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**NEWS RELEASE**  
**Lead Safety during Renovation**

Now that warm weather is here, we have the opportunity to start working on the home improvement projects we've been thinking about over the winter.

You've put a lot of thought into the work you're going to do: choosing paint colors, picking out new fixtures, perhaps even designing an addition. But have you thought about how to protect yourself and your family from lead exposure while the work is being done?

"If your home was built before 1978, you must consider that the paint in your home could contain lead, and you'll have to plan any home renovation, repair, and painting activities with this in mind," said Sue Smith, Deputy Director of The Otsego County Department of Health.

Lead dust, fumes and paint chips can cause serious health problems. Too much lead in the human body can cause serious damage to the brain, nervous system and red blood cells. Young children between the ages of six months and six years are more likely to suffer health problems from lead exposure. Lead poisoning can slow a child's physical growth and mental development and can cause behavior problems, mental retardation, kidney and liver damage, blindness and even death.

"A study by the New York State Department of Health found that in 2006-2007 home renovation, repair, and painting activities were the most likely source of lead exposure in 14.3 percent of children with elevated blood lead levels," Sue Smith said.

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