Lead – Protect Yourself from Lead Exposure Picture This





The worker is sanding or scraping painted surfaces without any respiratory protection, gloves, or protective clothing, generating a large amount of dust. If the paint contains lead, this creates a serious inhalation and ingestion hazard. Lead dust can enter the lungs or contaminate hands, clothing, and nearby surfaces—leading to chronic lead poisoning, which affects the nervous system, kidneys, and reproductive health.

When disturbing older painted surfaces, assume the presence of lead unless tested otherwise. Workers must use proper PPE, including a NIOSH-approved respirator, disposable coveralls, gloves, and safety goggles. Implement dust control measures (wet sanding, HEPA vacuums) and isolate the work area. Follow all applicable lead safety regulations, such as those from OSHA and EPA, to protect both workers and building occupants. Never dry-sand or power-sand lead paint without proper containment.