



Region 3: The Mid-Atlantic States

EPA Agreement with Realty Company to Bring Proper Lead Disclosure to Baltimore Homes

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PHILADELPHIA (May 1, 2007) – In a consent agreement with EPA, Continental Realty Corp. has agreed to pay a \$6,468 civil penalty and voluntarily perform an environmental audit to settle violations of federal lead based paint disclosure laws. The audit will cover 1,155 residential leases in three of 17 buildings managed by Continental, a large property management company, in Baltimore, Md.

Owners and property managers of pre-1978 buildings are required to provide renters and purchasers an EPA-approved lead information pamphlet, include a lead warning statement in their leases and sales documents, and disclose the presence of lead based paint. Continental will hire an independent third party auditor to determine if the company has met these requirements.

This agreement is the first of its kind in the nation, creating an innovative solution resolving federal lead based paint disclosure cases with large landlords and property management firms. Under the audit agreement, Continental will report to EPA on a quarterly basis the results from the audit and pay a civil penalty for any violations found during the audit. This agreement is designed to ensure proper disclosure of lead based paint and lead based paint hazards at all 17 of the buildings Continental manages, comprising 4,103 multi-family housing units.

EPA's goal is to ensure that renters and buyers receive adequate information to protect their health, especially children's health, from potential lead based paint hazards," said Donald S. Welsh, EPA regional administrator.

An estimated three-quarters of housing in America built before 1978 contains some lead-based paint. Lead based paint endangers the health of American children in as many as four million homes. Lead poisoning in children can cause serious, long-term consequences including intelligence deficiencies, learning disabilities, hearing impairment, hyperactivity and behavioral problems. Children under six years of age are among the most vulnerable to adverse health risks from lead-based paint and dust and soil contaminated with lead based paint.

Individuals who are concerned that they or their children may have been exposed to lead hazards can determine if they have elevated blood-lead levels through a simple, inexpensive test at their doctor's office.

The Residential Lead Based Paint Hazard Reduction Act helps prevent exposure -- especially the exposure of children -- to hazards from lead based paint by requiring disclosure and notification when selling or leasing housing. For additional information on lead in paint, dust and soil, see <http://www.epa.gov/lead/>.

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