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NC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

JOSH STEIN • Governor
DEVDUTTA SANGVAI • Secretary
KELLY KIMPLE • Director, Public Health

October 1, 2026

TO: NC Certified Lead-Based Paint Professionals

FROM: Ed Norman, MPH, Program Manager, Health Hazards Control Unit

Signed by: D04B0A64F5004F0... 10/28/26 | 9:01 AM

SUBJECT: HHCU Adoption of Lowered EPA Dust-Lead Clearance Standards

As part of the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) efforts to reduce childhood lead exposure, the current dust-lead clearance levels (DLCLs) have been amended. Clearance levels are defined as the maximum amount of lead permitted in dust on a surface following completion of an abatement activity. Surface dust is collected via dust wipe samples and analyzed at a laboratory, and post-abatement dust-lead levels must be below the clearance levels.

The EPA has lowered the DLCLs from 10 micrograms of lead per square foot (µg/ft²) to 5 µg/ft² for floors, from 100 µg/ft² to 40 µg/ft² for window sills, and from 400 µg/ft² to 100 µg/ft² for window troughs. The nomenclature of DLCL has been changed to DLAL (dust-lead action level) as defined in 40 CFR 745.223. The new federal DLCL/DLAL took effect January 12, 2026.

However, the North Carolina Health Hazards Control Unit (NC – HHCU) will not formally implement these changes until January 11, 2027, as allowed for state-authorized programs. If you have additional questions, please feel free to contact the Health Hazards Control Unit at (919) 707-5950 and ask to speak to a consultant.

The official regulatory change can be reviewed in the Federal Register at volume 89, number 218, dated January 13, 2025. For additional information, see the Federal Register link for reference material.