



Lead Poisoning Information For Landlords

Most homes in Rhode Island were built before 1978. They are very likely to have lead-based paint. Lead paint and paint dust can harm young children's health. There are steps landlords are required to take to protect tenants from lead. Learn more about what properties are exempt and what you should do.

Tenants also play a crucial role in minimizing lead exposure risks by maintaining the cleanliness of their living spaces, particularly from lead present in paint, dust, and soil.

Why It Matters

- **Lead dust from old paint** is a leading cause of lead poisoning in children.
- Even small amounts of lead can damage the brain and nervous system.
- Young children are especially vulnerable because they crawl, play, and put things in their mouths.

Everyone Has a Role

While landlords must follow legal requirements, **tenants also play a role** in reducing lead exposure by:

- Keeping floors and surfaces clean
- Minimizing dust and soil inside the home
- Reporting damaged or peeling paint immediately

Do the Lead Rules Apply to Your Property?

If you own **rental units built before 1978**, you are **likely required** to follow Rhode Island's **Lead Hazard Mitigation Regulations** — unless your property qualifies for an exemption.

Exempt Properties

You are **not required** to follow these regulations if your rental unit has:

- A **Full Lead-Safe Certificate** from the RI Department of Health
- A **Conditional Lead-Safe Certificate** (still current)
- A **Certificate of Lead-Free Status** (historical Full Lead Safe Certificate)
- Zoned housing for people **62 years or older**

- **Temporary (seasonal) housing** rented for no more than **100 days/year** to the same tenant

Landlord Responsibilities

Quick Checklist for Landlords

- ✓ Get your lead certificate
- ✓ Stay current on inspections
- ✓ Fix violations within 90 days
- ✓ Follow the Property Maintenance Code
- ✓ Keep your insurance active

If your property is not exempt, here's what you're required to do:

1 Get a Lead Inspection

Hire a licensed inspector to assess for lead hazards and obtain the proper certificate.

- See below information on Proving Your Rental Property is Lead Safe

2 Inform Tenants

Notify all tenants about:

- The presence of lead and share any lead certificates and/or inspection results
- Distribute the Rhode Island version of Protect your family from Lead in the Home to tenants. (keep evidence of its distribution for three years or duration of tenancy, whichever is longer)
- For copies in languages other than English click EPA's "Protect Your Family from Lead in Your Home" pamphlet .
- Include the required **"Lead Warning Statement"** in leases

3 Take a Lead Safety Class

Start with the recommended:

- 3-Hour Lead Hazard Awareness Class for Landlords (Available online)

4 Inspect Your Property Regularly

Every **two years** — or **between tenants** — check for:

- Peeling, chipping, or damaged paint
- Wear-prone areas (windows, stair treads, door frames)

5 Fix Lead Problems Promptly

- **Repair any damaged paint right away**
- Use **wet cleaning methods** to reduce dust
- Hire a **licensed Lead Renovation Firm** if disturbing painted surfaces

[Learn more about Renovation, Repair, and Painting \(RRP\).](#)

[Fixing Lead Hazards in Pre-1978 Housing](#)

When Doing Repairs or Maintenance

- All work must follow **lead-safe practices**
- Workers must be trained in Lead Safe Work Practices
- If you employ maintenance staff, they must comply with **OSHA regulations** too
- **Repair any damaged paint right away**
- Use **wet cleaning methods** to reduce dust
- Hire a **licensed Lead Renovation Firm** if disturbing painted surfaces
- [Learn more about Renovation, Repair, and Painting \(RRP\).](#)
- [Fixing Lead Hazards in Pre-1978 Housing](#)

6 Get lead Paint Liability Insurance

If you own a **rental property built before 1978**, you must have **insurance that covers lead paint liability**.

To qualify, your property must have *one of the following*:

- **Certificate of Lead Conformance**
- **Presumptive Compliance Certificate**
- **Conditional Lead-Safe Certificate**

- **Full Lead-Safe Certificate**

Don't Risk Losing Coverage

If a **lead hazard is found**, you must act quickly:

- You'll receive a **Notice of Violation**
- You have **90 days to fix all violations**
- If not fixed within 90 days, **you will lose eligibility for lead paint liability insurance**

💡 Tip: Stay proactive — schedule inspections and fix problems early.

