



## FULTON COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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# **Lead Safety Information: Frequently Asked Questions**

The following questions and answers were provided to the public on Wednesday, January 14, 2026. This document was updated and reposted on Feb. 18, 2026.

## **What is lead?**

Lead is a metal found in nature. It can be in dirt, water, and items manufactured in other countries. Houses built before 1978 may have lead paint.

## **How small is lead dust?**

According to the U.S EPA, lead dust is extremely small - between 0.1 and 10 microns. That's much smaller than a grain of salt (125 microns) or a human hair (50-100 microns).

## **What are the signs of lead exposure?** [BT1][KC2]

Many people have no signs at all. Others might feel ill. Possible signs include but are not limited to:

- Stomach aches
- Headaches
- Feeling very tired
- Low iron in blood

More information can be found: [Symptoms of Lead Exposure](#) | [Lead in the Workplace](#) | [CDC](#)

## **Should I get tested?**

Talk to your doctor or local health department about testing. A simple blood test can check for lead exposure.

## **Who pays for testing?**

The Fulton County Health Department will do finger-prick tests (capillary tests) free of charge.

Testing is available at the Fulton County Health Department Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. [BT3][KC4] Please call to make an appointment at 419-337-0915.

## **How do they test for lead?**

There are two ways to test blood for lead:

- **Finger-prick test (capillary test)** - Takes a small drop of blood from your finger. This test provides fast results, but can produce higher results if lead on the skin is captured in the sample.
- **Needle test (venous test)**- Draws blood from a vein from your arm with a needle. This test is more reliable and used to confirm the results of a finger-prick test.

The Health Department is using the finger-prick test.

## **Are blood lead level tests considered the best or only method for assessing exposure? Why are alternative methods, such as hair analysis—which may reflect longer-term exposure—not being discussed or recommended?**

Blood lead testing is the medical standard for diagnosing lead exposure blood lead confirmation testing is used to determine treatment. [SC5]Hair analysis is, an adjunctive test that can suggest past or chronic exposure but is not useful on its own.

- A blood lead level (BLL) reflects the current circulating lead burden [SC6]and is what clinicians use to diagnose lead exposure/poisoning and determine public health and or medical intervention.
- Ohio Department of Health guidelines and treatment thresholds (for example, when to repeat or confirm testing or investigating the home) are all based on blood lead.[SC7]
- Blood tests are standardized, with well-validated methods and reference ranges.

## **What level of lead is safe?**

No amount of lead in blood is safe.

## **What if my test shows high lead levels?**

If your finger-prick test (capillary test) shows high lead, 3.5 micrograms per deciliter or higher, the result will need to be confirmed. Your doctor will order a needle test (venous test) to confirm the result.[BT8] If you don't have a doctor, a list of Fulton County Healthcare Providers is posted on the [fultoncountyhealthdept.com](http://fultoncountyhealthdept.com) website. Under the Data & Resources tab select Fulton County Resources.

## **What is the process for notification of elevated adult lead levels?**

You will be notified of the blood lead test result by the healthcare provider that took the test. Consult with your healthcare provider if follow-up testing and treatment are needed. If you or your healthcare provider has questions about lead exposure, contact the Ohio Department of Health Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program:

**Phone:** 1-877-LEADSAFE (532-3723)

**Email:** [lead.testing@odh.ohio.gov](mailto:lead.testing@odh.ohio.gov)

If you are a woman of childbearing age (between 18- and 45-years years of age) with a needle test (venous test) result of 3.5 micrograms per deciliter or higher, the Ohio Department of Health will also send a letter to you notifying you of the result. This letter includes steps to reduce your exposure and a contact to reach out to if you have any questions. For more information visit the [Ohio Department of Health Childhood Lead Poisoning-For Pregnant Women webpage](#).

If you are an adult with a needle test (venous test) result of 25 micrograms per deciliter or higher, the Ohio Department of Health will refer the result to Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) for follow-up. If you suspect that your job may be contributing your lead exposure, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has guidance and resources for lead exposure in the workplace found [here](#).

## Does a mask help?

A special respirator mask (approved by National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)<sup>[BT9]</sup> for adults) can help. However, lead dust is so tiny that regular masks don't work well. Cloth masks and surgical masks don't protect you from lead dust.

## How do I clean my house?

- Use wet mops or wet rags on floors, window sills, and dusty areas.
- Use two buckets - one with soap, one for rinsing.
- A commercial HEPA vacuum should be used to clean lead dust. The Fulton County Health Department has commercial HEPA vacuums for short-term use. Call the Fulton County Health Department at 419-337-0915 to borrow a commercial HEPA vacuum.<sup>[GP10]</sup>
- Take off shoes at the door.
- Wash your pet's paws after they've been outside.
- Watch this helpful cleaning video: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6drdJ\\_J0e-k](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6drdJ_J0e-k)

## Can I work outside, is it ok to open my windows?

Ohio EPA has estimated the area most likely impacted by high lead concentrations detected in air monitoring in Delta, Ohio, resulting from demolition activities at the Bunting Bearings facility. Based on the modeling, the area of higher lead concentration extends less than a quarter mile (two-tenths) from the demolition site in all directions. Additional environmental sampling

will be done. Any lead particles would have fallen to the ground, but windy days and dry conditions could cause settled lead particles to go up into the air again.[RK11]

If you work outside, don't dig in the dirt or move soil. Ohio EPA issued orders requiring the facility to perform a study of potential soil contamination in the area. When you come inside, take off your shoes at the door. This keeps lead particles from getting tracked into your home.

To be extra safe, homes closest to the Bunting Bearings [TJ12][MH13] site should keep windows closed. This is especially important if more work happens at the site.

## **Should I change my furnace filter?**

Changing your furnace filter on a routine basis is always good, especially in winter. However, openings in regular home filters are too large to catch lead dust.

## **I live near the Bunting Bearings site and have had headaches since December 29. Is this from lead?**

Lead poisoning is hard to detect because the signs are unclear. If you're worried, talk to your doctor about getting tested. You can also call the Health Department at 419-337-0915 for testing.

## **Is outdoor recess safe for kids at nearby schools?**

Outdoor recess is not prohibited. Handwashing after recess and wiping shoes on the door mats upon entering the building is being practiced at the school.[BT14]

On Wednesday, Jan. 7, 2026, Ohio EPA collected wipe samples from the school areas. The test results were reported on Jan. 12, 2026. Per Ohio EPA, "These preliminary results do not indicate that there is zero risk of lead exposure. More comprehensive sampling will be conducted in the village in the near future..." Residents and the school are advised to continue to follow the recommendations of the Ohio Department of Health.

## **I live in Swanton, about 8 miles away. Am I affected?**

As mentioned earlier in this document, Ohio EPA has estimated the area most likely impacted by high lead concentrations detected in air monitoring in Delta, Ohio, resulting from demolition activities at the Bunting Bearings facility. Based on the modeling, the area of higher lead concentration extends less than a quarter mile (two-tenths) from the demolition site in all directions. However, the study required in the order will provide the best information on the extent of contamination.

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**Questions?**

Call the Health Department at 419-337-0915

Ohio EPA at 614-639-0211

Ohio Department of Health at 614-644-8562