOT BURN.

It is the goal of CSS to support our schools and their communities in better understanding common risks and to plan ahead with confidence. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to CSS on 09 828 1731 and one of our team will be happy to assist you today.

**Next Week... Preparedness: Your Emergency Management Plan.**

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Protect your property. Protect your people. Stay compliant with CSS.

 **CSS Emergency Response:** 09 828 1731

 **Learn More:** <https://cssnz.co.nz/health-safety-excellence/>

Stay Safe,  
**The CSS Team**



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