7 Follow the Property Maintenance Code

All rental properties in Rhode Island must comply with the **State Property Maintenance Code**. This law sets the **minimum health and safety standards** for housing.

8 Prove Your Rental Property Is Lead-Safe

If you rent out a home or apartment in Rhode Island, **you're required to have a valid lead certificate**. This certificate proves your property is safe for tenants — especially children.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

➕ What Is a Lead Certificate?

A **lead certificate** shows that your property has passed a **Lead Hazard Mitigation Inspection** and is safe from lead hazards.

There are different types:

- **Certificate of Lead Conformance** (most common)
- **Certificate of Presumptive Compliance** (for landlords with 10+ units)
- **Affidavit of Completion of Visual Inspection** (for long-term tenants)

[Learn more about lead certificate types](#) [Spanish](#) | [Portuguese](#)

➕ How to Get a Lead Certificate

1. Hire a licensed Lead Inspector

1. They'll conduct a Lead Hazard Mitigation Inspection.

2. Fix any lead hazards

1. If issues are found, you have **30 days to fix them**.

3. Pass inspection

1. If no hazards are found, you'll receive a **Certificate of Lead Conformance**.

Renew Every 2 Years

- Lead certificates must be **renewed at least every two years**.
- If the **tenant stays the same** for 2+ years, you can **inspect the unit yourself** and submit an **Affidavit of Completion of Visual Inspection**.

[Download Affidavit in English \(PDF\)](#) [Download Affidavit in Spanish \(PDF\)](#)

How to Submit an Affidavit

To file an **Affidavit of Completion of Visual Inspection**, follow these steps:

1. Confirm the **tenant has not changed** in 2+ years.
2. Attend a **3-hour Lead Hazard Awareness Seminar**.
3. Conduct a **visual inspection** of the unit.
4. Complete and notarize the affidavit within **30 days** of inspection. Please note: Affidavits should be submitted at least **30 days prior to the current lead certificate expiration date** to allow sufficient time for processing. **Visual Inspection Affidavits received more than 15 days after the certificate expiration date will not be accepted.**
5. Submit all documents as one file to: email: **doh.leadprogram@health.ri.gov** Or mail to: *Rhode Island Department of Health, Lead Hazard Mitigation Program, 3 Capitol Hill, Room 206, Providence, RI 02908.*

Include:

- The **notarized application**
- Proof of **Lead Awareness Seminar**
- A copy of your **last Certificate of Lead Conformance**
- Any **previous affidavits** you've submitted

The affidavit is **valid for 2 years**, unless a new tenant moves in — then you must hire a lead inspector again.

Own 10+ Units? Apply for Presumptive Compliance

Landlords with **10 or more rental units** can apply for a **Certificate of Presumptive Compliance**.

How it works:

1. Hire a **licensed Lead Inspector** to inspect at least **5% of your units** (minimum of 2).
2. At least **90% of inspected units** must pass.
3. Submit:
 1. The **Presumptive Compliance Application**
 2. One **Certificate of Lead Conformance per passed unit**
 3. Proof that any **Housing Code Violations** have been fixed

Valid for **2 years**.

[Check if your property is eligible](#)

Resources for Landlords

- [Take the Lead Hazard Awareness Class](#)
- [Find a Licensed Lead Renovation Firm](#)
- [Read the RI Landlord-Tenant Handbook](#)
- [Learn More About Lead Certificates](#)
- [What is the Lead Hazard Mitigation Law](#)
- [Review the Full Lead Hazard Mitigation Regulations](#)
- [Lead Hazard Mitigation Inspections](#)

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[Lead Inspector Login](#)
(for inspectors only)

Lead-safe 
is lead-smart

Landlords:

**Protecting your
investment is smart
and so is a lead
certificate.**