

WHAT IS THE LEAD HAZARD MITIGATION LAW?

The Lead Hazard Mitigation Law is designed to prevent lead poisoning in children and pregnant women. Most houses built before 1978 contain lead-based paint. Lead is poison when it gets into the body. Lead can harm people—especially children and pregnant women. Starting July 1, 2005, landlords who have housing rental units built before 1978 will be required by the Lead Hazard Mitigation Law to fix lead hazards in these units.



TENANT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

As a tenant living in rental housing you have certain rights and responsibilities under this law. This fact sheet describes your rights and responsibilities.

WHAT ARE MY RIGHTS AS A TENANT?

Pregnant women and children less than 6 years old have the right to live in housing where lead hazards have been fixed. If your landlord does not fix the lead hazards, you have the right to take legal action against your landlord.

WHAT ARE MY RESPONSIBILITIES AS A TENANT?

You are responsible for reporting lead hazards that you find in your home – such as chipping or peeling paint. Your landlord must fix any lead hazards found in your home or the surrounding property. Your landlord cannot evict you, raise your rent, or take any other action to punish you for reporting lead hazards.

Your landlord must give you:

- » Information about how to protect your family from lead hazards.
- » The name, address and telephone number of a contact person who you can call if you find lead hazards in your home.
- » A copy of the most recent lead inspection report for your home.

HOW DO I REPORT POSSIBLE LEAD HAZARDS?

If you see chipping or peeling paint or other lead hazards in your home or surrounding property, call your landlord or his or her contact person. Your landlord has 30 days to respond to your concerns and to fix the lead hazards. If the repairs require you to leave the rental unit for more than 3 days including overnights, the landlord must provide other acceptable accommodations for you during this time.

If your landlord does not fix the lead hazards within 30 days or you are not satisfied with the work that has been done, you can bring your concerns to the Housing Resources Commission who will review your complaint.

The Housing Resources Commission will inspect your home. If they find lead hazards, they will then issue a Notice of Violation to the landlord. If your landlord does not respond to this Notice or fix the lead hazards within 30 days, the Housing Resources Commission will file a complaint with the city or town housing code official.

Note: Tenants and landlords have other rights and responsibilities under the Residential Landlord and Tenant Act. The Rhode Island Landlord Tenant Handbook describes these rights and responsibilities. Call the Housing Resources Commission at 450-1350 to request a copy.



THE HOUSING RESOURCES COMMISSION IS READY TO HELP YOU

If you have questions about the Lead Hazard Mitigation Law, or any of the information in this brochure call the Housing Resources Commission at

1-800-570-0768 or visit **www.hrc.ri.gov**.

