

## **NAHB Applauds EPA Rejection Of Renovation Clearance Testing Requirements**

The National Association of Home Builders commends the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for rejecting a proposal to add third-party clearance testing to the Lead: Renovation, Repair and Painting Rule (RRP).

“We’re pleased that the EPA listened to the concerns of remodelers about the extreme costs the proposed clearance testing would have imposed,” said Bob Peterson, NAHB Remodelers chair and a remodeler from Fort Collins, Colo. “Home owners are saved from spending a great deal of money on lead testing. If remodeling is more affordable, home owners will be able to hire an EPA-certified renovator to keep them safe from lead dust hazards during renovation.”

At NAHB’s request this regulation was selected for review by the EPA under the Presidential Executive Order for Regulatory Review (*Improving Regulation and Regulatory Review*, 76 FR 3821 issued on Jan. 21) concerning the impact of federal rules on small businesses and job creation.

The lead rule applies to homes built before 1978 and requires renovator training and certification, following lead-safe work practices, containing and cleaning dust, and record keeping.

Under the lead paint rule contractors have been required to wipe down the project area after completing remodeling or renovation work and match the result to an EPA-approved card to determine whether lead paint dust is still present – a process that EPA says is “effective at reducing dust lead levels below the dust-lead hazard standard.”

The proposal would have required contractors to hire EPA-accredited dust samplers to collect several samples after a renovation and send them to an EPA-accredited lab for lead testing. Because of the cost of this as well as the waiting period for test results and the limited number of accredited labs nationwide, professional remodelers were very concerned about home owners’ willingness to undergo the process.

“The EPA has maintained its common sense approach to keeping families safe during renovation,” said Peterson. “Hiring trained professional remodelers to contain dust, use lead-safe work practices, and clean up has been shown to successfully minimize lead hazards and protect individuals from lead exposure.”

Several problems with the rule still remain. The EPA has yet to recognize an efficient, low-cost lead test kit that meets the requirements of the regulation. And last year the agency removed a key consumer choice measure – the opt-out provision – which allowed home owners with no children or pregnant women in residence to waive the rule’s requirement. In this down economy, consumers are still balking at the extra costs of the rule and often choose to reduce the amount of work done on their homes, hire uncertified contractors, or endanger themselves by attempting the work themselves.

For more information visit [www.nahb.org/leadpaint](http://www.nahb.org/leadpaint).