

Renovation, Repair and Painting Rule Comments

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Renovation, Repair and Painting Rule (RRP Rule) regulations are an ill-advised attempt to formulate a one-size-fits-all policy and set of protocols.

The RRP Rule's intent is a good one – to safeguard workers, their families and the clients that we serve. It appears that EPA's desire was to implement a set of policies and protocols based upon lead abatement practices including the clearance inspection requirement for all phases of renovation, home repairs and painting. EPA's adopted hybrid RRP Rule incorporates a number of the practices including a modified "clearance" methodology that "clears" a job once work is completed. However, the "clearance" does not safeguard a contractor if the practice was challenged in court. The problem is that it fails to provide a definitive clearance of the work area and, in my opinion, could lead to litigation if a client chose to raise the question of how comparing the color of a sample card against a cleaned surface can scientifically prove that a "tested" area is lead-safe.

Further, the RRP Rule impedes production, increases materials and labor costs. It does so with the addition of the required third-party Certified Renovator's on-site verification of the clean-up, set-up and "clearance" requirements. These independent, third-party Certified Renovator (CR) visits have to be timed just right or the crew will have to wait around for verification before resuming work which wastes time and money. In addition, the attendant costs for the CR, training and firm certification costs add to the overall operational costs of just about every job with questionable benefit for the client and agency.

I recommend that EPA rescind the RRP Rule. I recommend that EPA instead allow contractors to photograph their own set-up and containment with an independent inspector conducting a final visual inspection to verify clean-up of the work area. I am recommending this because the current protocols impede production, are inefficient, are expensive and leave contractors open for possible litigation. I believe that the current OSHA rules have sufficient safeguards in place with regards to lead to support a modified version of the rule that would achieve the goal of protecting workers, their families and the clients that we serve.

Respectfully submitted by

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